



Public Document Pack Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Agenda

Scrutiny making a positive difference: Member led and independent, Overview & Scrutiny Committee promote service improvements, influence policy development & hold Executive to account for the benefit of the Community of Dacorum

Wednesday 6 December 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 Barry-Mears (Chair)	Councillor Pesch
Councillor Capozzi (Vice-Chair)	Councillor B Williams
Councillor Adeleke	Councillor Banks
Councillor Barradell	Councillor C Link
Councillor Cox	Councillor McArevey
Councillor Johnson	Councillor Pringle
Councillor Mottershead	Councillor B Link

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

AGENDA

1. MINUTES (Pages 4 - 8)

To confirm the minutes from the previous meeting

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 or ask questions in accordance with the rules as to public participation

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

6. DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS (Pages 9 - 45)

Please note that only appendices relevant to the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be published with this agenda.

7. HOUSING STRATEGY 2014- 2029 (Pages 46 - 74)

8. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMISSIONING APPROACH (Pages 75 - 81)

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing a resolution in the following terms:

That, under s.100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Part 1 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during the item in Part II of the Agenda for this meeting, because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to: Item 10.

10. REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & CAPITAL DELIVERY COMMERCIAL PROCUREMENT REPORT (Pages 82 - 179)

11. ACTION POINTS (Pages 180 - 181)

12. FORWARD PLAN (Pages 182 - 184)

Agenda Item 1

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 8 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Barry-Mears (Chair)
Councillor Capozzi (Vice Chair)
Councillor McArevey
Councillor B Link
Councillor C Link
Councillor Pringle

Councillor Banks
Councillor Barradell
Councillor Wyatt-Lowe
Councillor Johnson
Councillor B Williams
Councillor Pesch

Viewing Via Teams:

Councillor Tindall
Councillor Cox

Officers:

Natasha Beresford
Mark Pinnell
Darren Welsh
David Barrett
Kayley Johnston

Assistant Director - Housing Operations & Safe Communities
Assistant Director Property
Chief Housing Officer
Assistant Director - Strategic Housing and Delivery
Corporate & Democratic Support Officer (minutes)

Others:

Councillor Dhyani

Portfolio Holder – Housing & Property Services

HC/076/23 MINUTES

Cllr Banks advised that there were some minor amendments to the minutes from 11 October 2023 so they will be agreed at the next meeting.

HC/077/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mottershead Adeleke and Cox. Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe substituted for Councillor Adeleke.

HC/078/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

HC/079/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation. Councillor Tindall and Cox were viewing via Teams.

HC/080/23 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO A CALL-IN

None.

HC/081/23 Q2 BUDGET MONITORING

F Jump introduced the report to members explaining that the report provides details of the projected outturn for 2022-2023 as at quarter 2. The Councils position is reported to the Committee and is ongoing on a quarterly basis.

F Jump was happy to take questions.

Cllr Barradell referred to the HRA capital budget, section 10.3. He asked if they had an update on that. The review of the Housing Development project that the Council were undertaking.

D Welsh said that the Councils new build programme budget is reviewed annually through the Housing Revenue Account business plan, which is the long-term financial plan for the housing service. He confirmed that the HRA refresh is coming to the next overview and scrutiny meeting. He confirmed that they will share the new details around new builds then. At the moment figures previously agreed by the Council are currently within the business plan, he confirmed that there was one scheme previously in the programme which fell through because it was undeliverable, but confirmed the other schemes are currently progressing.

Cllr Barradell had a follow up question around the last quarter. The report said ' that the housing development programme is being reviewed and Cherry Bounce and garage sites are currently being put on hold' he asked for clarification.

D Welsh confirmed that they were new schemes, which are not in the current programme; he said that these would be reviewed as of the development future programmes. He confirmed that they are not currently in the programme which we are working to at the moment. He said that when they are worked up to in detail, a recommendation would be put through to Councillors to incorporate the programme.

The report was noted.

Cllr Dhyani arrive at 19:40

The report was noted.

HC/082/23 Q2 HOUSING REPORT

D Barrett presented the report to provide the committee with an overview of the housing services performance at quarter 2. He confirmed that it was a lengthy report and there has been challenges around repairs, which they are tackling as part of their high-risk areas.

D Barrett was happy to take any question.

Cllr Barry-Mears asked if it was just one property that was not gas safety registered.

M Pinnell confirmed that the reason why it is actually red is that it is either compliant or it is not. If you're not complaint then it's recorded as not compliant. He confirmed there are other authorities which report it differently. We however, record it as, if you have a CP11 then you are compliant, if you do not then it is not compliant. He confirmed that we are maintaining really good compliance on these properties.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe made a comment to acronyms. She could not find a key and does not understand them so neither would the Public so we need to make this clear.

David Barrett said that he would take this on board and rectify this for next time.

Cllr Johnson referred to p18 the house mark scores; it talks about complaints and repairs. He said that they are very poor. He asked what action is being taken with this as complaints are a big issue within the Council.

D Barrett said it is a big issue and they are focusing on it. They have recently changed the process and how they are responding to the stage 1 and 2 complaints to make sure they are addressing the complaints that are coming in. The individual services are looking at action plans around the complaints that we are getting, to make sure the service is responding to the complaints. They are hoping to get an improvement.

Cllr Johnson asked what they are aiming for? as they seem to have a long way to go.

N Beresford said the aim is that they are working to 100% compliant. All assistant Directors meet at the DMT Meeting and focus on the scrutiny of complaints. She said up until a fortnight ago stage 2 escalation complaints were actually being led across the wider corporate leadership team so they were portioned out. She confirmed that there has been a revision to the process, which D Barrett has touched on.

The report was noted.

HC/083/23 DAMP AND MOULD POLICY

M Pinnell presented the report, introduction the new Damp and Mould Policy to Members to seek approval for the new report.

M Pinnell was happy to take questions.

Cllr Banks referred to 2.2 where you have listed the landlords responsibilities she asked if within the policy will we be looking for resident contribution, as some of it is caused by the residents. He said she believed that some of this is due to poor behaviours which are leading to the damp and mould.

M Pinnell said it was a good observation, he said that the driver isn't to blame anyone it's to work with them and help them out. He had purposely gone away with the 'you must'

approach. What he actually wanted to do was teach them and point out the do's and don'ts and educate residents rather than point the finger. The policy is high-level policy. He gave some examples of what he had seen and it's about educating them.

Cllr Cox referred to 2.1 Cllrs responsibility what is a reasonable time scale.

M Pinnell explained that we need to make a plan and then go back to see if it works, we need to have a review process to see if it is working because what will work for one will not work for another due to everyone's needs being different etc.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said she liked the report and found it interesting, she asked if we are putting more resources/funding into this to help get a faster and more effective response.

M Pinnell said that a paper was brought to committee last December and that was to allocate additional resource. He has now got 2 additional surveyors so this is being done quicker. The revenue budget pressure is a result of the work that we are doing with damp and mould, he confirmed that they do hold a cost pressure. He has the resources but it is putting additional cost pressures on the HRA.

Cllr Wyatt-lowe said she was glad that its included in the budget. She asked about time frames etc, she said it is very wishy washy. She said she cannot find a definitive time frame and asked has any thought been given about this to reassure tenants about the outcomes.

M Pinnell said that it does state about urgent and non-urgent time frames (section 2.1). It does state that if it is urgent they will send an inspector out within 48 hours and non urgent calls are inspected within 7 days. They have to get the surveyor out first to look at it then make a plan then committee to a time frame. They have also got smaller contractors to support Osborns.

She asked how many side wall properties do we have?

M Pinnell said Approximately 75 have been identified with solid walls. 7692 Cavity Wall, 533 Solid Wall, 1644 System Build

In the main, this data is based on visual surveys undertaken to date and we are confident that it is largely correct. However, we do continue to update our records as we complete new stock condition surveys, if any new information becomes available relating to construction type the figures may change slightly over time.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe asked what financial measures would it attract to immediate those problems in that particular type of housing.

M Pinnell gave a real time example as they are currently working though some engineering with those. He said to do solid walls, EWI solid wall insulation, solar panels on the top are a circular of about sixty thousand pound per property.

The report was agreed by Members.

HC/084/23 ACTION PLAN

Housing points training which was cancelled the other day will be re arranged.

Adventure Playground - Julie Banks is happy to wait for the warmer weather and propose a Member Development Session. – **Action Point**

HC/085/23 WORK PROGRAMME

Cllr Barradell asked when Diane's report (communities) would be coming to group as it was taken off the agenda. – **Action NB**

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said about the training meeting that was cancelled recently.
Cllr Dhyani apologised and said it would be re arranged. – **Action Cllr Dhyani.**

The work programme was agreed.



The meeting finished at 20:10

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Report for:	Budget Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Draft 2024/25 Budget Proposals
Date:	6 th December 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Ron Tindall, Leader of the Council
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	<p>Appendix A General Fund Revenue Summary 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix B General Fund Budget Change Analysis 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix Bi Finance and Resources GF Changes</p> <p>Appendix Bii Housing & Community GF Changes</p> <p>Appendix Biii Strategic Planning and Environment GF Changes</p> <p>Appendix C General Fund Budget Summary by committee 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix D HRA Revenue Summary 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix E HRA budget Change Analysis 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix F Capital Programme Finance & Resources 2024- 2028</p> <p>Appendix Fi Capital Programme Housing and Community 2024- 2028</p> <p>Appendix Fii Capital Programme Strategic Planning and Environment 2024-2028</p> <p>Appendix G Overall Revised Capital Programme 2024/28</p> <p>Appendix H Reserves Summary 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix Ii Finance and Resources Fees and Charges 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix Iii Housing & Community Fees and Charges 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix Iiii Strategic Planning and Environment Fees and Charges 2024/25</p>
Background papers:	<p>2023/24 Budget Report, Cabinet February 2023</p> <p>http://dbcgfeshare:9070/documents/s38129/Budget%20Report%202023-24%20Cabinet%20February%202023%20FINAL.pdf</p> <p>2023 Medium Term Financial Strategy, Cabinet October 2023</p> <p>http://dbcgfeshare:9070/documents/s40547/FINAL%20%20October%202023.%20Cabinet%20MTFS%202023%20%202027.28%20Final.pdf</p>

Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>GF – General Fund</p> <p>HRA – Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>MTFS – Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>OSC – Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>RSG – Revenue Support Grant</p> <p>MHCLG- Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government</p> <p>DLUHC- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities</p>
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<p>Report Author / Responsible Officer</p> <p>Nigel Howcutt, Chief Finance Officer</p> <p> </p> <p>Nigel.howcutt@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228236 (ext. 2236)</p>

Corporate Priorities	<p>A clean, safe and enjoyable environment</p> <p>Building strong and vibrant communities</p> <p>Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</p> <p>Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need</p> <p>Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery</p> <p>Climate and ecological emergency</p>
Wards affected	All Wards
Purpose of the report:	To provide Members with an overview of the draft budget strategy and proposals in order to provide Members the opportunity to scrutinise them and provide feedback to Cabinet.
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	That the Scrutiny Committee reviews and scrutinises the draft budget proposals for 2024/25 and provides feedback, to be considered by Cabinet, for each Committee’s specific area of responsibility.
Period for post policy/project review:	<p>February 2024 Overview and Scrutiny</p> <p>February 2024 Cabinet Budget Review</p> <p>February 2024 Council Budget Approval</p> <p>2024/25 Financial Performance Framework</p>

1. Introduction/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The budget report includes information culminating from work that was first initiated in April 2023, with the Corporate Service Planning process. This developed into the core budget assumptions for the General Fund and HRA that were included in the 2023 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This report sets out the key budget assumptions which have been used to develop the 2024/25 budget and highlights the position in relation to reserves and the management of risk.
- 1.2 The budget is created to ensure the Council's finances are allocated to deliver statutory services and support the delivery of the wider corporate plan and core Council strategies including the Place, Commercial, People and Digital strategies.
- 1.3 The current economic environment is very challenging; economic growth is static, interest rates and inflation are high and hence customer purchasing power and confidence is low. The government's requirement to borrow increased during the pandemic and the post pandemic recovery has been slow resulting in a continuation of that borrowing. In general the UK has been one of the slowest economies in the G7 to grow post pandemic. As a result the government has had little resources to spend, hence local authorities are unlikely to see increases in government funding in the short or medium term. The Autumn Statement on the 22 November 2023 detailed that public spending plans for 2025/26 – 2028/29 will grow by only 1% a year in real terms. When considering the government's need to increase investment in health and social care, local authority funding is highly likely to see significant future cuts by the next government.
- 1.4 These draft budget proposals present a balanced budget that is both affordable in the short term and sustainable in the medium term and is in line with the MTFS assumptions outlined in October. The budget setting process is getting increasingly challenging year on year as costs are increasing significantly driven by inflation, and core funding and council tax have remained relatively static in comparison.

