

CABINET AGENDA



TUESDAY 24 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 2 - THE FORUM

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Membership

Councillor Williams (Leader)	Councillor Anderson
Councillor Griffiths (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Banks
Councillor Elliot	Councillor Barrett

For further information, please contact Corporate and Democratic Support or 01442 228209

AGENDA

1. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered -

(i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent

and, if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, or a personal interest which is also prejudicial

(ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter (and must withdraw to the public seating area) unless they have been granted a dispensation.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Members' Register of Interests, or is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and prejudicial interests are defined in Part 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members

[If a member is in any doubt as to whether they have an interest which should be declared they should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the start of the meeting]

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An opportunity for members of the public to make statements and ask questions in accordance with the rules as to Public Participation.

5. REFERRALS TO CABINET

There were no referrals to Cabinet

6. CABINET FORWARD PLAN (Page 11)

7. DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY (Pages 12 - 50)

8. COMMITTEE TIMETABLE (Pages 51 - 56)

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT (Pages 57 - 65)

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

11. TOTAL ASSET MANAGEMENT (TAM) CONTRACT - BENCHMARK AND RECOMMISSION UPDATE (Pages 66 - 102)

MINUTES

CABINET

14 DECEMBER 2022

Councillors: Williams (Leader)
Griffiths (Deputy
Leader)
Elliot
Anderson
Banks
Barrett

Officers:

C Hamilton	Chief Executive
A Wilkie	Strategic Director People and Transformation
C Silva Donayre	Strategic Director – Corporate and Commercial
M Brookes	Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services
N Howcutt	Chief Finance Officer
A Robinson	Assistant Director Planning
L Fowell	Corporate & Democratic Support Lead Officer (minutes)

Also Attendance: Cllr Tindall

The meeting began at 6.00 pm

CA/103/21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2022 were agreed by Members present and signed by the Chair.

CA/104/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CA/105/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

CA/106/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

CA/107/21 REFERRALS TO CABINET

There were no referrals to Cabinet

CA/108/21 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan was noted

CA/109/21 KINGS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Decision

That Cabinet recommends to Full Council to formally adopt the Kings Langley Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Local Plan following a 'YES' vote at Referendum 17th November 2022

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

Building strong and vibrant communities

Ensuring economic growth and prosperity

Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need

Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The Neighbourhood Plan referendum produced a positive vote in favour of adopting the plan and therefore the only option available to the Council is to formally make the Kings Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

S151 Officer:

There are no direct financial implications of this decision.

Advice

Cllr Anderson introduced the report; he paid tribute to Parish Cllr John Morris who had led the project with a number of volunteers over a number of years. and was happy to take questions.

There were no questions.

Recommendation agreed

CA/110/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Decision

That Cabinet recommends to Council acceptance of the report on Treasury Management performance for 2022/23.

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Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

This report is part of the Council's financial governance and provides the required oversight to ensure that Members are fully informed of the Council's treasury management activities.

S151 Officer:

This is a Deputy S151 Officer report. Comments are contained within the body of the report.

Advice

Cllr Elliot introduced the report and was happy to take questions.

NHowcutt added that they had allowed the additional treasury management income in the 23/24 baseline budget to reduce some of the pressures that had been impacted due to inflation; they were reacting to that increased performance.

Cllr Barratt asked in relation to the list of investments what the Debt Management Office was. NHowcutt explained that was the Government and that the DMO was their last point of call as they got the lowest return, during covid times they were charging them to leave money with them.

Recommendations agreed

CA/111/21 TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

Decision

That Members note the report and agree the:

- Digital Strategy
- People Strategy
- Communications Strategy

As annexed to this report.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
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Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

There are no direct legal considerations arising from the three strategies presented for approval.

Deputy S151 Officer:

The delivery of these core Council strategies will require financial support that has been projected and accounted for as part of the Council's approved MTFs, the specific annual budgets will be detailed and approved as part of the annual budget setting process.

Advice

Cllr Elliot introduced the report and thanked Aidan and his team for such a comprehensive report. He was happy to take questions.

Cllr Griffiths said that she was pleased to see this reports as it has been around for some time, she feels it was now getting to the "doing" bit as opposed to the research stage. She feels this would have a major impact, in a good way to residents and business.

Cllr Banks asked for a comment around future proofing, she understood the background work and how they were modernising and bringing in to the present, she was keen to know that they had built in some capacity to move with the future changes that were on the horizon or would they have to redo this from scratch.

AWilkie responded that as they had been developing this, particularly on the digital side they had been conscious that the changes were only getting faster. What they do not want to do is have the monolithic strategy that in five years would be completely out of date and not relative. They want to be constantly challenging themselves about what could be coming down the line. The new Head of digital was very much in the headspace of looking at what they could do to practically avoid that. The strategy talks about ensuring that they were not signing up to or wedding themselves to different technologies for a considerable amount of time. Tying themselves into long-term contracts would not be the way to go, nor tying themselves to a particular system or provider. The strategy talks about technical design authority which means that every technical decision that is made as an organisation is done so strategically by aboard who understands not only where the market is leading but also where technology is leading whilst understanding the breadth of their infrastructure. Different departments with the best will in the world would make decision around their own technology however when you look across the organisation it doesn't make sense as different systems don't tie in with each other and we misuse the technology and miss opportunities. With this

strategy, it allows them to be agile with the mind-set to look into two or more years' time when the world has moved on and they can revisit this.

Recommendations agreed

CA/112/21 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Decision

1. That the content of the report is noted.
2. That Cabinet seek further assurance if, and where, required.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

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Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery.

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The Risk Register provides an appropriate framework for the Council to monitor and review the strategic risks which could affect the Council and its operations.

S151 Officer:

This is a S151 Officer report. Comments are contained within the body of the report.

Advice

Cllr Elliott introduced the Q2 report and was happy to take questions.

AWilkie added that in terms of the social media risk, it was clearly a risk but when they looked at the it didn't equate to the severity of the risk of a cyber-attack they would keep an eye on it and they had the policies in place.

There were no questions.

Recommendations agreed

CA/113/21 COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT

Decision

1. Cabinet approved the Collection Fund surplus estimate of £429,119.98 as at 31 March 2023. The Dacorum Borough Council share of this surplus is £50,451.32.

2. Cabinet approved the payment profile for the surplus identified at 1) above and contained at section 2.8 to this report (Table 3).

3. Cabinet approved the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2023/24 incorporating an estimated collection rate of 99.4%.

4. Cabinet agreed that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by the Council as its tax base for the year 2023/24 shall be 59,922.3 and its constituent elements shall be:

Table 1 Taxbase 2023/24

Part of Area - Parished and Non Parished	100% Tax base	99.4% Tax base
Hemel Hempstead	32,266.6	32,073.0
Aldbury	482.8	479.9
Berkhamsted	8,678.5	8,626.4
Bovingdon	2,150.4	2,137.5
Chipperfield	899.8	894.4
Flamstead	667.8	663.8
Flaunden	180.1	179.0
Great Gaddesden	464.6	461.8
Kings Langley	2,377.1	2,362.8
Little Gaddesden	642.5	638.6
Markyate	1,361.3	1,353.2
Nash Mills	1,249.2	1,241.7
Nettleden with Potten End	809.7	804.9
Northchurch	1,383.6	1,375.3
Tring Rural	698.9	694.7
Tring Town	5,286.3	5,254.6
Wigginton	684.8	680.7
Total	60,284.0	59,922.3

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Climate and ecological emergency.

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

No comments to add to the report

S151 Officer:

This is a Deputy Section 151 officer report.

Advice

Cllr Elliot introduced the report and was happy to take questions.

NHowcutt said that these technical reports could be quite difficult to get your head around. He said that the report showed a £500k surplus which appears to be a big variance however they collected £113 million last year so this comes out at 0.3% in terms of what they expect to collect. The impact in Dacorum is only around £50k and they smoothed that out with the funding equalization reserve so it does not affect the overall budget. In terms of the council tax base set for 23/24, they were seeing a 1% increase, which they have modelled in the budget, so from that perspective it is in line with what they have in the budget and the medium term financial strategy. In previous years they had always achieved their collection rate on the council tax, up to period 7 or 8 they were in a good place, where they go on with the costs of living crisis there was a potential risk to that collection rate. Council tax is often lower down the list of priorities for people to pay when their income is stretched so they may see an impact on that.

Cllr Tindall asked if they had noticed many people moving from a 10 month to 12-month payment of their council tax due to the cost of living crisis.

NHowcutt said that it was difficult to give a straight answer too as around four to five years ago the council moved to a having the option for a 12 month payment plan or 10 month for residents. Many of the residents moved to the 12 month at that point. Then came covid and they saw a bigger increase. Now they were seeing similar increase levels as before covid. They expected to see more move to the 12 months as they come to the respites of February and March, people might be feeling the bite of the costs of living and may move towards to 12 months. Therefore, whilst they had not seen a greater movement in the last few months, with the economy set to affect all of the service areas and comes streams we expect it to bite now and onwards and with utility bills set to increase again, they expect potential pressures ahead.

Cllr Tindall said that it was a shame as that advanced payment was a little extra bit of income collecting interest throughout the year.

NHowcutt said that it helped with their collection rate as when you have that movement, you get to period 10 and were thinking was the collection rate lower because people were finding it hard to pay or was it because they had moved to 12 months. It also meant that a lot of the time Feb and March were a good time to collect bad debt as the normal payment wasn't coming through so it does add additional complexity to it.

Cllr Tindall asked if it took anymore officer hours to have two different payment options and would it be better to have everyone on the 12 month.

NHowcutt said that it was fractions of fractions because it was just a matter of setting up the direct debit itself; they do the same reconciliation so it was only the setting up that takes time. If they saw a massive swing towards the 12-month option then they may come back to members to look to change the policy, however he felt that some people do really like the 10 month, as it is easier as they like the holiday.

Cllr Tindall did say that he does like the 2 months off.

Cllr Anderson said that he was one of the first to change to the 12 month as he feels that it is easier.

Cllr Williams agreed it was nice to not have a bill to pay in Feb and March.

Cllr Barratt said that he was not aware that they offered a 12-month option and asked if this was something that residents were aware of.

NHowcutt said that this was something that they offer when people are having difficulty paying, it is an option on the website, and residents can fill in a form to move to the 12 months option. He admitted that they could advertise this more widely and he would go away and see what they could do towards adverts.

Cllr Barratt feels that especially during the current climate that it should be something they should advertise to help people with their cash flow.

NHowcutt said that they do offer it to people who were struggling and during covid, officers led the switch so that is why they saw growth during that period.

Cllr Griffiths mentioned that this was included in the costs of living page on the website.