2. Budget Report

- 2.1. This report presents the draft budget proposals for 2024/25 for scrutiny and review. Budget detail at a strategic level has been provided for every area of the Council and this has been made available to all Members. A glossary of budget categories, and specific budget section groupings, is set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2. With the exception of the Finance & Resources Committee, which scrutinises all budgets, individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) will focus only on those budget changes and Capital Programme elements which relate directly to their remit.
- 2.3. A senior Finance Officer will be present at each of the committees to support the Chair and committee.
- 2.4. The following appendices are relevant to the draft budget proposals for 2024/25:

General Fund

- Appendix A – General Fund Budget Summary 2024/25
- Appendices B, Bi, Bii and Biii – Budget Change Analysis 2023/24 – 2024/25
- Appendix C – General Fund Budget Change Summary by Committee

Housing Revenue Account

- Appendix D – Housing Revenue Budget Summary 2024/25
- Appendix E – Housing Revenue Account Budget Analysis 2024/25

Capital Programme

- Appendix F, Fi and Fii – Capital Programme by OSC: Summary Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29
- Appendix G – Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29

Reserves

- Appendix H – Statement of Earmarked Reserves

Fees and Charges

- Appendices Ii, Iii and Iiii- 2024/25 Proposed Fees and Charges

3. Budget Setting Process 2024/25

- 3.1. As outlined in the MTFs, which was approved by Council in October 2023, there are significant medium term financial pressures which need to be addressed in order to deliver a sustainable medium term financial strategy for the Council. To ensure good financial planning and astute budget setting, the budget setting process started with the Corporate Service Planning process in April 2023.
- 3.2. A Corporate Service Planning process was undertaken to develop specific priorities and opportunities for service areas over a 3-year period. This process was then used to inform savings and opportunities for the budget planning process.
- 3.3. The resulting service plans identified a number of consistent themes across service areas, including: Climate change action; Improving customer focus; Improving processes through digitisation and the development of a Digital Strategy; Developing positive leadership and culture and the need for a new People Strategy; Community Safety; Economic Recovery and a refreshed focus on the Council's place shaping programme. The majority of these key outcomes have seen further strategic development throughout 2023.

4. Dacorum Core Strategic Drivers

- 4.1. The Corporate Plan is the driving mandate that the Council strives to achieve. It is essential that corporate strategies evolve and develop as an intrinsic part of delivering the Corporate Plan, and the budget set supports those strategies. During the last year the Council has had a change in administration and is still in the process of reflecting that change in a revised Corporate plan and headline Strategic investment ambitions. At present the revised Corporate Plan is expected to be delivered at the start of the next calendar year and there are several core strategies that support the 2024 - 2028 Corporate Plan.
- 4.2. There are 3 strategies in particular that have shaped the 2024/25 budget proposals these are;
 - Commercial Strategy
 - Transformation and Change Strategy
 - Place Strategy
- 4.3. These three strategies are now embedded into the organisational approach to service delivery, horizon scanning and decision making and are driving the organisation forward.

Commercial Strategy

- 4.4. The Commercial Strategy was approved by Cabinet in September 2022 and is a wide ranging strategy which aims to deliver a change in culture and approach to a more agile and commercially aware operating model that will leverage maximum value from the Council's assets and resources, to support a financially sustainable organisation that meets the needs and expectations of residents.
- 4.5. This approach has changed the way the Council reviews and scrutinises its procurement activity and is currently reviewing a range of existing services to drive increased income generation and improved effectiveness of service delivery. To date a number of full business cases exploring new income generating ideas have been produced and reviewed and those opportunities are being monitored. The 2024/25 capital budget includes capital funding to support commercial opportunities and specifically investment in new light industrial units in the borough to support the ongoing demand for these facilities, with an expectation of delivering additional income in the medium term.

- 4.6. A detailed review of Council fees and charges has been undertaken as part of the Commercial Strategy. Proposals for Council fees and charges can be found at Appendices li, lii and liii to this report.
- 4.7. The principle of cost recovery and income generation has formed the basis of this review. Fees and charges proposals for 2024/25 reflect expected increase in staffing and other costs, where the Council has the discretion to do so. This approach will support the continued delivery of valued Council services going forward.

Transformation/Change Strategy

- 4.8. The Council is also developing a wide ranging Transformation/Change agenda to develop and modernise current service delivery. This programme has a strong focus on the customer and the workforce, as outlined in the recent Customer and People strategies.
- 4.9. The revised Corporate Programme Management team is supporting Change and Development projects across the Council, and resources are being provided to support this programme.

Place Strategy

- 4.10. The Place Strategy is constantly developing and growing, with both officers and members involved driving the Place Shaping Strategy. The overall Place Strategy includes many projects across Dacorum including;
- Hemel Garden communities programme,
 - Town Centre Strategy,
 - Tring and Berkhamsted Place shaping reviews,
 - Hemel Health Campus feasibility work, and
 - Hemel Imaginarium and the Old Town project.
- 4.11. The draft 2024/25 budget and MTFS assumes that any direct capital investment required to deliver the Place strategy will be cost neutral ensuring returns from these investments support the costs of that investment. As this strategy evolves, the financial impact and sustainability will be assessed and reported to Members.

5. 2024/25 Budget Setting and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 5.1. The current MTFS was approved by Council in October 2023 and contained the following key decisions which have informed the budget-setting process for 2024/25:
- A General Fund savings target of £1.6m for 2023/24
 - A General Fund savings target of £4.4m over the duration of the MTFS period
 - A General Fund balance of between 5% and 15% of Net Cost of Services
 - A minimum HRA working balance of at least 5% of turnover
- 5.2. The draft budget presented in Appendix A has a balanced position. At this stage, this remains subject to a number of budgetary assumptions. Work continues on these assumptions, and the finalised position will be reported to Members at the Joint OSC in February.
- 5.3. The projected Dacorum 2024/25 government funding level has been set at the same level as assumed in the MTFS in October and at present the Autumn statement has not impacted the current assumptions, the Local Government Finance Settlement is expected close to but prior to the 19th December.
- 5.4. Council has delegated authority to the S151 Officer to revise the MTFS if material changes to forecasts are required as a result of future local government financing announcements. Members receive regular financial monitoring updates throughout the financial year. These will be supplemented by MTFS updates to Cabinet, as considered appropriate by the S151 Officer.

Key Assumptions included in draft General Fund Budget

5.5. The following key assumptions are incorporated within the draft budget:

- A Council Tax Increase of 2.99% (£6.66) plus a 1% increase in taxbase
- A 5% pay award settlement
- Vacancy factor of 5% for non-front-line services
- Baseline Government funding (Core grant and Retained business rates set at £4m in 2024/25)
- An inflationary increase in utilities of 20%
- An increase in Fuel and Supplies and Services of 5%

6. Council Tax

6.1. The government's autumn statement on the 17th November 2022 created additional Council tax flexibilities for local authorities for 2023-25. This revised policy allowed district authorities to increase Council tax by up to 2.99% or £5, whichever is the greatest.

6.2. The current government funding model assesses an authority's ability to raise income, including from Council tax, when assessing the level of funding required from central government. Hence if Local Authorities do not maximise their Council tax income they are creating a budget reduction that may require savings efficiencies. Therefore the Council's tax policy is to maximise the income from Council tax to support essential service provision.

6.3. As a result of this it is proposed to increase Council tax by 2.99% for 2024/25 - an increase of £6.66 P.A. for a band D property.

6.4. The council at present is in the process of consulting with residents in regard to proposed changes to the 2024/25 Council Tax Support Policy and the outcome of this consultation will be agreed by members in December.

7. Government funding

7.1. In the 2023/24 Local government finance settlement, the government introduced a new Minimum Funding Guarantee grant to be awarded to Local Authorities as part of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years. This grant was introduced as a response to the impact of the inflationary pressures being felt in the wider economy and public services. This grant aimed to ensure that overall Local Authority funding levels were not reducing year on year in cash terms. As part of the 2023/24 Local government settlement, Dacorum received circa £850k of MFG and is projected to receive circa £1m in 2024/25.

7.2. The current economic environment is uncertain. The current cost of living pressures combined with the expectation that the Government will need to reduce borrowing and hence spending, is likely to reduce Local Government funding from Government in real terms year on year going forward.

7.3. Confirmation of the funding allocation for 2024/25 is expected in December 2023. Any additional information given at that time regarding future years' funding will be reported to Members as part of the budget-setting process.

Government funding – New Homes Bonus

7.4. New Homes Bonus (NHB) is due to end in 2023/24, and hence the budget assumes no NHB in 2024/25. As part of the 2022 financial announcement government stated that a replacement housing policy would be provided going forward, at present no details have been shared with the sector.

7.5. In line with the approved MTFS, this budget assumes a continuation of the Council's current strategy, i.e. due to its time-limited nature NHB funding is not used to support ongoing service

provision, but is instead contributed to the Dacorum Development Reserve for future one-off spending.

Key General Fund budget savings since last year

7.6. Detailed budget changes between 2023/24 and 2024/25 are shown in Appendix B. Key items include:

- £500k Parking Fees additional income,
- £850k Garden Waste income generation,
- £110k Revenues and Benefits Service efficiencies.

The garden waste service budget is still undergoing review to reflect the cost of the service including increased costs such as pay awards, waste disposal inflation and supplies and services inflation, along with the charges and concessions applied.

7.7. In addition there are a number of post Covid income generating services that are impacted positively by the rolling back of the post Covid recovery support provided from the Economic Recovery Reserve. These are:

- Leisure Income - £436k
- Commercial Rents - £279k
- Garage Rents - £125k
- Commercial Waste - £25k

7.8. As of 2024/25 the base budget no longer includes short term additional funding from reserves to support income generation impacted during the pandemic and the recovery period following.