Recommendations agreed

The Meeting ended at 6.22 pm

CABINET FORWARD PLAN

DATE	MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION	Decision Making Process	Reports to Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer	CONTACT DETAILS	BACKGROUND INFORMATION
14/02/23	Quarter 3 Strategic risk report		02/02/23	Nigel Howcutt, Chief Finance Officer 01442 228662 Nigel.howcutt@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	Quarter 3 financial performance		02/02/23	Nigel Howcutt, Chief Finance Officer 01442 228662 Nigel.howcutt@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	Appropriation of the Paradise Depot site for planning purposes.		02/02/23	James Doe – Strategic Director Place James.doe@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	Air Quality Management Paper		02/02/23	Trevor Pugh – Interim Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery Trevor.pugh@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	Phase 2 Leadership Team Restructure proposals		02/02/23	Claire Hamilton – Chief Executive Claire.hamilton@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	KPI Update		02/02/23	Hannah Peacock Hannah.peacock@dacorum.gov.uk	
14/02/23	Electric Vehicle Charging Point		02/02/23	Ben Hosier Ben.hosier@dacorum.gov.uk	To Be Provided
14/02/23	Covid Recovery paper		02/02/23	Emma Walker , Head of Environmental Protection emma.walker@dacorum.gov.uk	To Be Provided
14/02/23	Hemel Place Strategy		02/02/23	James Doe – Strategic Director Place James.doe@dacorum.gov.uk	To Be Provided
14/02/23	Market Forces Policy		02/02/23	Matt Rawdon – Assistant Director – People Matt.rawdon@dacorum.gov.uk	
21/03/23	Senior Officer Pay Policy		09/03/23	Matt Rawdon – Assistant Director – People Matt.rawdon@dacorum.gov.uk	
21/03/23	Employee Code of Conduct		09/03/23	Mark Brookes Mark.brookes@dacorum.gov.uk	
21/03/23	Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Core Funds		09/03/23	Aex.robinson@dacorum.gov.uk Alex Robinson	
25/04/23	Appointment of the Principal Contractor for the Paradise Depot project			James Doe – Strategic Director Place James.doe@dacorum.gov.uk	
25/04/23	Appointment of the Principal Contractor for the Marchmont Fields project.			James Doe – Strategic Director Place James.doe@dacorum.gov.uk	
To Be Planned	Levelling Up Fund 2 proposals – Hemel Hempstead Town Centre			James Doe – Strategic Director – Place James.doe@dacorum.gov.uk	to provide an update on the proposals submitted to Government and any necessary decisions to be taken



Report for:	Cabinet
Title of report:	Domestic Abuse Policies
Date:	24 January 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	<p>Appendix A - Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees</p> <p>Appendix B - Domestic Abuse Policy for Residents, Tenants and Members</p> <p>Appendix 1 - Additional information about domestic abuse</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Our standards for responding to domestic abuse</p> <p>Appendix 3 - How to access domestic abuse support if you are or have been a victim of domestic abuse</p> <p>Appendix 4 - How to access support if you are concerned about your own behaviour or that of someone you know</p> <p>Appendix 5 - Domestic Abuse Review & DAHA Accreditation EIA</p>
Background papers:	<p>Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>VAWG_Strategy_FINAL_PUBLICATION_MASTER_vRB.PDF (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>What is DAHA Accreditation - daha - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (dahalliance.org.uk)</p> <p>https://www.hertssunflower.org/media/documents/hertfordshire-da-partnership-strategy-2022-25-.pdf</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>DA – Domestic Abuse</p> <p>DAHA – Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance</p> <p>HTIP – Housing Transformation Improvement Programme</p> <p>HR - Human resources</p>

Report Author / Responsible Officer

Natasha Beresford, Assistant Director – Strategic Housing



Natasha.beresford@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228840 (ext. 2840)

Corporate Priorities	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Wards affected	ALL
Purpose of the report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide information outlining the approach to improving service delivery in relation to Domestic Abuse (DA). 2. To inform Members of the revised policy approach in relation to DA.
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	That Cabinet approves the Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees and the Domestic Abuse Policy for Residents, Tenants and Members as annexed to this report.
Period for post policy/project review:	Annually or upon legislative change

1 Introduction/Background:

It has been estimated that 2.3 million people aged 16 to 74 are victims of domestic abuse a year, (two-thirds of whom are women), and more than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related (Gov.uk).

Domestic abuse is increasingly being acknowledged as an urgent threat to people on a national and global scale. The past few years have brought landmark changes within the sector: the first Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales was appointed in 2019, and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was published last year. The act has brought about significant changes to how domestic abuse is defined, and the expectations for how it should be responded to.

The Council committed to gaining accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) in 2022, and its Domestic Abuse Project Officer is Bartlett leading the project. DAHA are recognised within the Home Office's Statutory Domestic Abuse Guidance as the 'first domestic abuse accreditation for housing providers'. They aim 'to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction, and adoption, of an established set of standards and an accreditation process'. The Council expects to achieve accreditation in 2024, subject to a continued commitment to the project. Progress is monitored via the Housing Transformation Improvement Programme (HTIP).

This report introduces two policies which have been extensively consulted on with key stakeholders. Consultees include those with lived experience - as well as tenants, leaseholders, statutory and voluntary sector partners, staff, the Strategic Leadership Team and elected Members. As recommended under Standard 1 of the DAHA Accreditation, the following has been developed: an updated Domestic Abuse Policy for Residents, Tenants and Members, and for the first time, an additional stand alone Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees – Section 2 of the report will outline the key policy introductions.

2 Key Issues:

This section highlights the key areas of focus that are to be introduced by the new DA policies.

Employees

The policy introduces a robust support package for employees who are experiencing, or have recently experienced domestic abuse that includes:

- Allowing employees who are victims of crime, including those who are victims of domestic abuse, to work flexible hours to allow them to attend court, legal appointments, associated counselling or access support. This would not be available to those accused of acting abusively;
- Extending the provisions of our Special Leave Policy to all victims of crime, (such as domestic abuse, sexual assault, burglary etc.). For victims of domestic abuse, this may be used to relocate, recover from trauma or for any of the reasons given above. This leave would not be treated as sickness or absence and therefore would not trigger any disciplinary proceedings if taken;
- Allowing employees experiencing domestic abuse to request advanced salary pay or salary payment into another bank account (in the interest of minimising economic abuse, and/or increasing the possibility that they will have means to flee if they wish to);
- Adopting a proactive approach to identifying and corroborating employee domestic abuse crimes by implementing a requirement for employees to inform their line manager if they are being investigated, charged or have been convicted of any criminal offence during the year. Where information is disclosed about a recent caution or conviction, carrying out an adverse information risk assessment (see Appendix J) when information about an employee's caution

or convictions is disclosed, to determine whether the crime/s impact the individual's ability to continue to undertake their role.

Residents, Tenants and Members

This policy demonstrates how we, as a local authority and housing provider, will respond to those who have acted abusively, by:

- Stating in our policies and Tenancy Agreement that we do not condone domestic abuse, and committing to pursuing enforcement action up to, and including, termination of tenancy for the person who has acted abusively, where it is proportionate and possible to do so;
- Pursuing enforcement action for domestic abuse related breaches, (e.g. abusive behaviour as anti-social behaviour), domestic abuse related damages to property (where it is possible to do so without negatively affecting victim/s) collaborating where possible to strengthen enforcement action;
- Encouraging the use of rehabilitative support services where possible and appropriate;
- Reviewing our Domestic Abuse Prevention Notices/ Domestic Abuse Prevention Order process to ensure efficacy;

Commit to not recharging survivors/victims for domestic abuse related damage to property/ies, by:

- Formalising our process of not recharging victims/survivors for domestic abuse related damage to properties (the decision to recharge is currently at the discretion of Tenancy Management);
- Solely recharging the perpetrator where it is possible to do so without increasing risk to victim/s.

Reduce the financial barriers to victim/survivor/s fleeing abusive situations by:

- Developing ring-fenced funding that can be used to cover the costs of ending joint tenancies where a person wishes to end the tenancy to flee domestic abuse;
- Provide support to address or waver (where necessary) rent arrears debt in instances where a person may be otherwise prevented from fleeing domestic abuse through the Housing Panel (or similar counterpart) process or paying costs through a similar ring-fenced 'pot'.

3 Options and alternatives considered

Alternative options have not been considered. It is necessary for the Council to update and refresh regularly upon material or legislative change its policies to ensure that they remain compliant with the statutory framework and adequately inform all stakeholders of the Council's approach. As the Council has committed to transforming its services to provide exemplar support to survivors and victims of abuse, having two robust policies is considered a good practice requirement and a positive step towards gaining DAHA accreditation.

4 Consultation

During the process of delivering activity led by the DA Review, consultation and engagement activity has been integral to development of the new policies - with key stakeholders, ensuring that the learning from good practice, stakeholder feedback and approaches taken by other housing providers are embedded in a robust Dacorum approach to supporting and tackling DA. During the development of the new policies, activity has been undertaken as outlined below:

Human Resources

A review of our current Employee Handbook and Human Resources (HR) provision. Good practice examples were gathered from the DAHA network of accredited organisations. This enabled

improved understanding of the HR provision in place through other housing providers; in particular, examples included Calico Homes in Lancashire who currently provide up to ten working days of paid leave for domestic abuse victims as part of their 'Safe Leave' policy. Their staff policy enables the ability to grant such leave, which rests with an employee's line manager.

Good practice example of Adverse Risk Assessments were shared with HR to enable a review of current processes to be undertaken.

Resident Services

Representatives from Tenancy Management, Enforcement and the Community Safety Partnership were consulted and engaged with in relation to the introduction of Domestic Abuse Prevention Notices and Orders, known as DAPN and DAPO. The outcome of the consultation and engagement with the project team led to the successful development of procedures to support the use of DAPN and DAPOs in line with the statutory framework.

Further consultation will be undertaken with our repairs contractor/s to identify improvements in the identification of DA when delivering services in our homes – via HTIP the review of service delivery will lead to improved governance, consistency in knowledge, reporting and support provided.

Good practice examples were gathered from DAHA accredited organisations, Luton Housing and Cambridge City Council. The former state in their policy that they will take action 'repairing damage to the property ensuring that the victim is not recharged where it has been caused as a result of domestic abuse' (this is dependent upon them being aware that DA has occurred). The latter have elected not to recharge for damages at all in properties where they are aware of DA. Further consultation with Property Services in Housing and Finance colleagues will enable development of a Dacorum specific approach.

Consultation and engagement with several housing providers, has identified the benefits of allocating funding to cover the costs (such as legal costs) of ending joint tenancies for those fleeing domestic abuse was included as part of the Domestic Abuse Project Group's early action plan. Options are currently being explored as to how this can be implemented as part of HTIP, with the intention to identify funding using ring-fenced grant such as Homeless Prevention Grant to undertake a pilot scheme.

Consultation with several housing providers has been undertaken and a further good practice example from DAHA accredited organisation, Cheshire East, was identified – they have been able to mitigate the loss of organisational revenue to rent accounts by allocating funding to pay the costs for victims, instead of waiving them entirely. Further exploration is underway via the project group to determine the feasibility of implementing approach within HTIP.

In addition to the above consultation has been undertaken via the following forums:

- DA Project Group – which includes: HR, Community Safety & Safeguarding, representatives from Housing Operations, Property and Strategic Housing;
- Staff and Members via a DA survey;
- Community Safety Partnership;
- Hertfordshire County Council, Strategic Leads and commissioners;
- Tenant & Leaseholder Scrutiny Committee
- DAHA Regional Lead: supported by the DAHA Accreditation Portfolio
- Employees with lived experience of domestic abuse

- Volunteers with lived experience of domestic abuse (facilitated by local support service, Cherished)
- Senior Officers from Strategic Housing, Community Safety & Safeguarding were consulted across all proposals
- Member briefing session
- Strategic Leadership Team briefing
- Informal Cabinet
- Housing & Communities Overview Scrutiny Committee

Feedback and learning from consultation and engagement activity has enabled the shaping of the final draft policies attached with the report.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

Effective delivery of DA support has a positive impact on resources, as a robust approach to tackling DA may for example: prevent homelessness and necessary costs of administration of applicants and temporary accommodation provision or travel services, early intervention may prevent damage to property and/or escalation of rent arrears.

Should the Council go on to implement additional services such as additional provision of paid leave, there may be a financial impact, which will need to be determined through service planning and the budget setting process.

Where modifications are required to an employee's role following an adverse risk assessment, this may result in financial or resource impact.

At the current time no additional financial outlay is required, the Council may benefit financially from strengthening service delivery and processes, such as reviewing the approach to rechargeable costs following damage caused to property.

Should it be determined following further consideration to introduce 'ring-fenced' funding allocations to support activity, this will have financial implications that will need to be determined through budget setting process. Any such decisions will require further consideration by SLT in the first instance.

6 Legal Implications

Any amendments to policy and/or our tenancy agreements will be undertaken in collaboration with Legal and Democratic Services to ensure statutory compliance.

The development of the new policies provides reassurance that the Council is committed to the robust support of victims and survivors of domestic abuse, taking action against perpetrators and ensuring compliance with the legal framework.

7 Risk implications:

A robust policy approach provides reassurance that the Council has appropriate governance and processes in place to support, safeguard victims and survivors taking mitigating actions against risks arising through delivery of activity and safe case management practices.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken and approved by the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Leader officer, the assessment is pending formal sign off and adoption to the

register. The impact assessment identifies that adopting the DAHA framework and achieving standards is likely to positively impact those from protected groups. The assessment provides detail of the analysis of the impact on protected groups and others, outlining clearly the steps that will be taken to remove barriers that those with protected characteristics may face in accessing support and making concerted efforts to reduce them wherever possible.

Human Rights –there are no Human Rights Implications arising from this report.

9 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)

There are no sustainability issues arising from the development of these policies, the implementation will provide clearer guidance as to the Council's approach when dealing with DA, enabling marked improvements in service delivery and supporting the health and wellbeing of those affected. Day to day delivery of activity within the remit of the policy will be overseen by the Joint Action Group (JAG) ensuring that it is aligned with our Community Safety delivery plans.

10 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

Human Resources have indicated that any later process changes that require amendment to HR policy will need to be approved with the Trade Union.

11 Statutory Comments

Monitoring Officer:

The policies provide a range of measures which will help the Council to assist victims of Domestic Abuse and they are therefore recommended for approval.

S151 Officer:

There are no additional short term funding requirements to support the implementation of these policies.

12 Conclusions:

This report outlines the intention to introduce two new policies, providing clear direction as to the approach that will be undertaken by the Council when tackling perpetrators of DA and supporting victims and survivors. The policies have been consulted on broadly and are compliant with the key recommendations of DAHA accreditation framework, of which the Council is the only local authority in Hertfordshire that has committed to date to achieving.



Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees

Author: Jodie Bartlett, Domestic Abuse Project Officer

Version: 1.0

Last updated: November 2022

1.0 Introduction and policy purpose

1.1 We believe that everyone has the right to live free from fear of abuse or violence. As an employer, we want to provide a robust and supportive response to domestic abuse, so that we can limit the threat it poses to the health and happiness of our people.

1.2 It has been estimated that there are currently 2.3 million victims of domestic abuse a year aged 16 to 74 (two-thirds of whom are women), and more than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related (Gov.uk, 2022). We recognise that the prevalence of domestic abuse means it is highly likely that we will employ people who have been, or will be, victims of domestic abuse. Similarly, we recognise that we may employ people who are, or have been, perpetrators of domestic abuse.

1.3 This policy references the support we will provide to employees who are victims of, or have been victims of, domestic abuse. It states that we will not condone or tolerate domestic abuse, and outlines how we will hold employees accountable for their actions if they are perpetrators of domestic abuse.

1.4 We recognise that there are many barriers to disclosing domestic abuse, and we want to reassure our employees that any concerns they raise will be treated empathetically, appropriately, and confidentially.

2.0 Note on language

2.1 In this policy we use the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator'. 'Victim' is used to refer to the person/s who has been or is being abused, and 'perpetrator' refers to the person/s who is acting, or has acted, abusively.

2.2 We use these terms as they allow us to describe how the abuse affects those involved, in a context in which individual names are not available or appropriate to use.

2.3 We recognise that a 'victim' may prefer to be referred to as 'survivor', but we have chosen to use 'victim' within this policy as it allows us to clearly acknowledge that a person is or has been subjected to domestic abuse, without making assumptions about where they are within their own personal journey.

2.4 Within our practices, and particularly when engaging directly with those who are, or have been victims of domestic abuse, we will use the terms of address that they prefer where it is possible to do so.

3.0 Policy scope

3.1 This policy applies to those employed by Dacorum Borough Council, including those employed through agency contracts. If an agency contracted employee requires support that we cannot action without the agency's involvement, we will liaise with the agency. Contractors who work with, but not directly for, Dacorum Borough Council are encouraged to refer to their direct employers for advice on the workplace support that is available to them if they are experiencing domestic abuse.

3.2 When Dacorum resident/s or tenant/s are affected by domestic abuse, we will refer to our Domestic Abuse Policy for Residents, Tenants and Members. Where a person is both an employee and a resident or tenant, we will refer to both policies for guidance and tailor our response accordingly.

4.0 Our values

4.1 We are committed to demonstrating our organisational values in all that we do, including how we support employee/s who are affected by domestic abuse.

We will:

- **Be honest** about the prevalence of domestic abuse, and **act with integrity** by doing all we can to support employees who have been affected.
- Utilise the support of our internal service areas, specialist domestic abuse services and partner agencies, because we recognise that we need to **support each other and work together** to provide a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse.
- **Be ambitious for our places and our people** by continuously seeking opportunities to improve our response to domestic abuse.
- **Be accountable to each other** and honour the trust that our employees place in us when sharing their experience/s of domestic abuse by responding respectfully, and providing guidance about how and where they can access further support.
- **Nurture and celebrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in everything we do**, including how we recognise and respond to domestic abuse. We will take an intersectional approach when responding to domestic abuse by considering how a person's experience of domestic abuse may be impacted by their sex, age, gender identity, race, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, pregnancy status or social background differences.

5.0 Definition of domestic abuse

5.1 This policy uses an abridged version of the definition of domestic abuse provided by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. An expanded definition is included, alongside additional information about domestic abuse, in Appendix 1.

5.2 Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other
- And
- the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse

5.3 It **does not matter** whether the behaviour is a single incident or a course of actions: behaviour of this kind is domestic abuse.

5.4 More information about other forms of abuse (including those that can also be domestic abuse), is included in our Children and Adults at Risk Policy.

5.5 ‘Domestic abuse significantly impacts the lives of children and young people: one in five children lives with domestic abuse’ (Domestic Abuse Commissioner, 2022).

5.6 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children can be victims of domestic abuse, even when the abusive behaviours are not directly aimed at them.

They can also be victims if they:

- See, hear, or experience the effects of abuse
- Are related to the victim or perpetrator of the abuse (or both)

5.7 Further information about how domestic abuse affects children is provided in our Children and Adults at Risk Policy.

6.0 Awareness of domestic abuse

6.1 We will raise awareness of domestic abuse within our organisation by featuring it regularly within our internal and external communications, and participating in local and national campaigns. We will try to reduce the 'hidden' nature of domestic abuse by regularly acknowledging its prevalence, and encouraging our employees to make domestic abuse a regular topic of discussion in team meetings, where it is appropriate to do so.

6.2 We will encourage our employees to learn about domestic abuse by providing mandatory training, and additional training will be provided as it is relevant to employees' roles and their level of engagement with our community.

6.3 This policy will be made available to all employees, and treated as an essential part of the Induction package for our new employees.

7.0 Responding to domestic abuse

7.1 We will provide managers and those supporting staff with additional guidance and procedures to help them to support staff who are experiencing domestic abuse.

7.2 Additional information about domestic abuse, including how it may present when it affects colleagues or peers, is available in the domestic abuse section of the safeguarding hub on Dennis.

7.3 If you are concerned that a colleague or peer that you work with may be experiencing domestic abuse, we would encourage you to raise your concerns with your Line Manager/an alternative Line Manager, or a Designated Safeguarding Officer or Champion.

8.0 Support for employees who are, or have been, victims of domestic abuse

8.1 We respect our employees' right to privacy, and we recognise that it is their right to decide whether they disclose if they are, or have been, a victim of domestic abuse. We will prioritise gaining their consent before taking action.

8.2 The findings from our internal survey of Dacorum Borough Council employees that took place in autumn 2021, suggested that many of our employees would be likely to seek workplace support from their line manager if they were a victim of domestic abuse.

8.3 We encourage you to speak with an alternative line manager, a Designated Safeguarding Officer or Champion, or our Community Safety & Safeguarding team, if you feel able to. A list of Designated Safeguarding Officers and Champions will be published on Dennis.

8.4 We will ensure that these points of contact have the knowledge, tools and support they need to confidently support you by giving them additional resources, procedures, and training.

8.5 They will take a flexible and victim-centred approach to supporting you, and with your consent, will work with specialist domestic abuse agencies to take action/s to increase your personal safety. They will also consider the safety of your colleagues.

8.6 They can take action/s including:

- Agreeing whether to advise your colleagues, including level of detail you are comfortable to share, and planning how they should respond if the perpetrator/s make contact.
- Making reasonable accommodations to your working environment, duties or schedule, if it is likely to reduce the risk of contact with the perpetrator/s and/or have a positive impact on your wellbeing.
- Allowing you to work alternative or flexible working hours if this will minimise the risk of contact with the perpetrator/s.
- Agreeing changes to your schedule to allow you to attend appointments with the Police, specialist domestic abuse services, counselling and legal services et al during working hours, where necessary.
- Changing your workplace contact details to reduce the risk of harassment by phone or email.
- Arranging for your salary to be paid into an alternative account, at your request.

8.7 We recognise that an employee may wish to access support without our involvement, and we want to make it accessible for them to do so. A guide to how to access support as a victim of domestic abuse is provided as Appendix 2.

9.0 **Perpetrators of domestic abuse**

9.1 We do not condone the perpetration of domestic abuse by our employees under any circumstances.

9.2 If you have reason to believe that an employee has perpetrated domestic abuse, you can raise your concerns confidentially by using our Whistleblowing policy.

9.3 We will respond to employee perpetrated instances of domestic abuse in the interest of reducing risk to the perpetrator's victim/s and colleagues.

9.4 We will treat any allegation, disclosure or conviction of a domestic-abuse-related offence that relates to an employee, on a case a case-by-case basis.

9.5 We will complete an adverse risk assessment when we are made aware that an employee has been cautioned or convicted of a domestic abuse related offence.

9.6 We will use the findings of this risk assessment to take proportionate and appropriate action. This could include redeployment of duties and/or dismissal.

9.7 We also recognise the need to offer appropriate support to employed perpetrators, or those concerned about their own behaviour, and genuinely want to change.