Key General Fund budget growth since last year

7.9. Detailed ongoing growth areas (i.e. not one-off items of expenditure to be funded from reserves or additional grants) are shown in Appendix B. Key items include:

- £1,900k Employee pay award impact for 2023-25.
- £380k Digital Strategy financing
- £800k Inflationary pressures including utilities, fuel and supplies and services
- £300k reduction in planning income due to reduced demand in 23/24
- £200k Customer Strategy financing
- £130k to support the HR service in delivery of the People Strategy

8. 2023/24 Budget Risks

8.1. As part of the budget setting process, inherent and potential financial risks are assessed and mitigations applied to the budget where required. These risks require ongoing monitoring and reporting as part of the ongoing corporate financial reporting processes.

8.2. The most significant risk to Dacorum's budget setting would be if approved government funding did not meet the budgeted expectations. This risk is considered low following the Autumn Spending review announcements. The Council's projected government funding levels for 24/25 have increased by £2m year on year following the implementation of the Minimum funding guarantee (Detailed in para 7.1), and the removal of negative RSG assumptions detailed in the MTFS. These assumptions appear prudent at present when compared to the wider Local Government sector.

8.3. At present, the Council faces uncertain times and hence projections are more open to challenge and change than in previous years. As a result, there are a number of service risks where financial performance and service development processes remain under careful scrutiny and monitoring and will be reported back to Members if performance differs from expectations. The high risk areas include;

- The impact of the wider economic pressures on demand for Council services and income generating services. This is due to a combination of the impact of the current cost of living pressures and the ongoing slow economic recovery from Covid.
- Income generating services. Since Covid there have been shortfalls in income in several discretionary services including car parking income, commercial waste and planning income. The 2023/24 and 2024/25 budgets have provided growth to mitigate this risk, and this continues to be monitored.
- Refuse Service. There are a multitude of pressures in the refuse service including increased demand for waste routes, increased volumes of waste collection/disposal and the ongoing issues around growing staffing costs. The service is in the second phase of the transformation programme to reduce ongoing waste revenue pressures and deliver improvements and expansion of the commercial waste service.
- Impact of increasing utility costs. The budget proposals include a number of inflationary budget increases, but prices will continue to be monitored.

9. Housing Revenue Account

- 9.1. The draft HRA Budget for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix D, with explanations of major movements between the Original Budget 2023/24 and Draft Budget 2024/25 shown in Appendix E.
- 9.2. Key assumptions have been incorporated into the draft budget. These include the short term assumptions being reviewed at present as part of the HRA 30 year Business Plan, which will be reviewed by Cabinet in line with the 2023/24 budget setting reports;
- Annual rent increase of 7% on all properties, circa £4.3m income
 - An increase in repairs and maintenance budgets of 28%, circa £4.2m
 - An increase in pay award of 5% for 24/25, circa £1m.
 - Use of internal borrowing from the Council's own cash balances to finance capital expenditure once other financing resources have been applied. This approach minimises the cost of borrowing to the HRA.
- 9.3. Since 2019 the government HRA rent policy has to increase the rent model by CPI plus 1%. In 2023/24, in response to very high inflation at the time the government set the annual rent increase limit of 7%, at the time CPI plus 1% would of resulted in a potential 11.1% rent increase. This rent cap resulted in the HRA losing out on a potential circa £2.2m in 23/24 with the ongoing structural budget deficit exceeding £22m over the next 10 years alone.
- 9.4. This HRA is not exempt from the inflationary increase in cost pressures and balancing the HRA budget going forward will be increasingly challenging, with significant increases in costs incurred in 2023 and beyond. The HRA receives circa 95% of its income to support the HRA delivery from dwelling rents, so as the costs of service delivery increases a combination of increased rental income and additional income streams/recharges will be required to support the improved service delivery.

10. Capital Programme

- 10.1. The draft Capital Programme is set out in Appendix G.
- 10.2. The 2024 – 29 capital programme is predominantly a roll forward of the 2023 capital programme with limited changes made.
- 10.3. The only new additions to the 2024-29 capital programme are;
- Splash Park Plant and Machinery refurbishment, £75k
 - Increase in budget for Temporary Accommodation and Estates £180k,

- Increases in the Commercial Property Maintenance budget, £185k

10.4. The General Fund capital programme 2024-2029 totals circa £69m, the larger capital programmes are;

- £28m for Leisure Investment, plans to be discussed with members in early 2024
- £16m for the ongoing fleet replacement programme
- £2.5m for the provision of a new DEN's One stop shop and foodbank.
- £4.5m for Light Industrial development and delivery
- £6m for Place shaping acquisitions

11. Reserves

11.1. The draft 2024/25 budget includes a net contribution from reserves of £1.3m for 2024/25. These funds are used to finance one off short term projects that deliver the key corporate initiatives, such as support for the Place related initiatives or delivery of savings initiatives. The use of reserves requires cabinet and council approval and the 2024/25 budget summarises these agreements for 24/25.

11.2. The detailed proposed movements in General Fund reserves are set out in Appendix H. The significant reserve movements within the 2024/25 budget are detailed below:

- **Economic Recovery Reserve** – This reserve was created in 2020/21 to fund the forecast financial implications of Covid over the medium-term.

The reserve originally had a balance of £5.14m at the start of 21/22 to support income generating services in their recovery from the pandemic, 2024/25 is the first financial year since Covid where this reserve is no longer required to support budgets impacted by the fallout of the pandemic. This reserve has supported the strategic objectives it was created to do and hence will no longer be required going forward.

- **Management of Change Reserve** – This reserve was created to support the significant investment required when preparing and implementing service redesign and changes. This reserve is no longer supported by annual revenue contributions, but will continue to support Change initiatives going forward. The 2024/25 budget proposes approved draw downs from this reserve to finance; SAR £116k and an additional Customer services officer £50k, to support the Customer Services transformation.
- **Technology Reserve** – This reserve was set up to be utilised with the Management of Change Reserve to invest in technology improvements to improve efficiency and resilience across the Council. As the digital strategy evolves this reserve may be essential going forward.
- **Savings Efficiency Reserve** – This reserve was created from the achievement of prior year savings made by the Council in advance of need, and is retained to offset the risk of delays to initiatives planned to generate future savings.

The 2023 MTFs has outlined a significant level of savings requirement and hence this reserve could be fundamental to supporting this programme of work, and has a £200k contribution in 24/25. The net draw down is £50k in 2024/25 as there are planned draw-downs to support Car parking part year implementation, £150k and the delayed CCTV income generation programme, £100k.

- **Local Development Framework** – net drawdown of £130k. This reserve was created to support the significant research and consultancy costs associated with the development of the Council's Local Plan through to its conclusion in 2025.
- **Dacorum Development Reserve** – net drawdown of £1,114k in 2024/25. This reserve was created to support regeneration and economic development initiatives across the borough and in recent years has been funded primarily through one-off, growth-related funding streams.

The planned movements in 24/25:

- £300k draw down to fund costs associated with the Hemel Garden Communities Programme
 - £125k Support the ongoing garage strategy
 - £65k Light Industrial Unit project management
 - £60k Urban Designer to support Regeneration proposals
 - £264k to support short term additional Place resources
 - £300k to smooth any potential rental shortfalls
- **Vehicle Replacement Reserve-** This reserve helps fund the replacement of the Council's fleet, revenue contributions to this reserve will no longer be made with the programme being fully funded through capital financing.
 - **Funding Equalisation Reserve** - This surplus arises from the annual timing differences in the receipt of Collection Fund income to the Council. Balances on this reserve are held in part to support the deficits when they arise, funded by any prior year surpluses on the Collection Fund.
 - **Pension Reserve** – This reserve is used to support one-off pension contribution payments following triennial pension fund valuation, to smooth out these costs. The next potential payment is due in 2025 following the 2024/2025 triennial valuation report.
 - **Training and Development reserve-** Support the organisational development service in the roll out of the new people strategy.

11.3. The HRA retains a minimum working balance of at least 5% of turnover as part of the Council's reserves strategy. A transfer of £341k to the HRA earmarked reserves in 2024/25 is proposed in order to maintain the working balance at this level.

11.4. The budget presented in draft in this document is robust in its formulation and the level of reserves set for 2024/25 is adequate to mitigate the foreseeable risks to the organisation at this point in the process.

12. Governance Statement

12.1. The DBC Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was reviewed as part of the 2022/23 external audit of the financial processes and statements, and a draft was presented to the Audit Committee in September. The external Auditor raised no issues with the content or processes included. The external auditor confirmed the AGS was prepared in line with CIPFA Code and supporting guidance and were consistent with the financial statements.

13. Next Steps/Consultation

13.1. Members of the individual OSCs are asked to review and scrutinise the draft budget proposal for 2024/25, and to provide feedback for Cabinet to consider ahead of the next Joint OSC, in February 2023.

14. Financial Comments

14.1. This is a S151 Officer report and financial details are included in the body of the report. This is a draft budget report created for member and residents feedback.

15. Legal Implications

N/A

16. Risk implications

16.1. The significant budget risks related to these draft proposals at this point in time are detailed in the risk section of the report. As with any financial estimates they include a set of

assumptions and projections utilising both internal and external professional advice and guidance but are subject to changes due to internal and external forces.

17. Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

17.1. The relevant Community Impact Assessments will be undertaken as the individual projects that form the Council's budget are implemented.

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

All the proposals and changes made to the services that the Council delivers and subsequent investment decisions made as part of the budget review are assessed for their sustainability implications and impact on the wider environment. As these draft proposals developed further work will be undertaken as part of the final formal approval process.

Annexe A

Explanation of expenditure categories used in appendices

Budget Categories Glossary

Employees

This group includes the cost of employee expenses, both direct and indirect, for example:

- Salaries
- Employer's National Insurance and pension contributions
- Agency staff
- Employee allowances (not including travel and subsistence)
- Training
- Advertising
- Severance payments

Premises

This group includes expenses directly related to the running of premises and land:

- Repairs, alterations and maintenance
- Energy costs
- Rent
- Business Rates
- Water
- Fixture and fittings
- Premises insurance
- Cleaning and domestic supplies
- Grounds maintenance

Transport

This group includes all costs associated with the hire or use of transport, including travel allowances:

- Repair and maintenance of vehicles
- Vehicle licensing
- Fuel
- Vehicle hire
- Vehicle insurance
- Employee mileage

Third Party Payments

Third party payments are contracts with external providers for the provision of a specific service. Examples for the Council include the Call Centre, Payroll Services, and Parking Enforcement.

Supplies & Services

This group includes all direct supplies and service expenses to the authority:

- Equipment, furniture and materials
- Catering/Vending
- Clothing and uniforms
- Printing, stationery and general office expenses
- External services (consultancy, professional advisors)
- Communications and computing (eg software maintenance, telephones and postage)
- Members allowances
- Conferences and seminars
- Grants and subscriptions

Capital Charges

These statutory accounting adjustments reflect a notional charge to the service for the use of a Councils asset. An example is Cupid Depot, for which a charge is made to Waste Services, for as long as the service uses the asset. These charges are reversed out centrally and do not impact on Council Tax.

Transfer Payments

This includes the cost of payments to individuals for which no goods or services are received. For the Council this only relates to Housing Benefit payments.

Income

This group includes all income received by the service from external users or by way of charges:

- Rental income
- Sales of goods or services (eg the sale of recyclables and waste sacks)
- Fees and charges (eg Planning, Parking and Burials)

Grants and Contributions

This group includes all income received by the service from external bodies:

- Specific Government grants
- Income for jointly run projects/services
- Reimbursement of costs (eg recovery of legal costs)
- Other contributions (eg recycling credits from Herts County Council)

Recharges

This statutory accounting adjustment charges out the back office functions (such as Finance and Legal) to the front line services. These adjustments are based on timesheet information provided by the Corporate Leadership Team and are subject to changes each year. The recharges overall will come back to zero, with the only impact on Council Tax being the overall charge to the Housing Revenue Account, as shown in Appendix A.

DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET SUMMARY 2024/25

Appendix A

	Original 2023/24	Growth / (Savings)	Estimate 2024/25 1st OSC 6.12.23
	£000	£000	£000
Service Expenditure & Income			
Employees	30,341	1,821	32,162
Premises	5,461	301	5,762
Transport	1,929	173	2,101
Supplies & Services	8,427	478	8,905
Third-Parties	831	35	866
Transfer Payments	47,146	0	47,146
Capital Charges & Bad Debts	4,922	6	4,928
Income	(19,851)	(1,669)	(21,520)
Grants and Contributions	(51,702)	41	(51,661)
Recharge to HRA	(6,115)	485	(5,630)
Net Cost Of Services	21,389	1,671	23,059
Less:			
Interest Receipts	(755)	(444)	(1,199)
Interest Payments & MRP	741	60	801
Reversal of Capital Charges	(4,802)	0	(4,802)
Revenue Contributions to Capital	0	0	0
Net movement to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	2,639	(3,956)	(1,317)
Budget Requirement General Fund	19,212	(2,669)	16,543
Parish Precepts	1,234	37	1,270
Budget Requirement Including Parishes	20,445	(2,632)	17,813
Funded by:			
Business Rates Retained	(3,067)	167	(2,900)
Revenue Support Grant	0	400	400
New Homes Bonus/Government Grants	(1,627)	1,627	0
Other Government Grants	(66)	(1,034)	(1,100)
Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit	0	0	
Business Rates (Surplus)/Deficit	(1,111)	1,894	783
Net Expenditure before Council Tax	14,574	422	14,996
Demand on the Collection Fund	(14,574)	(433)	(15,007)
Net Change in General Fund Balance	0	(11)	(11)
General Fund Balance B/Fwd	(2,502)		(2,502)
In year use	0		
General Fund Balance C/Fwd	(2,502)		(2,502)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 EMPLOYEE EXPENDITURE		
2023/24 Employee Budget		5,085
Growth items		
Private Sector Housing Officer (MEES)	HO Safe Communities	39
Sub total - Growth items		39
Removal of 2023/24 one-off items (reserve / grant funded)		
HTIP Restructure	HO Housing Operations	(52)
Sub total - Removal of 2023/24 one-off items		(52)
Total change year on year		(13)
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 PREMISES EXPENDITURE		
2023/24 Premises Budget		1,114
Total change year on year		0
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 TRANSPORT EXPENDITURE		
2023/24 Transport Budget		6
Total change year on year		0
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 SUPPLIES & SERVICES EXPENDITURE		
2023/24 Supplies & Services Budget		1,230
Growth items		
Other growth items under £15k		5
Sub total - Growth items		5
Total change year on year		5
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 TRANSFER PAYMENTS		
2023/24 Transfer Payments Budget		2
Total change year on year		0
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 INCOME		
2023/24 Income Budget		(5,559)
Increased income		
Garage Rents Income - recovery over 4 years of Covid-19 impact	HO Commercial Development	(125)
Sub total - Increased income		(125)
Total change year on year		(125)
GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGE ANALYSIS 2024/25 GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS		
2023/24 Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions Budget		(711)
Growth items		
Homeless Prevention Grant - one off funding 23/24		55
CCTV Income - one off for 24/25	HO Safe Communities	100
Sub total - Growth items		155
Increased income		
Homeless Prevention Grant - announced funding for 24/25		(138)
Sub total - Increased income		(138)
Total change year on year		17

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE GENERAL FUND BUDGETS 2024/25				
	Finance & Resources 2024/25 (£'000s)	Housing & Community 2024/25 (£'000s)	Planning & Environment 2024/25 (£'000s)	Total (£'000s)
Employees	13,104	5,408	13,650	32,162
Premises	3,399	1,161	1,201	5,762
Transport	360	6	1,735	2,101
Supplies & Services	5,037	1,246	2,622	8,905
Third-Parties	774	0	91	866
Transfer Payments	1,818	2	0	1,820
Capital Charges	47,144	955	2,155	50,254
Income	(10,995)	(5,531)	(5,344)	(21,870)
Grants and Contributions	(48,474)	(950)	(1,887)	(51,311)
Recharges	(4,221)	(431)	(977)	(5,630)
Net Expenditure by Committee	7,948	1,865	13,247	23,059

DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET SUMMARY 2023/24 & 2024/25														
£000	Note	2023/24			2024/25									2024/25
		Original 2023/24	Forecast Outturn Q2	Variance	7% rent increase	Additional Rent Week	Adjustments	Growth Bids	R&M/TAM Contract	General Inflation	Change in Income	Change in Recharge	Growth / (Savings)	Estimate 2024/25
Income														
Dwelling Rents	1	(60,868)	(61,589)	(721)	(4,311)	(1,358)	(61)					(50)	(5,780)	(67,369)
Non-Dwelling Rents		(104)	(98)	6						(5)	6		1	(103)
Tenant Service Charges		(1,504)	(1,595)	(91)						(80)	(91)		(170)	(1,675)
Leaseholder Charges		(606)	(651)	(45)						(19)	(45)	(5)	(69)	(675)
Interest and Investment Income	2	(210)	(2,007)	(1,797)			4						4	(206)
Contributions to Expenditure		(647)	(990)	(343)						(50)	(343)		(393)	(1,040)
Total Income		(63,939)	(66,930)	(2,991)	(4,311)	(1,358)	(57)	0	0	(153)	(473)	(55)	(6,407)	(71,067)
Expenditure														
Repairs and Maintenance	3	14,594	19,684	5,090					4,165	0		318	4,483	19,077
Revenue Contribution to Capital	4	2,538	0	(2,538)			(2,538)						(2,538)	0
Supervision & Management	5	18,421	19,480	1,059			26	427		910		457	1,820	20,241
Corporate and Democratic Core		406	406	0								(12)	(12)	394
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges		178	178	(0)						9			9	187
Provision for Bad Debts		750	500	(250)			(250)						(250)	500
Interest Payable	6	11,267	11,267	0			375						375	11,642
Depreciation		15,620	15,620	0			1,947						1,947	17,567
Total Expenditure		63,774	67,135	3,361	0	0	(440)	427	4,165	919	0	763	5,834	69,608
Contribution to HRA Working Balance	7	165	165				341						341	506
Contribution to Reserve-Other Revenue	8	0	0				934						934	934
Contribution to Debt repayment reserve	9	0	0				20						20	20
HRA Deficit / (Surplus)		(0)	370	370	(4,311)	(1,358)	798	427	4,165	766	(473)	708	722	0
Housing Revenue Account Balance:														
Opening Balance at 1 April		(2,892)	(2,892)	0									0	(3,057)
Contribution from Revenue		(165)	(165)	0			(506)						(506)	(506)
Closing Balance at 31 March		(3,057)	(3,057)	0	0	0	(506)	0	0	0	0	0	(506)	(3,563)
Earmarked Revenue Reserves:														
Opening Balance at 1 April		(4,731)	0	(4,731)									0	(4,361)
Contribution from / (to) Reserve		0	370	370			(954)						(954)	(954)
Closing Balance at 31 March		(4,731)	370	(4,361)	0	0	(954)	0	0	0	0	0	(954)	(5,315)

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR MOVEMENTS IN HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 -
2024/25**

Note 1 - Dwelling Rents

Rents for 2024/25 have been increased by 7% the maximum cap set by government for 2023/24 and assumed to be set for 2024/25. The average dwelling rent is proposed to be £137.32 in 2024/25.

For 2024/25 there will be 49 rent weeks charged for the financial year so as a one off a further £1.3m is forecast to be received.

Note 2 - Interest & Investment Income

Interest Receivable for 2024/25 is expected to be significantly lower than actuals received in 2023/24 due to reduced cash balances forecast for the HRA. Interest rates are forecast at an average of 5% over the year.

Note 3 - Repairs and Maintenance

Due to increasing demand for housing repairs a 28% increase has been applied to the repairs and maintenance budgets for 2024/25.

Note 4 - Revenue Contribution to Capital

Due to increasing costs and pressures on the HRA budgets no Revenue Contribution to Capital will be budgeted for 2024/25 or future years.

Note 5 - Supervision and Management and Corporate and Democratic Core

The draft budget includes the following growth assumptions and changes :

Commercial Housing Contracts Team 3 New posts £180k

Safe Homes - Project Manager, 2 x apprentice posts and compliance officer £145k

Asset Management - Disrepair Surveyor £55k

Housing Transformation Improvement Programme £250k budget for 24/25

Inflation on existing budgets from Pay Award 2023/24 and assumed 5% increase for 2024/25

Note 6 - Interest Payable

Increased borrowing will be required to fund the HRA Capital programme following the removal of the RCCO contribution over the last few years and future year requirements.

Note 7 - Housing Revenue Account Working Balance

The HRA Working Balance is maintained by the Council at a level of not below 5% of turnover, as approved by Members as part of the MTFs Reserves Strategy. Due to the increase in income to maintain this balance a contribution to the HRA working balance of £506K is required.

Note 8 - Contribution to Other Revenue Reserves

A contribution is proposed to contribute £986k to other HRA Revenue Reserve balances. This will build increased resilience in the HRA and allow investment in future development and initiatives identified by ongoing service reviews.

Note 9 - Contribution to Debt Repayment Reserve

As the HRA borrows to finance investment in its capital programme, it is proposed that contributions are made to a new Debt Repayment Reserve to ensure the HRA can repay this borrowing when it matures. A contribution of £20k is proposed for 24/25.

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

APPENDIX Fi

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
HOUSING & COMMUNITY						
Head of Safe Communities						
31	Rolling Programme - CCTV Cameras	61	25	25	25	25
32	Alarm Receiving Centre	34	-	-	-	-
33	CCTV equipment refresh	485	-	-	-	-
34	CCTV A41 Bypass	30	-	-	-	-
AD Place, Community & Enterprise						
35	Capital Grants - Community Groups	20	20	20	20	20
36	Adventure Playgrounds Improvement programme	-	-	-	-	-
Head of Investment & Delivery						
37	Estate & Temporary Accommodation improvements	150	-	-	-	-
38	Verge Hardening Programme	705	250	250	-	-
Head of Asset Management						
39	Disabled Facilities Grants	741	741	741	741	741
TOTAL - HOUSING & COMMUNITY		2,226	1,036	1,036	786	786
TOTAL - GENERAL FUND		2,226	1,036	1,036	786	786

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DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT					
	AD Property Services					
40	Planned Fixed Expenditure	13,342	21,924	23,915	21,689	24,799
41	DBC Commissioned Capital Works	6,700	5,574	2,712	2,721	-
42	Special Projects	230	6	6	6	-
		20,272	27,504	26,634	24,415	24,799
	Head of Housing Management					
43	CCTV Installation in 6 Communal Lounges	29	6	6	6	-
		29	6	6	6	-
	Head of Investment and Delivery					
44	New Build - General Expenditure	33,412	14,184	2,617	1,000	1,000
		33,412	14,184	2,617	1,000	1,000
	TOTAL - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	53,713	41,693	29,257	25,421	25,799
	TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	55,939	42,729	30,293	26,207	26,585