9.8 We will signpost or refer employed perpetrators to support programmes, where it is appropriate to do so without increasing the risk to their victim/s or colleagues. A guide to how to access support as a perpetrator/someone concerned about their own, or as a person concerned about someone else's behaviour is included as Appendix 3.

10.0 Confidentiality and GDPR

10.1 Any information related to domestic abuse will be treated with sensitivity, and if it is recorded, it will be stored securely on our systems. We will maintain confidentiality and prioritise gaining consent from victims before making referrals or taking further action, as far as it is practicable to do so. We may have to share information with agencies such as the Police or Social Services if an adult or child is at serious risk of harm.

10.2 If an instance of domestic abuse meets the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) risk threshold or if there are child protection concerns, we have a legal duty to share information with relevant partner agencies in the interest of reducing risk to those concerned.

11.0 Links to other policies and policy review expectations

11.1 We involved employees from across the organisation, including those with lived experience of domestic abuse, when developing this policy.

11.2 We will review this policy, related strategy, and information sources every 3 years at minimum to ensure that it aligns with changes in research, national legislation, policies and local support and service provision.

11.3 We may also review this policy in response to (but not limited to): staff and tenant/resident/leaseholder feedback; local Domestic Homicide Review; Serious Case Review and Serious Adult Review recommendations and findings.

11.4 This policy can be read in conjunction with its associated domestic abuse procedures and the following relevant policies and procedures:

- Employment Handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) / Data Protection Act 2018 Policy

11.5 We recognise that this policy must align with the legislative framework set out by the following:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Homeless Reduction Act 2017
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Civil partnership Act 2004

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Domestic Abuse Policy for Residents, Tenants, Leaseholders and Members

Author: Jodie Bartlett, Domestic
Abuse Project Officer

Version: 1.0

Last updated: November 2022

1.0 Introduction and policy purpose

1.1 We believe that everyone has the right to live free from fear of abuse or violence. We know that domestic abuse can be experienced by anyone, regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity differences.

1.2 It has been estimated that there are currently 2.3 million victims of domestic abuse a year aged 16 to 74 (two-thirds of whom are women), and more than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related (Gov.uk, 2022).

1.3 We believe that as a local authority and housing provider, we are well placed to recognise and respond to domestic abuse. We recognise that there are many barriers to disclosing domestic abuse, but we want to reassure our residents, tenants, leaseholders and members that any concerns they raise will be met with an empathetic and appropriate response.

1.4 This policy acts in the intention of reducing the risk of domestic abuse, and outlines how we will respond to domestic abuse when it affects our residents, tenants, leaseholders and members.

1.5 This policy references the support we will provide to those are victims of, or have been victims of, domestic abuse. It states that we will not condone or tolerate domestic abuse, and outlines how we will hold perpetrators of domestic abuse accountable for their actions.

2.0 Note on language

2.1 In this policy we use the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator'. 'Victim' is used to refer to the person/s who has been or is being abused, and 'perpetrator' refers to the person/s who is acting, or has acted, abusively.

2.2 We use these terms as they allow us to describe how the abuse affects those involved, in a context in which individual names are not available or appropriate to use.

2.3 We recognise that a 'victim' may prefer to be referred to as 'survivor', but we have chosen to use 'victim' within this policy as it allows us to clearly acknowledge that a person is or has been subjected to domestic abuse, without making assumptions about where they are within their own personal journey.

2.4 Within our practices, and particularly when engaging directly with those who are, or have been victims of domestic abuse, we will use the terms of address that they prefer where it is possible to do so.

3.0 Policy scope

3.1 This policy applies to residents within the Dacorum area, Dacorum Borough Council tenants and leaseholders, and Dacorum Borough Council members.

3.2 When our employees are affected by domestic abuse, we will refer to our Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees. Where a person is a resident, tenant, or leaseholder, and also employed by Dacorum Borough Council, we will refer to both policies for guidance and tailor our response accordingly.

3.3 Although this policy is primarily for Dacorum Borough Council residents, tenants, leaseholders and members, the guidance included within Appendix 3 can be used by anyone who needs to access domestic abuse support.

4.0 Our values

4.1 We are committed to demonstrating our organisational values in all that we do, including how we support those affected by domestic abuse.

We will:

- **Be honest** about the prevalence of domestic abuse, and **act with integrity** by doing all we can to support residents, tenants, leaseholders and members who have been affected.
- Utilise the support of our internal service areas, specialist domestic abuse services and partner agencies, because we recognise that we need to **support each other and work together** to provide a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse.
- **Be ambitious for our places and our people** by continuously seeking opportunities to improve our response to domestic abuse.
- **Be accountable to each other** and honour the trust that our residents, tenants, leaseholders and members place in us when sharing their experience/s of domestic abuse by responding respectfully, and providing guidance about how and where they can access further support.
- **Nurture and celebrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in everything we do**, including how we recognise and respond to domestic abuse. We will take an intersectional approach when responding to domestic abuse by considering how a person's experience of domestic abuse may be impacted by their sex, age, gender identity, race, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, pregnancy status or social background differences.

5.0 Definition of domestic abuse

5.1 This policy uses an abridged version of the definition of domestic abuse provided by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. An expanded definition is included, alongside additional information about domestic abuse, in Appendix 1.

5.2 Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other
- And
- the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse

5.3 It **does not matter** whether the behaviour is a single incident or a course of actions: behaviour of this kind is domestic abuse.

5.4 More information about other forms of abuse (including those that can also be domestic abuse), is included in Children and Adults at Risk Policy.

5.5 ‘Domestic abuse significantly impacts the lives of children and young people: one in five children lives with domestic abuse’ (Domestic Abuse Commissioner, 2022).

5.6 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children can be victims of domestic abuse, even when the abusive behaviours are not directly aimed at them.

They can also be victims if they:

- See, hear, or experience the effects of abuse
- Are related to the victim or perpetrator of the abuse (or both)

5.7 Further information about how domestic abuse affects children is provided in our Children and Adults at Risk Policy.

6.0 Our aims and practices

6.1 We will:

- **Support our employees to confidently recognise and appropriately respond to domestic abuse** by providing mandatory domestic abuse training for all employees. Additional training will be provided as it is relevant to the employees’

roles and their level of engagement with residents, tenants, leaseholders and members. This policy is supported by internal procedures and guidance that our employees can refer to.

- **Make information about what domestic abuse is readily available** through regular communications and during our engagement with our community.
- **Set the expectation for all domestic abuse disclosures to be responded to empathetically and appropriately.** We have created a set of standards that we will uphold when responding to disclosures of domestic abuse. These standards are outlined in Appendix 2.
- **Publicise support pathways for victims of domestic abuse** and make information about how to access domestic abuse support easily accessible, so that those who need support can access support that is right for them and their circumstances. We will review these pathways regularly to ensure that the information remains up-to-date, and to identify opportunities to increase provision where necessary. A guide to how to access support as a victim of domestic abuse is provided as Appendix 3.
- **Work closely with local specialist domestic abuse services and agencies (such as the Police) to provide a co-ordinated response to domestic abuse** by making referrals where necessary, taking actions from Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), and being active contributors to the Dacorum Community Safety Partnership through engagement at the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG), Joint Action Group (JAG), and Community Safety Action Group (CSAG).
- **Create opportunities for cross-working, collaboration and escalating barriers to supporting victims** by communicating regularly with local services through events and our regular Domestic Abuse Forum.
- **Act in accordance with our existing safeguarding framework** by addressing any links to domestic abuse when safeguarding referrals are made, in the interest of protecting vulnerable adults and children.
- **Maintain flexibility and a victim-centred approach** because we know that no two experiences of domestic abuse are the same. Our employees will use this policy, its associated procedures and guidance documents and/or advice from our Safeguarding Lead, the Police and specialist domestic abuse services to ensure that they respond appropriately to domestic abuse.
- **Create ‘safety at home’ for victims of domestic abuse who wish to stay within their home** through working with the Police and partner agencies to use legal measures to remove the perpetrator from the property (such as Non Molestation Orders, Domestic Abuse Protection Orders and Domestic Abuse Protection Notices) and/or providing panic alarms, locks and additional security measures.
- **Support victims who wish to relocate because it is not safe, or preferable for them to remain at their address because of domestic abuse** by providing guidance and assisting their move to alternative accommodation. Our Housing service areas and our Domestic Abuse Action

Group (DAAG) will take an active role in helping victims to live in accommodation that is free from abuse.

- **State that perpetrating domestic abuse is unacceptable, and take appropriate action to hold perpetrators accountable.** This sentiment is echoed in the Tenancy Agreement that is issued to tenants when they start a tenancy with Dacorum Borough Council. We reserve the right to take enforcement action against Dacorum Borough Council tenants, using the powers available under the Housing Act, up to and including terminating a tenancy, for domestic abuse related offences. When taking action against perpetrator/s, we will prioritise the safety and wishes of their victim/s, and ensure that their wishes and housing needs are considered.
- **Refer perpetrators to specialist support when it is appropriate to do so** because we recognise that long-term domestic abuse prevention requires behavioural change from those who cause harm. We believe in referring perpetrators, and those concerned about their behaviour or that of someone they know, to specialist services who can help them to change, when it is safe and appropriate to do so without increasing risk to their victim/s. A guide to how to access support as a perpetrator, or someone concerned about their own or someone else's behaviour is included as Appendix 4.
- **Continually strive to improve our response to domestic abuse and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)** by seeking opportunities to receive feedback from victims and survivors, and taking note of learnings from the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) process. As of 2022, we are working towards accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) because we want to provide our residents, tenants, leaseholders and members with an exemplary response to domestic abuse.



7.0 Confidentiality and GDPR

7.1 Any information related to domestic abuse will be treated with sensitivity, and if it is recorded, it will be stored securely on our systems. We will maintain confidentiality and prioritise gaining consent from victims before making referrals or taking further action, as far as it is practicable to do so. We may have to share information with agencies such as the Police or Social Services if an adult or child is at serious risk of harm.

7.2 If an instance of domestic abuse meets the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) risk threshold or if there are child protection concerns, we have a legal duty to share information with relevant partner agencies in the interest of reducing risk to those concerned.

8.0 Links to other policies and policy review expectations

8.1 We involved employees from across our organisation, including those with lived experience of domestic abuse, when developing this policy. We also sought feedback and contribution from service users of local specialist domestic abuse support services.

8.2 We will review this policy, related strategy, and information sources every three years at minimum to ensure that it aligns with changes in research, national legislation, policies and local support and service provision.

8.3 We may also review this policy in response to (but not limited to): employee and resident/tenant/leaseholder feedback; local Domestic Homicide Review; Serious Case Review and Serious Adult Review recommendations and findings.

8.4 This policy is supported by a number of internal procedures, and can be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Children and Adults at Risk Policy
- Housing Allocations Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
- GDPR Policy

8.5 We recognise the need to align this policy with the legislative framework set out by the following:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Homeless Reduction Act 2017
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Equality Act 2010

- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Civil partnership Act 2004
- Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Housing Act 1996, Part 7 (as amended by Homelessness Act 2002)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Protection of Harassment Act 1997
- The Family Law Act 1996
- Housing Act 1985 and 1996
- Violence Against Women and Girls National Statement of Expectations 2022

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Appendix 1 – Additional information about domestic abuse

Definition of ‘personally connected’

‘Personally connected’ means that the relationship between the involved parties meets one or more of the following criteria:

They:

- Are married to each other
- Are in a civil partnership with each other
- Have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- Have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- Are or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- Have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- Are relatives

Coercive and controlling behaviour

‘Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour’ (ONS, 2022).

More information about coercive and controlling behaviour is available from the following resource:

[What is Coercive Control?](#)

‘Honour’ based violence (HBV) as a form of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can also be a form of ‘honour’ based violence if it ‘has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community’ (NPCC, 2015).

More information about ‘honour’ based violence is available from the following resources:

[Refuge - Honour Based Violence](#)

[CPS – So-Called Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage](#)



Appendix 2 - Our standards for responding to domestic abuse

We recognise that it can be difficult to share personal experiences of domestic abuse.

In any interaction with us, you can expect us to maintain the behavioural standards we set out in our housing service standards: [Our House, Your Home](#).

If you believe that you are a victim of domestic abuse, and you decide to share your experience with us, you can also expect:

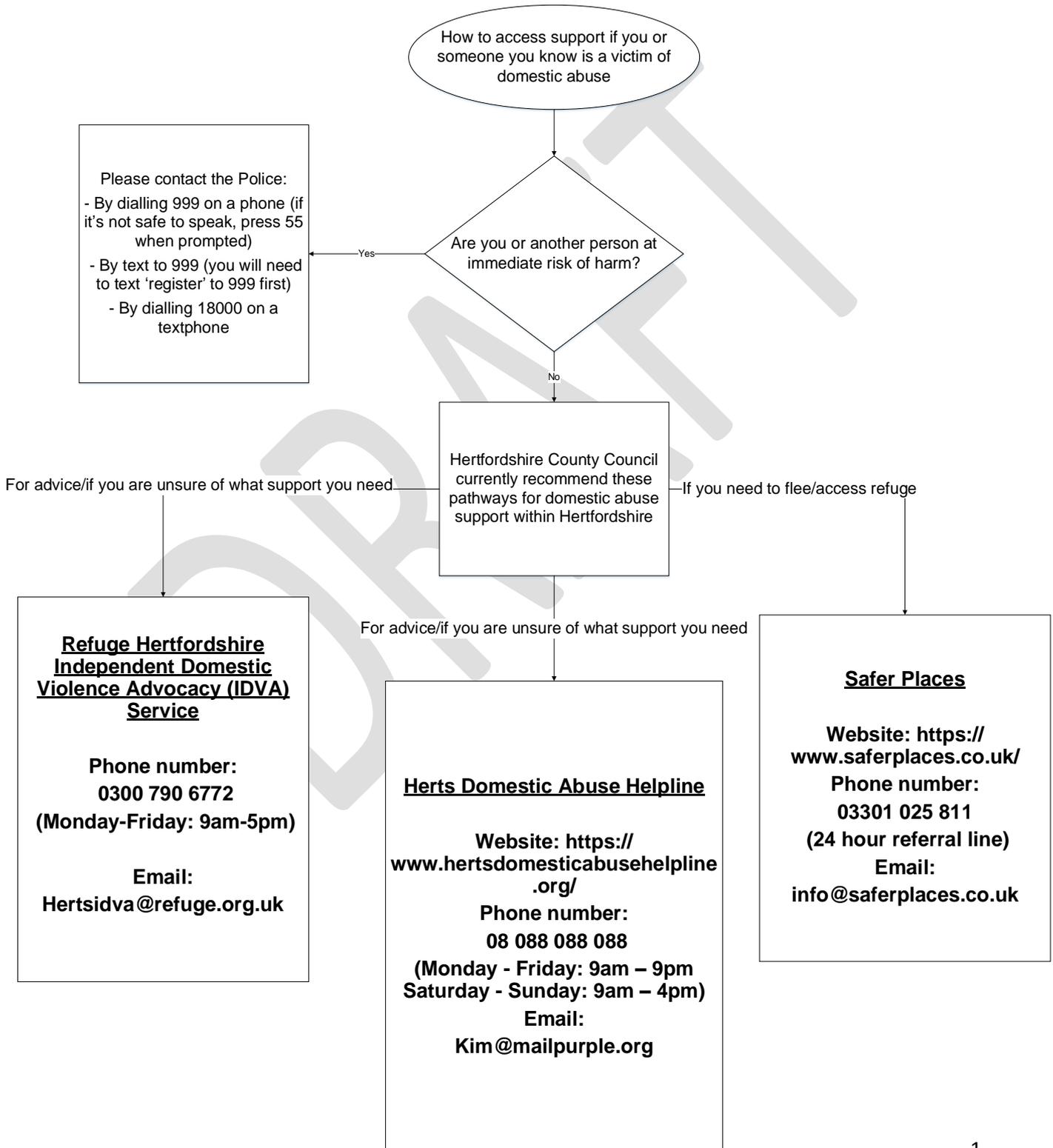
- To be listened to and treated in a non-judgemental and empathetic manner.
- We will meet your requests to speak with an employee of the same (or different, according to your preferences) gender and/or sexual orientation, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- To be able to discuss your concerns at the time that you make contact, if it is safe and possible for you to do so. Where there is a need to refer to another service area or employee/s, domestic abuse disclosures will be treated as a priority, and you can expect to speak with a suitable employee within 24 hours at most.
- For the Dacorum Borough Council employee/s you speak with to consider your personal safety before engaging in any discussion of your situation, by asking you whether it is a safe and appropriate time to talk, and to make arrangements to speak with you alone.
If the employee that you disclose your experience to is within a service area that will be unable to meet these expectations, or limited in the follow up support that they can provide, (such as the Customer Services Unit), they will make arrangements for you to discuss your situation further with an employee from a relevant service area.
- If it is not safe or appropriate for you to discuss your situation at the time that you make contact, the Employee should make arrangements for further discussion at a time, and in a way, that is safe, appropriate, and in accordance with your wishes, for example by arranging to meet with you in a mutually agreed location, or continuing the discussion at another time or via an alternative contact method.
- For an impartial interpreter to be made available and/or for other accommodations to be made if English is not your first language, and to provide support for any other literacy or support needs that may impact your ability to communicate effectively.
- To receive a relevant and supportive response that prioritises your wishes and your safety.
- For the Dacorum Borough Council employee/s you speak with to consider any associated safeguarding risks and escalate any concerns through our Safeguarding processes, including to any relevant partner agencies where it is necessary and appropriate to do so.



Appendix 3 – How to access domestic abuse support if you are or have been a victim of domestic abuse

Hertfordshire County Council recommended pathways

The following flowchart outlines the referral pathways that are currently recommended by Hertfordshire County Council:



We recognise that victims may benefit from additional support from 'by and for' services, particularly if their experience of domestic abuse is impacted by their characteristics.

'By and for' services are created and run by the communities or those with similar lived experiences as those they intend to support E.g.: Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and more), Gypsy, Romany and Traveller etc.

We have included 'by and for' services within our more detailed directory of the specialist domestic abuse victim support services that are available at a local (within Dacorum and the surrounding Hertfordshire area) and national level.

Where local provision of 'by and for' services are not available or are limited within Dacorum, we have tried to include details of services that are available outside of the borough or at a national level.

Domestic Abuse Victim Support Services ***to be published on website alongside policy

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Appendix 4 - How to access support if you are concerned about your own behaviour, or that of someone you know

We understand that it may be difficult to acknowledge or recognise if you, or someone you know is acting, or has acted abusively. We have put together the following checklist to help you recognise abusive behaviours:

Mental / emotional abuse

If you are being mentally or emotionally abusive towards your partner or family member, you might be:

- Criticising
- Using language designed to humiliate
- Blaming
- Intimidating and threatening
- Destroying personal belongings
- Telling them that they are mad
- Telling them that you are not being abusive

Threatening behaviours

This can include making threats to:

- Take the children away yourself
- Have the children taken away by Social Care or other people
- Have your victim deported
- Have your victim sectioned
- Abuse your victim's children, family, friends or pets
- Kill someone
- Commit suicide
- Mutilate your victim or their loved ones
- Stalk your victim (any of which could be in person, via phone call, email or text message)

Intimidation and isolation

It could be you:

- Repeatedly criticise your victim
- Tell your victim that they are ugly / worthless / useless
- Prevent your victim from having contact with family and friends
- Humiliate your victim in front of others

- Give your victim a curfew
- Stop or monitor your victim's phone calls

Psychological abuse

You may:

- Act jealously
- Blame your victim for causing the abuse
- Lie to your victim
- Manipulate your victim to do as you want
- Ignore your victim
- Undermine or confuse your victim
- Tell your victim that they are losing their mind

Financial abuse

Being financially abusive may include:

- Building up debt in your victim's name
- Withholding money from your victim
- Stealing money from your victim
- Limiting or preventing your victim from having access to money
- Not letting your victim work
- Using family money for alcohol / drugs
- Claiming and keeping your victim's benefits
- Selling your victim's possessions
- Not paying child support
- Refusing to pay bills
- Forcing your victim to earn money for you/ another person
- Threatening to report to your victim to the Benefits Agency or other authorities

Sexual abuse

Are you asking your victim to do sexual things in return for meeting their basic needs and requirements?

Whether in a relationship or not, if someone does not want to have sex, they do not have to. If you are forcing someone against their will, then you are being abusive.

Some forms of sexual abuse can include:

- Rape
- Forcing someone to engage in sexual acts
- Degrading treatment
- Sexual name-calling

- Forcing someone to prostitute themselves
- Making someone wear clothes that they haven't chosen
- Forcing someone to take part in or look at pornographic images
- Forcing someone to have sexual relationships with other people

Violence / physical abuse

You may be directing violence and physical abuse at your victim, or at their family, friends or pets.

An example of this is:

- Hitting / punching / kicking / shoving
- Spitting
- Strangling
- Pulling hair
- Making angry or physical threats
- Biting
- Burning
- Using weapons
- Forcing someone to use drugs and / or alcohol
- Depriving someone of sleep
- Hurting a pet
- Invading other's space

If you are concerned about your own behaviour, or that of someone close to you, we would encourage you to make contact with a suitable support service, such as Respect.

Their contact details are available from their website: respectphoneline.org.uk.

A more detailed directory of the specialist domestic abuse perpetrator and family support services available at a local (within Dacorum and the surrounding Hertfordshire area) and national level is included below:

[Domestic Abuse Perpetrator and Family Support Services](#)

Dacorum BC Community Impact Assessment (CIA)

Policy / service / decision

Domestic Abuse Review and Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation

Description of what is being impact assessed

What are the aims of the service, proposal, and project? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What are the reasons for the proposal or change? Do you need to reference/consider any related projects?

Stakeholders; Who will be affected? Which protected characteristics is it most relevant to? Consider the public, service users, partners, staff, Members, etc

It is advisable to involve at least one colleague in the preparation of the assessment, dependent on likely level of impact

A review of Dacorum Borough Council's organisational domestic abuse response was initiated in response to the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#), and a Domestic Abuse Project Group and project plan were put together. A Domestic Abuse Project Officer was appointed to oversee the project plan, and later, to lead Dacorum Borough Council to achieving accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA).