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>					
	FINANCE & RESOURCES					
	Chief Finance Officer (S151)					
1	Various commercial ventures (commercially sensitive)	17,856	19,672	3,600	-	-
	Head of Neighbourhood Management					
2	Car Park Refurbishment	135	-	-	-	-
3	Water Gardens North Car Park Drainage Improvements	35	-	-	-	-
	Head of Commercial Development					
4	Multi Functional Devices	90	-	-	-	-
	Head of Property Services					
5	Service Lease Domestic Properties	-	30	-	-	-
6	Commercial Properties Projects					
7	Bellgate Canopy Renewal Highfield	50	-	-	-	-
8	Fire Alarm Upgrades	6	20	20	20	-
9	Community Building Fire Exits	30	30	30	30	-
10	Rossgate Shopping Centre Structural Works	55	-	-	-	-
11	Silk Mill Shops - Concrete Works	45	-	-	-	-
12	Bennetts End Adventure Playground - Cabin Roof	24	-	-	-	-
13	Void Refurbishment Properties for Temporary Accommodation	70	-	-	-	-
14	Ash Mills Recreations Centre - Resurfacing and Drainage	50	-	-	-	-
15	Long Chaulden Roof	35	-	-	-	-
16	Broadwater Road Resurfacing	93	-	-	-	-
17	Stone Works to Charter Tower					
		18,574	19,752	3,650	50	-

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DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
FINANCE & RESOURCES						
Head of Investment & Delivery						
18	Creation of new Community Facility and Foodbank at The Hub (Dens)	2,500	-	-	-	-
19	Hemel Hempstead Sports Centre - Astroturf renewal	530	-	-	-	-
Head of Digital						
20	Rolling Programme - Hardware	157	75	75	75	75
21	Software Licences - Right of Use	40	40	40	40	40
22	Future vision of CRM	490	-	-	-	-
23	Renewal of Data Centre Hardware	390	-	-	-	-
		1,077	115	115	115	115
	TOTAL - FINANCE & RESOURCES	4,565	195	165	165	115

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

Scheme		24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	STRATEGIC PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT					
	Head of Environmental Services					
24	New Wheeled Bins	100	100	100	100	100
25	Fleet Replacement Programme	2,756	897	2,268	2,046	7,655
	Head of Neighbourhood Management					
26	Play Area Investment Income	387	-	-	-	-
27	Gadebridge Park - Splash Park	75	-	-	-	-
		3,244	997	2,368	2,146	7,755
	Head of Regulatory Services					
28	Health & Safety Software System	40	-	-	-	-
		40	-	-	-	-
	AD Place, Community and Enterprise					
29	Urban Park/Education Centre (Durrants Lakes)	104	-	-	-	-
30	Nickey Line Improvements - HGC capital project	36	-	-	-	-
		104	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL - STRATEGIC PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT	3,498	997	2,368	2,146	7,755

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

APPENDIX G

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
	HOUSING & COMMUNITY					
	Head of Safe Communities					
31	Rolling Programme - CCTV Cameras	61	25	25	25	25
32	Alarm Receiving Centre	34	-	-	-	-
33	CCTV equipment refresh	485	-	-	-	-
34	CCTV A41 Bypass	30	-	-	-	-
	AD Place, Community & Enterprise					
35	Capital Grants - Community Groups	20	20	20	20	20
36	Adventure Playgrounds Improvement programme	-	-	-	-	-
	Head of Investment & Delivery					
37	Estate & Temporary Accommodation improvements	150	-	-	-	-
38	Verge Hardening Programme	705	250	250	-	-
	Head of Asset Management					
39	Disabled Facilities Grants	741	741	741	741	741
	TOTAL - HOUSING & COMMUNITY	2,226	1,036	1,036	786	786
	TOTAL - GENERAL FUND	28,406	21,900	7,169	3,097	8,656

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY OSC 2024/25 - 2028/29

Scheme		24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000	28/29 £'000
	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT					
	AD Property Services					
40	Planned Fixed Expenditure	13,342	21,924	23,915	21,689	24,799
41	DBC Commissioned Capital Works	6,700	5,574	2,712	2,721	-
42	Special Projects	230	6	6	6	-
		20,272	27,504	26,634	24,415	24,799
	Head of Housing Management					
43	CCTV Installation in 6 Communal Lounges	29	6	6	6	-
		29	6	6	6	-
	Head of Investment and Delivery					
44	New Build - General Expenditure	33,412	14,184	2,617	1,000	1,000
		33,412	14,184	2,617	1,000	1,000
	TOTAL - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	53,713	41,693	29,257	25,421	25,799
	TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	82,119	63,593	36,425	28,518	34,455

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25				
	Unit Measurement	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge	% Change
Garages				
Garage Rent (VAT not charged to tenants but is charged to non tenants)	Per Week	13.65	14.30	4.8%
Premium garages	Per Week	14.55	15.20	4.5%
Garage Rent - Concessionary	Per Week	6.95	7.30	5.0%
Private Sector Housing				
Housing Notices (fixed charge per person)		326.00	342.00	4.9%
Licence for a standard 5 bedroom HMO (initiated with LA intervention) 5 year licence		904.00	949.00	5.0%
Additional Bedrooms	Per Bedroom	17.00	18.00	5.9%
HMO licence fee Part 1: Initial licence fee application		780.00	841.00	7.8%
HMO licence fee Part 2: Ongoing management of 5 year licence		474.00	506.00	6.8%
Enforcement fee: Due to failure to apply to Local authority		633.00	678.00	7.1%
Standard inspection for immigration		217.00	228.00	5.1%
Licensing				
Licensing fees with nil increase year on year are set by statute. Legislation would be required to vary these charges.				
Mobile Home Licences (Per Annum)				
Annual Fee		£53.00 +£7.90 per unit	£53.00 +£7.90 per unit	0.0%
New Site Application				
New Site Licence Application Fee		£514.00+ £7.92 per unit	£514.00+ £7.92 per unit	0.0%
Other fees				
Deposit/Change of Site Rules		£90	£90	0.0%
Transfer/amendment of a Site Licence		£209 (+ £94 if a site visit is required)	£209 (+ £94 if a site visit is required)	0.0%
Enforcement: Hourly rate of officers involved, plus any other costs such as legal fees.				
Old Town Hall Arts Centre				
Meetings / Rehearsals / Workshops / Classes (no technical support) minimum 2hr booking				
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Fri (10:30 - 18:00)	Per Hour	32.00	34.00	6.3%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Fri (18:00 - 23:00)	Per Hour	38.00	40.00	5.3%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Sat - Sun (10:30 - 23:00)	Per Hour	38.00	40.00	5.3%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 23.00) (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Additional Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Fri (10:30 - 17:30) - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Fri (18:00 - 22:30) - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Sat - Sun - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 23.00) - Registered Charity rate (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Additional Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Fri (10:30 - 17:30)	Per Hour	17.00	18.00	5.9%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Fri (18:00 - 22:30)	Per Hour	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Sat - Sun (10:30 - 22:30)	Per Hour	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 22.30) (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Additional Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Fri (10:30 - 17:30) - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	16.00	17.00	6.3%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Fri (18:00 - 22:30) - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Sat-Sun - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 22.30) - Registered Charity rate - (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Additional Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 22:30)	Per Hour	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 22:30) (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 22:30) - Registered Charity rate	Per Hour	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (10.30 - 22:30) Registered Charity rate - (Casual Staff are required for the event)	Additional Per Hour	12.00	13.00	8.3%
Private Parties (including FOH / Bar staff)				
If the hirer requires daytime rehearsal / set up - this is charged at the hourly rate				
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 23:00)		308.00	324.00	5.2%
Cellar (capacity 60-90) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 23:00) - Registered Charity rate		253.00	266.00	5.1%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 23:00)		308.00	324.00	5.2%
Gallery (capacity 55) - Mon - Sun (18:00 - 23:00) - Registered Charity rate		253.00	266.00	5.1%
There is an additional charge of £60 for technical support if deemed necessary				
Performances & Rehearsals (inc. FOH / Technical / Bar / Box Office Support)				
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Sun (10.00 - 23:00)		743.00	781.00	5.1%
Theatre (capacity 120) - Mon - Sun (10.00 - 23:00) Registered Charity rate		572.00	601.00	5.1%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25				
	Unit Measurement	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge	% Change
Cellar (capacity 30 - 60) - Mon - Sun (10:00 - 23:00)		517.00	543.00	5.0%
Cellar (capacity 30 - 60) - Mon - Sun (10:00 - 23:00) Registered Charity rate		341.00	359.00	5.3%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25				
	Unit Measurement	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge	% Change
Adventure Playgrounds				
Community/Voluntary Group	Per Hour	37.63	39.51	5.0%
Private Group	Per Hour	65.00	68.25	5.0%
Children's Party	Per Hour	65.00	68.25	5.0%
Training Organisation (Play) if no staff needed	Per Hour	34.35	36.07	5.0%
Training Organisation (Care)	Per Hour	55.15	57.90	5.0%
Schools	Per Hour	34.35	36.07	5.0%
Schools	Half Day	66.60	86.25	29.5%
Schools	Full Day	133.20	139.86	5.0%
Sports pitch (Chaulden AP)	Per Hour	39.55	41.52	5.0%
Sports pitch (Grovehill & Woodhall Farm AP)	Per Hour	57.25	60.11	5.0%
Sports pitch (Adeyfield AP)	Per Hour	39.55	41.52	5.0%
Laser Tag (party hire in addition to venue)		67.65	71.03	5.0%
Soft Play	Per Hour	30.00	30.00	0.0%
Zorb Ball (up to 16 people)	Per hour	50.00	50.00	0.0%
Archery Tag	Per hour	50.00	50.00	0.0%
Quad Bikes 30 minute session	Per Person, Per session	15.00	15.00	0.0%
Sports Pitch Hire				
Netball Courts at Cupid Green (November – March from 8am – 6pm April – October from 7am – 9pm)				
Hire of Netball courts by a coach or a club	Per Hour	12.00	12.00	0.0%
Hire of Netball Courts by an individual	Per Hour	No charge	No charge	0.0%
Tennis Courts at Cupid Green (November – March from 8am – 6pm April – October from 7am – 9pm)				
Hire of Tennis Courts by coach or club	Per Hour	6.00	6.00	0.0%
Hire of Tennis Courts by an individual	Per Hour	No charge	No charge	0.0%
Hire of Open Space for Bootcamp (November – March from 8am – 6pm April – October from 7am – 9pm)				
Charges for trainers /companies offering outdoor exercise for more than one person	Per Hour option	6.00	6.00	0.0%
	Per Month option	23.00	23.00	0.0%
	Per Year option	225.00	225.00	0.0%
Personal Trainers offering outdoor exercise for an individual - no charge.		No charge	No charge	0.0%
CCTV				
Civil claims - search of footage	Per Request	21.50	50.00	132.6%
Civil claims - supply of evidence	Per Request	40.00	N/a	-
Civil claims - search of footage and supply of evidence	Per Request	-	150.00	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Fees in this schedule with nil increase year on year are set by statute. Legislation would be required to vary these charges.						
Alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment licences						
Club premises certificates – applications						
Application for new club premises certificate	Band A	100.00	100.00	-	100.00	0.0%
	Band B	190.00	190.00	-	190.00	0.0%
	Band C	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Band D	450.00	450.00	-	450.00	0.0%
	Band E	635.00	635.00	-	635.00	0.0%
	Site under construction/development	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
Application for full variation of club premises certificate	Band A	100.00	100.00	-	100.00	0.0%
	Band B	190.00	190.00	-	190.00	0.0%
	Band C	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Band D	450.00	450.00	-	450.00	0.0%
	Band E	635.00	635.00	-	635.00	0.0%
	Site under construction/development	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
Application for minor variation of club premises certificate		89.00	89.00	-	89.00	0.0%
Request for duplicate copy of certificate following loss/theft/damage		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Change of name or address on club premises certificate		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Change of club rules		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Club premises certificates – annual fees						
Annual fee (payable on anniversary of grant of certificate)	Band A	70.00	-	70.00	70.00	0.0%
	Band B	180.00	-	180.00	180.00	0.0%
	Band C	295.00	-	295.00	295.00	0.0%
	Band D	320.00	-	320.00	320.00	0.0%
	Band E	350.00	-	350.00	350.00	0.0%
	Site under construction/development	295.00	-	295.00	295.00	0.0%
Personal licences						
Application for new personal licence		37.00	37.00	-	37.00	0.0%
Duplicate copy of licence following theft/loss/damage		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Change of name or address		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Premises licences – applications						
Application for new premises licence	Band A	100.00	100.00	-	100.00	0.0%
	Band B	190.00	190.00	-	190.00	0.0%
	Band C	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Band D	450.00	450.00	-	450.00	0.0%
	Band D with multiplier	900.00	900.00	-	900.00	0.0%
	Band E	635.00	635.00	-	635.00	0.0%
	Band E with multiplier	1,905.00	1,905.00	-	1,905.00	0.0%
	Site under construction/development	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Exempt	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	0.0%
Application for full variation of premises licence	Band A	100.00	100.00	-	100.00	0.0%
	Band B	190.00	190.00	-	190.00	0.0%
	Band C	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Band D	450.00	450.00	-	450.00	0.0%
	Band D with multiplier	900.00	900.00	-	900.00	0.0%
	Band E	635.00	635.00	-	635.00	0.0%
	Band E with multiplier	1,905.00	1,905.00	-	1,905.00	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
	Site under construction/development	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
	Exempt	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Additional application fee for high-capacity premises (payable in addition to the standard application fee)	Capacity: 5,000–9,999	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 10,000–14,999	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 15,000–19,999	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	4,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 20,000–29,999	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	8,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 30,000–39,999	16,000.00	16,000.00	-	16,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 40,000–49,999	24,000.00	24,000.00	-	24,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 50,000–59,999	32,000.00	32,000.00	-	32,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 60,000–69,999	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	40,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 70,000–79,999	48,000.00	48,000.00	-	48,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 80,000–89,999	56,000.00	56,000.00	-	56,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 90,000+	64,000.00	64,000.00	-	64,000.00	0.0%
Application for transfer of premises licence		23.00	23.00	-	23.00	0.0%
Application for variation of premises licence to specify premises supervisor		23.00	23.00	-	23.00	0.0%
Application for minor variation of premises licence		89.00	89.00	-	89.00	0.0%
Application to substitute mandatory condition for community premises (if not made simultaneously with another application)		23.00	23.00	-	23.00	0.0%
Application for interim authority notice		23.00	23.00	-	23.00	0.0%
Request for duplicate copy of premises licence following loss/theft/damage		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Change of name or address on premises licence		10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Premises licences – annual fees						
Annual fee (payable on anniversary of grant of licence)	Band A	70.00	-	70.00	70.00	0.0%
	Band B	180.00	-	180.00	180.00	0.0%
	Band C	295.00	-	295.00	295.00	0.0%
	Band D	320.00	-	320.00	320.00	0.0%
	Band D with multiplier	640.00	-	640.00	640.00	0.0%
	Band E	350.00	-	350.00	350.00	0.0%
	Band E with multiplier	1,050.00	-	1,050.00	1,050.00	0.0%
	Site under construction/development	295.00	-	295.00	295.00	0.0%
	Exempt	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	0.0%
Additional annual fee for high-capacity premises (payable in addition to the standard annual fee)	Capacity: 5,000–9,999	500.00	-	500.00	500.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 10,000–14,999	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 15,000–19,999	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 20,000–29,999	4,000.00	-	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 30,000–39,999	8,000.00	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 40,000–49,999	12,000.00	-	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 50,000–59,999	16,000.00	-	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 60,000–69,999	20,000.00	-	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 70,000–79,999	24,000.00	-	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 80,000–89,999	28,000.00	-	28,000.00	28,000.00	0.0%
	Capacity: 90,000+	32,000.00	-	32,000.00	32,000.00	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25					
	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
		Application	Licence	Total fee	
Temporary event notices					
Temporary event notice (standard) - submission fee	21.00	21.00	-	21.00	0.0%
Temporary event notice (late) - submission fee	21.00	21.00	-	21.00	0.0%
Duplicate copy of notice following theft/loss/damage	10.50	10.50	-	10.50	0.0%
Miscellaneous					
Application for provisional statement	315.00	315.00	-	315.00	0.0%
Notification of legal/financial interest in premises	21.00	21.00	-	21.00	0.0%
Animal licences					
*Where licences for multiple animal activities are issued under The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018, the fees will be equivalent to the higher cost activity.					