The aim of this review and accreditation process is to improve Dacorum Borough Council's organisational response to domestic abuse, in line with DAHA's model for a housing response 'which is nationally recognised as best practice, through the Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance 2022, and is endorsed by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England & Wales, Nicole Jacobs' (DAHA, 2022).

This assessment considers the impact of the project and accreditation. The review and accreditation will affect the Dacorum community, including residents, tenants and members/councillors. It will also impact Dacorum Borough Council employees, because for the first time, a separate domestic abuse policy has been created for employees.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service/decision might impact on protected groups?

(Include relevant national/local data, research, monitoring information, service user feedback, complaints, audits, consultations, CIAs from other projects or other local authorities, etc.). You should include such information in a proportionate manner to reflect the level of impact of the policy/service/decision.

The accreditation framework that steers the review direction is informed by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the direction agreed by the current Domestic Abuse Commissioner. Additionally, the DAHA framework includes the priority area, 'Intersectional and anti-racist practice'. Achieving the standards in this section in particular is likely to positively impact those from protected groups. See attached framework for more detail.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? *If you have not consulted other people, please explain why? You should include such information in a proportionate manner to reflect the level of impact of the policy/service/decision.*

The action plan's progress and actions is regularly discussed at the project group meetings, which are attended by a broad selection of staff from across Dacorum Borough Council (including those from Housing and Community Safety) and Hertfordshire County Council (aligning with their Domestic Abuse Strategy). Diversity and Community Inclusion Lead Officer, Cybele Fernandes, is also part of this group, and will continue to assist in maximising accessibility and inclusivity, especially for those from protected groups.

The policies created as part of this project were consulted on by members of the Domestic Abuse Project Group, Hertfordshire County Council and our local DAHA Regional Lead (South). Efforts were also made to gain a 'survivor voice': employees and volunteers with lived experience of domestic abuse (kindly facilitated by local support service, Cherished) also provided feedback on the policies.

Analysis of impact on protected groups (and others)

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires Dacorum BC to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service/decision will achieve these aims. Using the table below, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of these using the evidence that you have collated and your own understanding. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, **before** you have implemented any mitigation.

- The PCs of Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity should be added if their inclusion is relevant for impact assessment.
- Use “insert below” menu layout option to insert extra rows where relevant (e.g. extra rows for different impairments within Disability).

Summary of impact		Negative impact / outcome	Neutral impact / outcome	Positive impact / outcome
Protected group	<i>What do you know? What do people tell you? Summary of data and feedback about service users and the wider community/public. Who uses / will use the service? Who doesn't / can't and why? Feedback/complaints?</i>			
Age	<p>*For all characteristics*</p> <p>Domestic abuse can affect victim/s differently depending on the intersection of their protected characteristics, and the DAHA ‘Intersectionality and Anti-Racist practice’ focuses specifically on recognising the barriers that those with protected characteristics may face in accessing support, and making concerted efforts to reduce them where possible.</p> <p>Whilst our interaction with tenants is likely to be limited to those 18+, our residents may be under 18. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right when they ‘see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse’ and they are ‘related to the person/s being abused or the</p>	□	□	☒

	<p>person/s acting abusively. In any interaction with those under 18, we will uphold our Safeguarding responsibilities.</p> <p>Age will be especially relevant when targeting communications and awareness raising for the tenants in our sheltered housing schemes.</p> <p>All age groups are likely to benefit from the changes made organisationally in response to this work.</p>			
<p>Disability (physical, intellectual, mental)</p> <p><i>Refer to CIA Guidance Notes and Mental Illness & Learning Disability Guide</i></p>	<p>The intersectional lens of this project’s aims prioritises promoting ‘by and for’ services, which is likely to positively impact those with disabilities.</p> <p>‘Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse, but the rate of support referrals are much lower than those for able bodied victims. Disabled victims also typically experience abuse for a longer period of time before accessing support’ (Safe Lives, 2022).</p> <p>There are also often concerns about mental health linked to domestic abuse, not least because of the impact that it can have on a person.</p> <p>Increasing awareness of and strengthening our response to domestic abuse is likely to positively impact those with disabilities.</p>	<p>□</p>	<p>□</p>	<p>☒</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>Domestic abuse can be experienced by anyone, and our work around the topic will not be specifically relevant to those who have undergone gender reassignment. With that being said, the intersectional lens of this project will consider how domestic abuse is experienced by those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Increased awareness of and focus on how LGBTQ+ experiences can impact a person’s experience of domestic abuse will likely have</p>	<p>□</p>	<p>□</p>	<p>☒</p>

	a positive impact on those who have undergone gender reassignment.			
Race and ethnicity	The 'Intersectional and Anti-Racist' priority of the DAHA framework is likely to have an especially positive impact for this characteristic. A lot of the focus of this work is about reducing barriers to support for those experiencing domestic abuse, and recognising how race and ethnicity can impact ease of access. It also focuses on broadening the understanding of what domestic abuse is, and increased focus on 'honour based abuse' may be linked to other factors of ethic or cultural significance.	□	□	☒
Religion or belief	<p>This work is likely to have less of an impact related to religion or belief, but it is also unlikely to have a negative impact, so I have classified this as neutral.</p> <p>However, one aspect that I believe we need to be mindful of, is to avoid any encouraging assumption that 'honour based abuse' or certain types of domestic abuse are only enacted by to those of particular religious or cultural beliefs (or race or ethnicity), or that they are linked to said religion/s or beliefs. This can be managed by applying the intersectional lens that this work commands.</p>	□	☒	□
Sex	Women are currently more likely to be victims of domestic abuse: the majority (approximately 73%) of all domestic abuse related offences recorded by the Police between April 2020 and March 2021 were against female victims, compared to 26.9% of male victims (Office for National Statistics, 2021). Male perpetrated, female victim domestic abuse is in some instances related to misogynistic ideology, and increasing awareness of domestic abuse is therefore	□	□	☒

	<p>relevant to our efforts to address Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in this context, thus having a positive impact on addressing sex discrimination.</p> <p>It is also relevant to note that whilst this work acknowledges that women are currently more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than men (and often in an intimate partner relationship), it seeks to broaden the public perception of domestic abuse by recognising the DA Act definition of domestic abuse, and confirming (in Comms and awareness and through our guidance etc) that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse.</p>			
Sexual orientation	<p>Increased awareness of and focus on how being LGBTQ+ can impact a person's experience of domestic abuse will likely have a positive impact on this group.</p>	☐	☐	☒
Not protected characteristics but consider other factors, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, loneliness, rurality etc.	<p>This work is likely to have a positive impact on many of these factors.</p> <p>Domestic abuse is often cited as a reason for homelessness, and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 gives automatic priority need to <u>'a person who is homeless as a result of that person being a victim of domestic abuse'</u>.</p> <p>Domestic abuse may also be present in relationships between carer and patient, especially where those concerned are also related.</p> <p>External stressors such as financial pressures (perhaps aggravated by low income or cost of living concerns) can increase the risk of domestic abuse. This may be linked to economic/financial abuse, which is recognised as a form of domestic abuse.</p>	☐	☐	☒

	<p>Rurality is also often a concern in relation to domestic abuse. Victims are often isolated from their support networks by those who abuse them, and this can be compounded by the physical isolation of living in a rural area.</p> <p>The work associated with this assessment will consider all of these factors as they relate to domestic abuse.</p>			
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Negative impacts / outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative impacts / outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken <i>(copy & paste the negative impact / outcome then detail action)</i>	Date	Person responsible	Action complete
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>

	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
If negative impacts / outcomes remain, please provide an explanation below.			
Completed by (all involved in CIA)	Jodie Bartlett, Domestic Abuse Project Officer		
Date	04/10/2022		
Signed off by <i>(AD from different Directorate if being presented to CMT / Cabinet)</i>	 Matt Rawdon – Assistant Director (People)		
Date	3 January 2023		
Entered onto CIA database - date			

To be reviewed by (officer name)	
Review date	



Cabinet

Report for:	Cabinet
Title of report:	Committee Timetable 2023/24
Date:	24 January 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Graeme Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	Draft Committee Timetable 2023/24
Background papers:	N/A
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	DMC – Development Management Committee F&R OSC – Finance & Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee SPAEC OSC – Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee H&C OSC – Housing & Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report Author / Responsible Officer

Mark Brookes, Assistant Director (Legal and Democratic Services)



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Corporate Priorities	<p>The various meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees support the achievement of all the Council's Corporate Objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
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	Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery Climate and ecological emergency
Wards affected	All
Purpose of the report:	To seek approval of the committee meeting timetable for 2023/24.
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	That Cabinet recommends Council approve the Committee Timetable for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A to this report.
Period for post policy/project review:	N/A

1 Introduction:

- 1.1 Each year a calendar of committee meetings running May to May is agreed and published, allowing forward planning for key statutory and decision-making functions. Once agreed, room bookings are secured and calendar invites circulated to elected Members and the Strategic Leadership Team to act as diary placeholders.
- 1.2 The timetable includes dates for the regular cycle of meetings for Council, the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the regulatory Committees such as Development Management, Standards and Licensing, as well as non-statutory committees such as Health and the Member Development Steering Group.
- 1.3 The timetable also sets out a number of Member Development training sessions. Owing to local elections taking place in May 2023, there is an increased number of training sessions scheduled in the 2023/24 cycle to enable the delivery of all mandatory training to newly elected Members.

2 Key Issues:

- 2.1 Attached at Appendix A is a draft timetable showing the proposed dates for the meetings of the Full Council, the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the regulatory Committees for the municipal year 2023/24.
- 2.2 Appeals have not been scheduled on the timetable. Whilst in previous years these have been scheduled as provisional dates and slotted in on Mondays, due to the small number of Appeals that happen throughout the year, these are now arranged by the Democratic Support Team when required, and subject to officer and member availability, giving greater flexibility as to when most suitable for them to take place.
- 2.3 The three main Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been scheduled, with seven meetings in the year plus the two Joint Budget meetings which involve all three Scrutiny Committees. In addition, a number of "Call-in Contingency" dates have been set aside for call-ins arising from any of the Committees.
- 2.4 Monday evenings are mostly left free to enable those Members who are also Parish or Town Councillors to attend Town or Parish Council meetings, which are traditionally held on Mondays.
- 2.5 School holidays are shaded and meetings are kept to a minimum during that time.

3 Options and alternatives considered

Considerations made when compiling the timetable include:

- The timetable starting point is organised around DMC and Full Council
- The need to align O&S committees with the Quarterly Performance reporting schedule;
Qtr 4 2022/23 will be considered at the June 2023 OSC meetings
Qtr 1 2023/24 will be considered at the September 2023 OSC meetings
Qtr 2 2023/24 will be considered at the November 2023 OSC meetings
Qtr 3 2023/24 will be considered at the March 2024 OSC meetings
- Budget setting process

- Audit regime - Audit of Accounts
- Date of Annual Council
- Each Committee to repeat on the same day of the week for ease/consistency
- Member availability
- Dates of Elections
- Dates of School Holidays

4 Consultation

The Leader of the Council and the Strategic Leadership Team have been consulted.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

Approval of the Meeting Timetable enables Members and Officers to manage and plan decision-making.

6 Legal Implications

The Council is required to agree and set out a schedule of formal committee meetings for the year.

7 Risk implications:

The failure to agree and adopt a schedule of committee meetings for the year could impact the Council's ability to make decisions and for its elected Members to carry out robust scrutiny.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

There are no Community Impacts arising as a result of this report.

There are no Human Rights Implications arising from this report.

9 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

10 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

Formal committee meetings require Audio/Visual support from ICT. Once agreed, the timetable is diarised with the ICT department to arrange necessary cover.

11 Statutory Comments

Monitoring Officer:

This is a Monitoring Officer report.

Deputy S151 Officer:

No further comments to add.

12 Conclusions

The Committee Timetable is set out in Appendix A and is presented for Cabinet's referral to Council for approval.

Dacorum Borough Council – Meeting Timetable 2023-2024

	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	
MON	1 BANK HOLIDAY								1 BANK HOLIDAY			1 BANK HOLIDAY		MON
TUES	2			1					2			2		TUES
WEDS	3			2			1 SPAE OSC		3			3	1	WEDS
THUR	4 ELECTION	1 Member Development		3			2		4	1 DMC		4	2 ELECTION	THUR
FRI	5	2		4	1		3	1	5	2	1	5	3	FRI
SAT	6	3	1	5	2		4	2	6	3	2	6	4	SAT
SUN	7	4	2	6	3	1	5	3	7	4	3	7	5	SUN
MON	8 BANK HOLIDAY	5 JNC	3	7	4 JNC	2	6	4	8	5	4 JNC	8	6 BANK HOLIDAY	MON
TUES	9	6 F&R OSC	4 F&R OSC	8	5 F&R OSC	3 F&R OSC	7 F&R OSC	5	9 F&R OSC	6	5 F&R OSC	9	7	TUES
WEDS	10	7 H&C OSC	5 SPAE OSC	9	6 SPAE OSC	4SPAE OSC	8 H&C OSC	6 Joint Budget OSC	10 SPAE OSC	7 Joint Budget OSC	6 SPAE OSC	10	8	WEDS
THUR	11	8 Member Development Hemel Place	6 Member Development	10 DMC	7 DMC	5 Member Development	9 Member Development	7 Standards Hemel Place	11 DMC	8 Call In Contingency	7 Standards	11	9	THUR
FRI	12 Member Induction	9	7	11	8	6	10	8	12	9	8	12	10	FRI
SAT	13	10	8	12	9	7	11	9	13	10	9	13	11	SAT
SUN	14	11	9	13	10	8	12	10	14	11	10	14	12	SUN
MON	15 Member Induction	12 Member Development	10 Member Development	14	11	9	13	11	15	12	11	15	13	MON
TUES	16 Group Meetings	13 SPAE OSC	11 Group Meetings	15	12 Cabinet Licensing	10	14 Group Meetings	12 Cabinet Licensing	16 Member Development	13 Group Meetings	12 Member Development	16 Group Meetings	14 Group Meetings	TUES
WEDS	17 Member Development & Annual Council	14 Audit	12 Member Development Council	16	13 H&C OSC	11 H&C OSC	15 Council	13	17 H&C OSC	14 Council	13 H&C OSC	17 Council	15 Annual Council	WEDS
THUR	18	15 Call In Contingency	13 DMC	17	14 Standards Hemel Place	12 Call In Contingency	16 DMC	14 DMC	18 Call In Contingency	15	14 Health	18 DMC	16	THUR
FRI	19	16	14	18	15	13	17	15	19	16	15	19	17	FRI
SAT	20	17	15	19	16	14	18	16	20	17	16	20	18	SAT
SUN	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	17	21	18	17	21	19	SUN
MON	22	19	17	21	18 Member Development	16	20	18	22	19	18	22	20	MON
TUES	23 Cabinet	20 Cabinet	18 Cabinet Licensing	22	19 Member Development	17 Cabinet	21 Cabinet	19	23 Group Meetings	20	19 Cabinet	23 Cabinet Licensing	21	TUES
WEDS	24 Member Development	21 MDSG	19 H&C OSC	23	20 Audit	18 MDSG	22 Audit	20 MDSG	24 Council	21	20 Audit	24	22	WEDS
THUR	25 DMC	22 DMC	20 Call In Contingency	24	21 Health	19 DMC	23 Call In Contingency	21	25	22	21 DMC	25 Call In Contingency Hemel Place	23	THUR
FRI	26	23	21	25	22	20	24	22	26	23	22	26	24	FRI
SAT	27	24	22	26	23	21	25	23	27	24	23	27	25	SAT
SUN	28	25	23	27	24	22	26	24	28	25	24	28	26	SUN
MON	29 BANK HOLIDAY	26	24	28 BANK HOLIDAY	25	23	27 JNC	25 BANK HOLIDAY	29	26	25	29	27 BANK HOLIDAY	MON
TUES	30 Licensing	27 Licensing	25	29	26 Group Meetings	24 Licensing	28 Licensing	26 BANK HOLIDAY	30 Cabinet Licensing	27 Cabinet Licensing	26 Licensing	30 Member Development	28	TUES
WEDS	31	28 Health	26 Audit	30	27 Member Development Council	25	29	27	31 Member Development	28 Audit	27 MDSG		29	WEDS
THUR		29 Standards	27	31	28 DMC	26	30 Health	28		29 DMC	28 Call in Contingency		30 DMC	THUR
FRI		30	28		29	27		29			29 BANK HOLIDAY		31	FRI
SAT			29		30	28		30			30			SAT
SUN			30			29		31			31			SUN
MON			31			30								MON
TUES						31								TUES

H & C OSC = Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 SPAE OSC = Strategic Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 F & R OSC = Finance & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

JNC = Joint Negotiating Committee
 MDSG = Member Development Steering Group

Bank Holidays and School Holiday dates are shaded



Cabinet

Report for:	Cabinet
Title of report:	Treasury Management 2022/23 Mid-Year Performance Report
Date:	24/01/2023
Report on behalf of:	Cllr Graeme Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Investment portfolio as at 30 September 2022 Appendix 2: Link Asset Services counterparty credit list as at 30 September 2022
Background papers:	Cabinet 15th February 2022 – Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix K to Budget 2022/23 Report)
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	CIPFA-The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy MPC- Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee CFR- Capital Financing Requirement

Report Author / Responsible Officer	
Report Author: Tracy Claridge, Assistant Financial Accountant (Financial Services)	
 	
Tracy.claridge@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228322 (ext. 2322)	
Responsible Officer: Fiona Jump, Head of Financial Services (Financial Services)	
 	
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Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
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	Climate and ecological emergency
Wards affected	All
Purpose of the report:	1. To report upon the mid-year information on Treasury Management performance for 2022/23.
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. That Cabinet recommends to Council acceptance of the report on Treasury Management performance for 2022/23.
Period for post policy/project review:	Not applicable. Treasury management performance is formally reported to Members twice a year on an ongoing basis.

1. **Background**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the performance of this Council's treasury management function during the first half of 2022/23, to the period 30 September 2022.

1.2 Treasury management is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

The Council's Treasury Management team manages the Council's cash-flows in order to strike the optimal balance between the following three elements:

- The liquidity requirements for the Council's day-to-day business;
- Funding the Council's capital programme;
- Investing surplus monies in line with the Treasury Management Strategy.

2. **Governance**

2.1 This report has been written in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2017).

2.2 The Code requires:

- Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities;
- Creation and maintenance of treasury management practices, setting out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives;
- Receipt by Full Council of an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement - including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy - for the year ahead, a Mid-year Review Report (this report) and an Annual Report (stewardship report) covering activities during the previous year;
- Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and execution and administration of treasury management decisions;
- This organisation nominates Cabinet to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy, policies and monitoring before recommendation to Full Council.

3. **Economic update**

3.1 The second quarter of 2022/23 saw the following:

- GDP grew by 0.2% in Q1 2022/23, so the UK economy has avoided recession for the time being;
- Signs of economic activity losing momentum as production fell due to rising energy prices;
- CPI inflation of 9.9% year on year in August (9.0% in April) and domestic price pressures are showing little sign of abating in the near-term;
- The unemployment rate fell to a 48-year low of 3.6%, due to a large shortfall in labour supply;

- The Bank Rate rise by 100bps over the quarter, taking Bank Rate to 2.25% with further rises to come;
 - Gilt yields surge and sterling fall.
- 3.2 During the first half of 2022, there were changes of both Prime Minister and Chancellor. In September 2022, various tax cuts were announced including a reduction in income tax, stamp duty, and the cancellation of the corporation tax rise due to take place in April.
- 3.3 Following further changes of Prime Minister and Chancellor in October 2022, some of the previously announced cuts in September were reversed, and new fiscal policies were announced in the November Autumn Statement that seek to ensure public finances are kept on a sound footing and any projected gaps, (possibly £50bn to £60bn), are fully funded from services efficiencies and/or net tax increases.
- 3.4 The MPC has increased interest rates eight times in as many meetings in 2022 and has raised rates to their highest level since the Global Financial Crisis. It is expected that the MPC may increase interest rates further and faster to a peak of 4.50% in June 2023.
- 3.5 The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisors and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps, calculated as gilts plus 80bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1st November 2012.

Link Group Interest Rate View	08.11.22												
	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
BANK RATE	3.50	4.25	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.50
3 month ave earnings	3.60	4.30	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.50	2.50
6 month ave earnings	4.20	4.50	4.60	4.50	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.40	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.60	2.60
12 month ave earnings	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.50	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.70	2.70
5 yr PWLB	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.10
10 yr PWLB	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20
25 yr PWLB	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50
50 yr PWLB	4.30	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.20

4. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy update

- 4.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2021/22 was approved by Council on 15 February 2022.
- 4.2 The Council's Annual Investment Strategy, which is incorporated within the TMSS, outlines the Council's investment priorities as:
- Security of capital;
 - Liquidity;
 - Return on investment.
- 4.3 The Council aims to achieve the optimum return on investments within the context of the first two priorities. A breakdown of the Council's investment portfolio, as at 30 September 2022, is shown in Appendix 1.
- 4.4 Link Asset Services' full counterparty credit list, as at 30 September 2022, identifies those organisations with which the Council is able to place funds and is shown in Appendix 2.
- 4.5 All the Council's investments during the first six months of the current financial year have been placed in accordance with the approved strategy.

5. Investment Performance 2022/23

- 5.1 It is the Council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity and to obtain an appropriate level of return consistent with the Council's risk appetite. In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs, but also to

seek out best value available in periods up to 12 months with high credit rated financial institutions.

- 5.2 As shown in section 3.5, the latest interest forecast sets out a view that both short and long-dated interest rates will be elevated, as the Bank of England seeks to manage inflation. Given this environment and that the bank rate may continue to rise into mid-2023, investment returns are expected to improve on recent years returns.
- 5.3 The Council held £131.003m of investments as at 30 September 2022 (£139.090m at 31 March 2022). The average investment return for the first six months of the year was 1.12%. In comparison, the Council achieved 0.07% in the first 6 months of 2021/22.
- 5.4 The Council's investment return for the first half of 2022/23 displays a £777k favourable variance against half-yearly budgeted figure of £171k. This reflects the much higher rate of returns available as described in section 5.2.