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25					
	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
		Application	Licence	Total fee	
Animal boarding establishments					
Application for new animal boarding establishment licence (up to 3yrs)	703.00	640.00	70.00	710.00	1.0%
Application to renew animal boarding establishment licence (3yrs)	459.00	390.00	70.00	460.00	0.2%
Application for a new animal boarding establishment Franchise	606.00	540.00	70.00	610.00	0.7%
Application to renew a franchise	362.00	292.00	70.00	362.00	0.0%
Application to vary animal boarding establishment licence (Qualified officer inspection may be required)	235.00	215.00	20.00	235.00	0.0%
Application to vary a franchise to add premises (Qualified officer inspection will be required for each additional premises)	180.00	190.00	-	190.00	5.6%
Application to vary to reduce numbers or types of animals or activities.	32.00	35.00	-	35.00	9.4%
Re-evaluation of star rating (Qualified officer inspection may be required)	32.00	35.00	-	35.00	9.4%
Application to vary an animal boarding establishment (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	-	35.00	9.4%
Qualified officer inspection (where required)	97.00	100.00			3.1%
Veterinary inspection of premises * (where required)	Recharged at cost				
Dangerous wild animals					
Application for licence to keep dangerous wild animals (2yr) (plus cost of vet inspection)	206.00	145.00	65.00	210.00	1.9%
Application to renew licence to keep dangerous wild animals (2yr) (plus cost of vet inspection)	206.00	145.00	65.00	210.00	1.9%
Application to vary licence conditions (new species/increased numbers of animals)	113.00	95.00	20.00	115.00	1.8%
Application to vary licence conditions (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Veterinary inspection of premises *	Recharged at cost				
Dog breeding establishments					
Application for new dog breeding licence (plus cost of vet inspection) (up to 3 yrs)	705.00	650.00	65.00	715.00	1.4%
Application to renew dog breeding licence (plus cost of vet inspection) (up to 3 yrs)	460.00	410.00	65.00	475.00	3.3%
Application to vary an animal breeding establishment (inspection may be required)	111.00	50.00	65.00	115.00	3.6%
Re-evaluation of star rating (inspection may be required)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Application to vary licence (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Qualified officer inspection (where required)	97.00	100.00			3.1%
Veterinary inspection of premises *	Recharged at cost				
Pet shops					
Application for new pet shop licence (up to 3yrs)	703.00	640.00	70.00	710.00	1.0%
Application to renew pet shop licence (up to 3yrs)	457.00	390.00	70.00	460.00	0.7%
Application to vary a pet shop licence (Qualified officer inspection may be required)	208.00	220.00	0.00	220.00	5.8%
Application to vary a pet shop licence - reduce animals	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Re-evaluation of star rating (Qualified officer inspection may be required)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Application to vary licence (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%
Qualified officer inspection (where required)	97.00	100.00			3.1%
Veterinary inspection of premises * (where required)	Recharged at cost				