6. Borrowing

The Capital Financing Requirement

- 6.1 The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. The CFR is forecasted to be £348.30m as at 31/03/2023. This includes the fixed interest rate borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) following the introduction of HRA Self Financing and for General Fund capital expenditure requirements.

Current Borrowing Arrangements

- 6.2 As a Local Authority, the Council is able to borrow from PWLB, which operates within the Debt Management Office (DMO), an Executive Agency of HM Treasury.
- 6.3 The PWLB charges interest on the loans it issues to local authorities. Any borrowing undertaken by the Council will be carried out in line with its approved Treasury Management Strategy. If required, the Council is able to utilise existing cash balances to fund some of its future capital programme instead of undertaking new external borrowing.

Debt rescheduling

- 6.4 Debt rescheduling opportunities have previously been very limited, following the various increases in the margins added to gilt yields which have impacted PWLB new borrowing rates since October 2010. No debt rescheduling was undertaken in the 6-month period to 30 September 2022. Since 30 September, economic conditions have made debt repayment more favourable for the Council. The Council repaid General Fund borrowing to the PWLB with an original principal loan value of £10.5m during December 2022. The discount received on repayment was £0.6m, giving a final loan repayment value of £9.9m. Prudent and affordable debt rescheduling will continue to be considered by the Council.

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

- 6.5 It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine, and keep under review, the affordable borrowing limits. During the half year ended 30th September 2022, the Council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022/23. The Chief Finance Officer envisages no difficulties for the current or future years in complying with these indicators.

7. The Council's Capital Expenditure (Prudential Indicators)

- 7.1 Prudential indicators are set yearly as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. They set the annual limits on borrowing and provide a basis for assessing the affordability of financing costs, external debt and capital expenditure.

Prudential Indicators for Capital Expenditure

- 7.2 The table below shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and financing with the changes since the capital programme was agreed in February 2022, as at the end of September 2022

Capital Expenditure by Service	2022/23 Original Budget £M	2022/23 Revised Forecast as at September 2022 £M
General Fund	22.854	8.640
HRA	67.92	51.237
Total	90.774	59.877
Financed by:		
Capital grants & S106	5.002	4.456
Capital receipts & reserves	70.925	51.821
Revenue	4.649	3.284
Borrowing	10.199	0.316
Total financing	90.774	59.877

- 7.3 The table below shows the CFR and the expected debt position over the period; termed the 'Operational Boundary'. The changes to the forecast CFR are due to revision of the Capital Programme and incorporation of the actual outturn position from 2021/22 and programme slippage and underspends in 2022/23.

	2022/23 Original Estimate £M	2022/23 Revised Forecast £M
Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement		
CFR – General Fund	19.26	12.271
CFR – HRA	341.28	331.394
Total CFR	360.54	343.665
Net movement in CFR from 31/03/21	9.486	(1.386)
Prudential Indicator – External Debt / the Operational Boundary		
Borrowing	347.974	347.974
Other long term liabilities (leases)	0.188	0.188
Total debt 31 March 2022	348.162	348.162

Prudential Indicator for Borrowing Activity

- 7.4 The key control over treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that, over the medium term, net borrowing (borrowings less investments) will only be for a capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year, plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2022/23 and the next two financial years.
- 7.5 The table highlights that the Council's gross borrowing is forecast to be below its CFR.

	2022/23 Original Estimate £M	2022/23 Revised Estimate £M
Gross borrowing	347.974	347.974
Plus other long term liabilities (leases)	0.188	0.188
Less investments	-35.386	-131.003
Net borrowing	312.776	217.159
CFR (year-end position)	360.54	343.660

- 7.6 A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited and needs to be set and revised annually by Full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. As at 30 September 2022, the Council had borrowing and other long term liabilities of £349.680m, which is £60.32m under the authorised limit.

Authorised limit for external debt	2022/23 Original Indicator £M	Current Position £M
Borrowing	347.974	349.680
Other long term liabilities	0.188	0.188
Total	348.162	349.868

8. Options and alternatives considered

None. A mid- year treasury management review is a statutory requirement.

9. Consultation

The Council liaises with Link Asset Services, its Treasury advisors.

10. Financial and value for money implications:

In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice, the order of the Council's investment priorities is 1. Security; 2. Liquidity; and, 3. Return. This may result in the Council achieving a lower rate of return than an organisation operating a more aggressive investment strategy in a less regulated sector.

11. Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

12. Risk implications:

A prudent approach to investment is required to minimise the risk to the Council of investment losses, as outlined in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23. This report provides an update on the delivery of that strategy.

13. Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

A Community Impact Assessment is not required. There are no Human Rights Implications.

14. Statutory Comments

Monitoring Officer:

No comments to add to the report.

Deputy S151 Officer:

This is a Deputy S151 Officer report. Comments are contained within the body of the report.

15. Conclusion:

The Treasury Management Mid- Year Report for 2022/23 provides an updated position for the Council's 2022-23 treasury activities and highlights compliance with policies previously approved by Members. Its approval is required for the Council to meet its statutory obligations in respect of Treasury Management activities.

Appendix 1: Investment portfolio as at 30 September 2022

Borrower	Deposit Type	Principal	Date Lent	Date Repayable	Interest Rate	Duration (Days)	Approved Duration	DBC Limit(M)
National Westminster Bank PLC (RFB)	Call Account	503,114	30/09/2022	01/10/2022	0.01	1	12 months	14.5
Blackrock MMF	MMF	1,000,000	30/09/2022	01/10/2022	1.94	1	100 days	9
Goldman Sachs MMF	MMF	5,500,000	30/09/2022	01/10/2022	1.98	1	100 days	9
Insight Liquidity MMF	MMF	9,000,000	30/09/2022	01/10/2022	2.05	1	100 days	9
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	Investment	3,000,000	28/03/2022	28/03/2023	1.65	365	12 months	14.5
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	Investment	5,000,000	30/03/2022	18/10/2022	1.32	202	12 months	14.5
SMBC Bank International Plc	Investment	1,000,000	19/04/2022	19/10/2022	1.40	183	6 months	11
Nationwide Building Society	Investment	1,000,000	19/04/2022	19/10/2022	0.93	183	6 months	11
Santander UK Plc	Investment	5,000,000	13/05/2022	11/11/2022	1.42	182	6 months	11
Coventry Building Society	Investment	1,000,000	16/05/2022	16/11/2022	1.21	184	6 months	11
SMBC Bank International Plc	Investment	3,000,000	20/05/2022	18/11/2022	1.55	182	6 months	11
Santander UK Plc	Investment	2,000,000	17/06/2022	16/12/2022	1.94	182	6 months	11
SMBC Bank International Plc	Investment	3,000,000	20/06/2022	19/12/2022	1.95	182	6 months	11
Coventry Building Society	Investment	3,000,000	24/06/2022	23/12/2022	1.75	182	6 months	11
Skipton Building Society	Investment	4,500,000	01/07/2022	30/12/2022	1.50	182	6 months	11
Leeds Building Society	Investment	1,000,000	01/07/2022	07/10/2022	1.26	98	100 days	9
Yorkshire Building Society	Investment	1,500,000	08/07/2022	14/10/2022	1.25	98	100 days	9
Santander UK Plc	Investment	2,000,000	22/07/2022	20/01/2023	2.17	182	6 months	11
Debt Management Office	Investment	3,500,000	01/08/2022	18/10/2022	1.63	78	60 months	N/A
Debt Management Office	Investment	7,500,000	01/08/2022	16/11/2022	1.69	107	60 months	N/A
SMBC Bank International Plc	Investment	4,000,000	08/08/2022	25/11/2022	2.13	109	6 months	11
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	Investment	2,000,000	10/08/2022	03/02/2023	2.32	177	6 months	11
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	Investment	2,000,000	12/08/2022	11/08/2023	2.70	364	12 months	14.5
Nationwide Building Society	Investment	8,000,000	18/08/2022	16/02/2023	2.31	182	6 months	11
Nationwide Building Society	Investment	2,000,000	19/08/2022	17/02/2023	2.35	182	6 months	11
Clydesdale Bank Plc	Investment	1,000,000	22/08/2022	04/11/2022	1.85	74	100 days	9
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	Investment	2,000,000	25/08/2022	24/02/2023	2.76	183	6 months	11
Yorkshire Building Society	Investment	3,500,000	26/08/2022	02/12/2022	1.95	98	100 days	9
Coventry Building Society	Investment	1,000,000	01/09/2022	22/02/2023	2.52	174	6 months	11
Clydesdale Bank Plc	Investment	8,000,000	01/09/2022	09/12/2022	2.15	99	100 days	9
Coventry Building Society	Investment	2,000,000	02/09/2022	24/02/2023	2.56	175	6 months	11
Debt Management Office	Investment	1,500,000	06/09/2022	05/10/2022	1.82	29	60 months	N/A
Yorkshire Building Society	Investment	2,000,000	09/09/2022	15/12/2022	2.22	97	100 days	9
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	Investment	3,000,000	14/09/2022	18/01/2023	2.70	126	6 months	11
Debt Management Office	Investment	2,000,000	15/09/2022	15/12/2022	2.30	91	60 months	N/A
Debt Management Office	Investment	5,000,000	15/09/2022	18/01/2023	2.54	125	60 months	N/A
Santander UK Plc	Investment	2,000,000	16/09/2022	10/03/2023	3.15	175	6 months	11
Debt Management Office	Investment	1,500,000	20/09/2022	19/01/2023	2.61	121	60 months	N/A
Debt Management Office	Investment	3,000,000	21/09/2022	20/02/2023	2.83	152	60 months	N/A
Debt Management Office	Investment	1,500,000	22/09/2022	13/01/2023	2.60	113	60 months	N/A
Close Brothers Ltd	Investment	9,000,000	23/09/2022	17/03/2023	3.40	175	6 months	11
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	Investment	2,000,000	28/09/2022	06/01/2023	3.52	100	6 months	11

Appendix 2: Link Asset Services counterparty credit list as at 30 September 2022

Country	Counterparty	Approved Duration	DBC Limit (M)
U.K	Al Rayan Bank Plc	6 months	11
U.K	Bank of Scotland PLC (RFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Barclays Bank PLC (NRFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Barclays Bank UK PLC (RFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Close Brothers Ltd	6 months	11
U.K	Clydesdale Bank PLC	100 days	9
U.K	Goldman Sachs International Bank	6 months	11
U.K	Handelsbanken Plc	12 months	12.5
U.K	HSBC Bank PLC (NRFB)	12 months	12.5
U.K	HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	12 months	12.5
U.K	Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets Plc (NRFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	6 months	11
U.K	National Bank Of Kuwait (International) PLC	6 months	11
U.K	NatWest Markets Plc (NRFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Santander Financial Services plc (NRFB)	6 months	11
U.K	Santander UK plc	6 months	11
U.K	SMBC Bank International Plc	6 months	11
U.K	Standard Chartered Bank	6 months	11
U.K	Coventry BS	6 months	11
U.K	Leeds BS	100 days	9
U.K	Nationwide BS	6 months	11
U.K	Skipton Building Society	6 months	11
U.K	Yorkshire BS	100 days	9
U.K	National Westminster Bank PLC (RFB)	12 months	14.5
U.K	The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc (RFB)	12 months	14.5

Agenda Item 11

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
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