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
	2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change	
		Application	Licence	Total fee		
Riding establishments						
Application for new riding establishment licence	566.00	525.00	65.00	590.00	4.2%	
Application to renew riding establishment licence (plus cost of vet inspection)	362.00	380.00	0.00	380.00	5.0%	
Application to vary a riding establishment licence (Inspection may be required)	111.00	50.00	65.00	115.00	3.6%	
Application to vary - to reduce licensable activities or numbers of animals	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%	
Re-evaluation of star rating (Inspection may be required)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%	
Application to vary licence (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%	
Qualified officer inspection (where required)	97.00	100.00			3.1%	
Veterinary inspection of premises *		Recharged at cost				
Keeping of Exhibition/Performing Animals						
Application for a new licence for keeping exhibition/performing animals	445.00	415.00	55.00	470.00	5.6%	
Application for to renew licence for keeping exhibition/performing animals	362.00	320.00	55.00	375.00	3.6%	
Application to vary licence to keep or train animals for exhibition (Qualified officer inspection may be required)	208.00	195.00	20.00	215.00	3.4%	
Application to vary a licence for keeping exhibition/performing animals to reduce licensable activities or number of animal	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%	
Application to vary licence (administrative matters only)	32.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	9.4%	
Qualified officer inspection (where required)	97.00	100.00			3.1%	
Veterinary inspection of premises * (where required)		Recharged at cost				
Zoos						
Application for new zoo licence (4yr) (plus cost of vet inspection)	2,064.00	1,780.00	320.00	2,100.00	1.7%	
Application to renew zoo licence (6yr) (plus cost of vet inspection)	1,404.00	1,180.00	320.00	1,500.00	6.8%	
Application to vary zoo licence (plus cost of vet inspection)	2,064.00	1,780.00	320.00	2,100.00	1.7%	
Application to transfer zoo licence (plus cost of vet inspection)	243.00	220.00	45.00	265.00	9.1%	
Veterinary inspection of premises *		Recharged at cost				
Betting, gambling and lottery licences						
Lottery registrations						
Registration of society for small society lotteries	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	0.0%	
Annual fee (payable on anniversary of registration)	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.0%	
Notices						
Temporary use notice submission fee	409.00	409.00	0.00	409.00	0.0%	
Duplicate copy of temporary use notice following theft/loss/damage	18.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	11.1%	
Occasional use notice submission fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	0.0%	
Permits						
Notification of 1-2 gaming machine in alcohol-licensed premises	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.0%	
Licensed premises gaming machine permit	Application for new permit	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	0.0%
	Application for variation of permit	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Application for transfer of permit	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	0.0%
	Change of name or address	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	0.0%
	Replacement - theft/loss	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
	Annual fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Club gaming permit	Application for new permit (standard)	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.0%
	Application for new permit (fast track)	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Application for variation of permit	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit (standard)	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit (fast track)	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Replacement - theft/loss	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
	Annual fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.0%
Club machine permit	Application for new permit (standard)	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.0%
	Application for new permit (fast track)	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Application for variation of permit	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit (standard)	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit (fast track)	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.0%
	Replacement - theft/loss	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
	Annual fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.0%
Prize gaming permit	Application for new permit	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.0%
	Change of name or address	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	0.0%
	Replacement - theft/loss	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
Family entertainment centre gaming machine permit	Application for new permit	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.0%
	Application for renewal of permit	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.0%
	Change of name or address	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	0.0%
	Replacement - theft/loss	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
Premises licences - applications						
Application for new premises licence (without provisional statement)	Adult gaming centre	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Betting (track)	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Betting (other)	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Bingo	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Family entertainment centre	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
Application for new premises licence (with provisional statement)	Adult gaming centre	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Betting (track)	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Betting (other)	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Bingo	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Family entertainment centre	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
Application for provisional statement	Adult gaming centre	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Betting (track)	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Betting (other)	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Bingo	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Family entertainment centre	1,282.00	1,345.00	0.00	1,345.00	4.9%
	Adult gaming centre	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Betting (track)	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Application for variation of premises licence	Betting (other)	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Bingo	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
	Family entertainment centre	883.00	925.00	0.00	925.00	4.8%
Application for transfer of premises licence	Adult gaming centre	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Betting (track)	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Betting (other)	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Bingo	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Family entertainment centre	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
Application for reinstatement of premises licence	Adult gaming centre	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Betting (track)	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Betting (other)	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Bingo	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
	Family entertainment centre	372.00	390.00	0.00	390.00	4.8%
Duplicate copy of licence following theft/loss/damage		18.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	11.1%
Change of name or address on premises licence		41.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	9.8%
Premises licences – annual fees						
Annual fee (payable 30 days after the licence takes effect, and then annually on the anniversary of the grant of the licence)	Adult gaming centre	564.00	0.00	590.00	590.00	4.6%
	Betting (track)	564.00	0.00	590.00	590.00	4.6%
	Betting (other)	564.00	0.00	590.00	590.00	4.6%
	Bingo	564.00	0.00	590.00	590.00	4.6%
	Family entertainment centre	564.00	0.00	590.00	590.00	4.6%
Charity collections						
House-to-house collections						
Application for house to house collection licence		No fee	0.00	0.00	No fee	0.0%
Street collections						
Application for street collection licence		No fee	0.00	0.00	No fee	0.0%
Hypnotism						
Authorisation of hypnotism performance		No fee	0.00	0.00	No fee	0.0%
Scrap metal dealers						
Application for new scrap metal site licence (3yr)		342.00	290.00	70.00	360.00	5.3%
Application for new scrap metal collectors licence (3yr)		246.00	230.00	35.00	265.00	7.7%
Application to renew scrap metal site licence (3yr)		322.00	275.00	70.00	345.00	7.1%
Application to renew scrap metal collectors licence (3yr)		227.00	210.00	35.00	245.00	7.9%
Application to vary scrap metal licence - change of licensee details		19.00	20.00	1.00	21.00	10.5%
Application to vary scrap metal licence - change of licensed sites		96.00	100.00	1.00	101.00	5.2%
Application to vary scrap metal licence - change of site managers		57.00	60.00	1.00	61.00	7.0%
Application to vary scrap metal licence - site to collectors licence		35.00	35.00	1.00	36.00	2.9%
Application to vary scrap metal licence - collectors to site licence		169.00	130.00	45.00	175.00	3.6%
Sex establishments						
Application for new sex establishment licence		2,372.00	2,130.00	285.00	2,415.00	1.8%
Application for renewal of sex establishment licence		1,908.00	1,635.00	285.00	1,920.00	0.6%
Application for variation of sex establishment licence		1,036.00	925.00	130.00	1,055.00	1.8%
Application for transfer of sex establishment licence		465.00	485.00	0.00	485.00	4.3%
Skin piercing, tattooing, etc.						
Application for registration of skin piercing, etc., premises		266.00	280.00	0.00	280.00	5.3%
Application for registration of skin piercing, etc., operator		125.00	130.00	0.00	130.00	4.0%
Street trading						
	New (1 vehicle/pitch)	742.00	475.00	290.00	765.00	3.1%
	Renewal (1 vehicle/pitch)	675.00	475.00	290.00	675.00	0.0%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Street trading consent (annual) (1 year)	Additional fee per extra vehicle/pitch	82.00	40.00	45.00	85.00	3.7%
	Interim substitution of vehicle	28.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	7.1%
	Other consent variation	158.00	170.00	0.00	170.00	7.6%
Street trading consent (single event)	Commercial event	177.00	185.00	0.00	185.00	4.5%
	Community/charity event	33.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	6.1%
Street trading consent partial year (up to 6 months)		383.00	255.00	150.00	405.00	5.7%
Taxis and private hire						
Driver licences						
Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (3 years) [external e-form/checks]	New	309.00	325.00	0.00	325.00	5.2%
	Renewal	238.00	255.00	0.00	255.00	7.1%
	Theft/loss of badge	22.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	13.6%
Private Hire Drivers Licence (3 years) [external e-form/checks]	New	309.00	325.00	0.00	325.00	5.2%
	Renewal	251.00	255.00	0.00	255.00	1.6%
	Theft/loss of badge	22.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	13.6%
Dual HC/PH Drivers Licence (3 years) [external e-form/checks]	New	338.00	360.00	0	360.00	6.5%
	Renewal	279.00	295.00	0	295.00	5.7%
	Renewal & Upgrade interim upgrade (+£1 / unexpired month)	79.00	85.00	0	85.00	7.6%
	Theft/loss of badge (per)	22.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	13.6%
Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure * [in-house]		Recharged at cost + £15 admin		80.00		0.0%
External identity check (DBS route 2 verification) * [in-house]		Recharged at cost		10.00		0.0%
Driving licence verification check * [in-house]		Recharged at cost		10.00		0.0%
Driver knowledge tests						
Hackney carriage written local/legal test	Full test	84.00	90.00		90.00	7.1%
	Conditions only	46.00	50.00		50.00	8.7%
Private hire written local/legal test	Full test	84.00	90.00		90.00	7.1%
	Conditions only	46.00	50.00		50.00	8.7%
Dual HC/PH driver written local/legal test	Full test	84.00	90.00		90.00	7.1%
	Conditions only	46.00	50.00		50.00	8.7%
Versant English language assessment	Test fee *	Recharged at cost		31.80		
	Administration fee	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.0%
Operator licences						
Private hire operator licence (5 years)	New (0-3 vehicles)	487.00	515.00		515.00	5.7%
	New (4+ vehicles)	826.00	865.00		865.00	4.7%
	Renewal (1-3 vehicles)	487.00	515.00		515.00	5.7%
	Renewal (4+ vehicles)	826.00	865.00		865.00	4.7%
Vehicle licences						
Hackney carriage vehicle licence (excludes compliance test fee)	New (1 year)	407.00	430.00		430.00	5.7%
	Renewal (1 year)	303.00	315.00		315.00	4.0%
	Renewal & substitution (1 year)	303.00	315.00		315.00	4.0%
	Interim substitution (remaining duration)	145.00	150.00		150.00	3.4%
	Transfer of ownership	69.00	75.00		75.00	8.7%
	Theft/loss of rear plate	21.00	25.00		25.00	19.0%
	Theft/loss of front plate	21.00	25.00		25.00	19.0%
	Change of vehicle particulars	61.00	65.00		65.00	6.6%

HOUSING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25						
		2023/24 Charge	2024/25 Proposed Charge			% change
			Application	Licence	Total fee	
Private hire vehicle licence (excludes compliance test fee)	New (1 year)	271.00	285.00		285.00	5.2%
	Renewal (1 year)	271.00	285.00		285.00	5.2%
	Renewal & substitution (1 yr.)	275.00	290.00		290.00	5.5%
	Interim substitution (remaining duration)	145.00	150.00		150.00	3.4%
	Transfer of ownership	69.00	75.00		75.00	8.7%
	Theft/loss of rear plate	21.00	25.00		25.00	19.0%
	Theft/loss of front plate	21.00	25.00		25.00	19.0%
	Change of vehicle particulars	61.00	65.00		65.00	6.6%
Vehicle MOT and compliance test * (payable direct to test station)		Recharged at cost	52.00			
Other fees						
Duplicate copy of licence following theft/loss/damage		18.00	20.00		20.00	11.1%
General service charges						
Photocopies (per A4 side, at officers discretion, subject to legal restrictions)		0.20	0.25		0.25	25.0%
Copy of interview recording following PACE interview (per tape/disc)		19.00	20.00		20.00	5.3%
Copy of public register entry (where kept and made available by statute) (per entry)		18.00	20.00		20.00	11.1%
Request for duplicate copy of licence following loss/theft/damage (where not otherwise listed)		17.00	20.00		20.00	17.6%
Licensing pre-application advice (per whole or part hour)		53.00	55.00		55.00	3.8%



Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report for:	Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Housing Strategy 2014- 2029
Date:	6 th December 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Simy Dhyani, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	1 – Housing Strategy 2 – Action plan
Background papers:	
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

Report Author / Responsible Officer

Simon Walton, Head of Strategy, Quality & Assurance



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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
Wards affected	All
Purpose of the report:	1. Approval of Housing Strategy
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. Approve Housing Strategy
Period for post policy/project review:	Annual review against action plan

1 Introduction/Background:

A Housing Strategy is a legislative requirement, however as a service we want to make it a more meaningful document which outlines:

- The level of housing need in Dacorum and how we will drive up housing standards
- How we will drive forward the provision of genuinely affordable housing
- Explain how we will provide help for people in Dacorum who are facing the cost of living crisis, homelessness, poor housing conditions or who have other additional needs
- Tell people how we will champion diversity and resettle refugees
- Outline how we will make the best use of available land
- Explain how we will work with other landlords such as housing associations, and private landlords to ensure that all homes in Dacorum are safe, warm and dry

2 Key Issues/proposals/main body of the report:

To develop this strategy we considered a number of key changes in the housing sector, on both a national and local scale, as well as the needs of the service users and our communities. Based on this this we have developed five, outcome-based commitments:

- **Commitment one:** To become an excellent social landlord, delivering tailored services that meet the needs of our residents.
- **Commitment two:** Demonstrate dedication to tackling the climate emergency in Dacorum. Reducing the carbon footprint of our existing housing stock, and take steps to ensure that all new homes meet excellent thermal efficiency standards.
- **Commitment three:** Challenge ourselves and partners to work collaboratively to maximise the delivery of genuinely affordable new homes.
- **Commitment four:** Champion the provision of safe, warm and dry homes across the borough.
- **Commitment five:** Meet the diverse housing needs of everyone living in Dacorum.

The Strategy is supported by a shared action plan, which will be a live document to capture how we will work with partners to deliver the commitments in the strategy. We will also develop supporting success measures to record outcomes and hold ourselves to account throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

To support the Strategy and make it a live document, we will host an annual stakeholder conference. This annual event will enable us to work with partners and stakeholders to review and drive progress on the actions detailed in the action plan. The networking opportunity at this event will create opportunities for further partnership working and allow us as a group to align the strategy with the most up to date legislation and best practice.

Once approved the Housing Strategy will be launched at an event, including stakeholders and partners. The event will take place in Spring 2024.

3 Options and alternatives considered

Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 A Housing Strategy puts local housing strategies on a statutory basis to reflect the Government's belief that a robust strategy is essential to the delivery of local authorities' housing functions

4 Consultation

The Housing Strategy has been developed in partnership with Officers across Dacorum and with stakeholders, the activity to date has included:

September 2022 – HQN commissioned - To lead on the stakeholder consultation and produce the draft strategy.

November 2022 – Stakeholder consultation event - Over 100 attendees from local authority partners, registered providers, Homes England, Charity sector and more, helped shape the Commitments and action plan.

December 2022 – 2 staff consultation sessions - Including teams across the Council, feeding back on operational

deliverables.

May 2023 - The Housing Strategy has been substantially rewritten to take on board the priorities of our engaged residents, the new Administration and the changing regulatory framework.

The Housing Strategy and its priorities have been aligned with the HRA Business plan, Local Plan, and new Corporate Plan.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

The Housing Strategy has been developed to align with the HRA Business plan. The Strategy explores opportunities for us to make the best use of our housing stock, but also take a wider strategic view by linking with the strategic asset review and local plan.

The Strategy has been developed closely working with residents and partners, and the shared action plan will include actions for both Dacorum and our partners, by working collaboratively we can seek out value for money and maximise outcomes.

6 Legal Implications

The Housing Strategy has been aligned with current and emerging legislation, in particular the Social Housing Regulatory Act which will introduce inspections from the Social Housing Regulator. This document will underpin our approach to delivering a housing service which will deliver the best service for our residents, and also how we will demonstrate our compliance with the Consumer Standards and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

7 Risk implications:

We are keen for the Housing Strategy to be a dynamic and live document, which is owned by us and also our partners and stakeholders. The ongoing engagement and annual stakeholder conferences will be key in the success of the supporting action plan.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

Community Impact Assessment reviewed/carried out and annexed at appendix 3

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

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

Central to this document is the consideration and actions to tackle the climate emergency. The Strategy also outlines the promotion of health, wellbeing and safety for our Tenants and Leaseholders, but also the wider community in Dacorum, no matter what tenure they are.

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

11 Conclusions:

The recommendation is that Cabinet approve the Housing Strategy.



Housing Strategy

2024-2029

Date of Publication

10/2023

Version Number

2.0

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1 Foreword: A New Approach to Housing—Right home, right place, right price

I am pleased to introduce our new housing strategy, developed with partners who will continue working with us to deliver our shared commitments.

The urgent climate emergency calls for meaningful and targeted action, to lead the Council's housing stock to our target of net zero carbon by, or preferably before 2050. However, we aspire to go beyond this and to be a champion for action to tackle climate change with all housing providers in the borough. As part of this commitment, we will look to promote greening of estates to make sure everyone can access attractive open space to support their wellbeing, and to benefit native wildlife.

We aspire to making accommodation in Dacorum high quality, energy efficient and as importantly affordable, particularly for younger people who may have limited options due to the high cost of home ownership. I am also passionate about providing high quality and sought-after housing for older people, which supports them to thrive into their retirement. We will continue to create sustainable communities, where everyone feels safe and supported, including those who have come into our borough as asylum seekers or refugees.

Housing is the key foundation for a good life; stable and affordable accommodation is a basic requirement for good health, education and employment. This strategy sets out our five commitments and how the Council and its partners will do their utmost to make sure that everyone in Dacorum can access warm, safe, secure housing to meet their needs, in an attractive, welcoming community where people from all backgrounds feel at home.

[Simy Dhyani](#)
[Portfolio Holder, Housing and Property Services](#)

2 Introduction

Dacorum is an aspirational place: close to the Capital, with excellent standards of education and a broad range of employment. Dacorum is surrounded by beautiful and accessible countryside, including part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the National Trust's 2,000 hectare Ashridge Estate. Dacorum is proud to be the home of 85% of the world's extremely rare chalk streams, Rivers Gade, Bulbourne, Ver and Chess.

The main town of Hemel Hempstead already hosts successful retail and business areas and is targeted for future growth, whilst the desirable market towns of Berkhamsted and Tring

are surrounded by attractive villages.

Dacorum's ever-growing population places increased demands on services, but brings improving economic prosperity, with economies of scale allowing the prospect of greater efficiency and cost-savings. Dacorum Borough Council is committed to working with partners to deliver good quality affordable housing, particularly for those in greatest need. We let Council homes at truly affordable 'social rent', but our commitments go beyond this; we want everyone living in the borough to have a warm and dry home and we will encourage a move towards sustainable heat sources across all tenures. We want to build strong and vibrant communities; we work hard to prevent homelessness and end rough sleeping. And we commit to ensuring that our own stock of over 10,000 homes is well-managed and maintained.

We are proud of our achievements: We have successfully bid for funding from Homes England and used this to build award-winning developments. Our commitment to building and letting these homes at truly affordable 'social rent' – around 50% of local market rents – is demonstrated by the fact that over the five years up to 2022, Dacorum Borough Council had the second-highest number of starts on site for social rent of any Local Authority in the whole of England and Wales (Exceeded only by Birmingham City Council).

Dacorum Borough Council's ambitious development programme is already delivering its own additional social rented units, and we will continue to seek funding from Homes England. We also work collaboratively with other registered providers to develop affordable homes. In addition to new build opportunities, we are keen to make the best use of our property and estates to create thriving and sustainable communities. To inform this we are carrying out a Strategic Asset review on our housing estates, sheltered housing and garages.

In the financial year ending April 2022, the Council had agreed planning permission for 159 units for social rent, and 470 affordable rent properties across Dacorum, prioritising brownfield development to avoid undue pressure on green open spaces. Investment in development will be balanced with a sound investment and stock improvement strategy. In 2021, the Council commissioned the BRE to review all private dwellings in Dacorum. This report, together with the recently-commissioned stock condition survey of the Council's own stock, will inform the investment programme for the lifetime of this strategy.

Housing is not just about bricks and mortar, it's about the quality of the home, the services provided and the positive impact good housing has on communities and the local economy. An effective housing strategy will support our vision to deliver the Council's corporate strategy together with those focused on place making, the local economy, health and well-

being, and the delivery of highly energy efficient homes for all tenure types.

The strategy is being developed at a time when inflation and living costs are high. The climate emergency impact threatens to increase energy prices, making energy-efficiency crucial. Many Dacorum residents are struggling. We want to make sure that no-one becomes homeless because of the financial pressures on households – regardless of their tenure. The Council and its partners also face financial pressures; costs are rising, including the cost of delivering new homes and improving existing stock. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to the actions in this strategy.

This housing strategy has been developed with support and input from a wide range of stakeholders and partners, all of whom play a vital role in meeting our resident's needs. We reviewed our previous housing strategy and used input from stakeholders including our partners, residents, Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TLC), the Supported Housing Forum and staff to determine the main housing issues that the Council should address. The feedback around the Council's role in helping to deliver new homes was positive, with the key issue for residents and organisations being affordability and the challenges this brings to our local community.

We will continue to consult and work collaboratively with our partners and local residents about housing issues throughout the life of this strategy in order to ensure that our services provide value for money and meet local need.

3 Our vision

The Council's corporate plan commits us to ensuring delivery of 5,000 new homes in the borough by 2025 (including 400 new Council homes, let at a social rent) and to investing £88 million in our housing stock. Yet we know that the population is growing and that it may become increasingly difficult for many households to afford market rent or a mortgage.

Our vision is:

People living in Dacorum have a safe, warm and affordable home that meets their needs; homes are energy-efficient and tackle the Climate and ecological emergency.

The housing strategy supports the Council's vision and priorities of:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
 - Building strong and vibrant communities
 - Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Climate and Ecological Emergency - working to deliver net zero carbon.

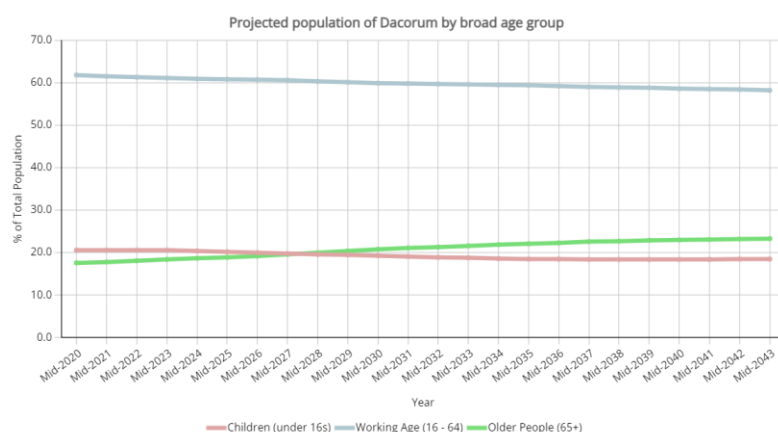
Dacorum Borough Council develops a robust annual Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to ensure that income is invested efficiently into its housing stock and landlord service delivery. This strategy complements key strategies, by providing the context for the delivery of good quality affordable housing, in particular for those in greatest need.

4 About Dacorum

Located in Hertfordshire, just outside the Greater London area, Dacorum sits amongst the countryside of the Chiltern Hills and includes an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The borough has easy access both into London and the countryside along well-established road and rail networks. Our location offers the best of both worlds, making Dacorum an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Dacorum’s population grew by 7.1% between 2011-2021. The age distribution is similar to the average in England, but Dacorum has a slightly larger proportion of young people than the national average. 61.9% of the population is working age (16-64), with 83% in employment.

The proportion of young people has fallen over time as the population ages, which is a trend projected to continue in the future. Household size is predicted to continue to fall (from 2.36 in 2006 to 2.15 in 2031), particularly as a consequence of an increase in one-person households. The percentage of the population from minority and ethnic groups in the borough is below both the East of England and national averages. The largest non-white minority ethnic group is people of Asian origin.

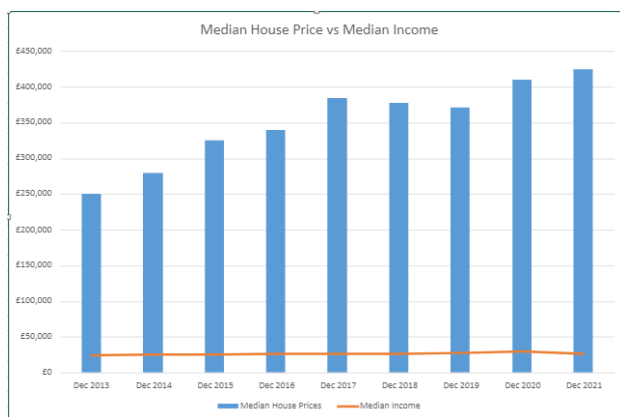


Around 60% of Dacorum lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which poses some development constraints. However, it also sets a foundation for a creative and innovative approach to sustainable development, such as regeneration and re-purposing underutilised land. The Council’s priority will always be to make best use of these ‘brownfield’ sites.

Weekly wages for those living in Dacorum are higher than the East of England and National average. House prices are high due to the borough’s proximity to London and its attractive local environment. House prices are very high relative to incomes, which means that many local people find it difficult to access suitable accommodation, particularly in the private sector.

Demand and need for housing has been assessed through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2020 (covering six Hertfordshire authorities, including Dacorum). The SHMA provides information on the type and tenure of housing required to meet need and market demand across different housing markets. The SHMA demonstrates that the average sale price for houses in Dacorum increased by 29.87% from 2014 to 2019, and the average market rental cost increased by 17.50%.

In 2021, there were 66,078 dwellings in Dacorum, of which 61% were owner-occupied, 18% privately rented and 21% socially rented. The existing stock of housing is generally of good quality and there are very low levels of vacancy. The proportion of Council-owned housing is higher than other local authority areas within Hertfordshire, which reflects Hemel Hempstead’s New Town legacy. The borough has a mix of housing types that includes a large proportion of terraced housing, modest levels of detached properties, and lower proportions of flats and semi-detached properties when compared with adjoining districts.



5 Place Making & Our Local Plan

Dacorum’s Local Plan sets out a strategic vision to address the borough-wide need for housing, employment, and retail and other development, including the required levels and mix of affordable housing on qualifying sites. The current Local Plan and supporting documents are published on the Council’s website and kept up-to-date to ensure that we incorporate national changes, such as the Government’s [‘First Homes’](#) scheme.

Looking to the future, over the coming decades Dacorum's main town of Hemel Hempstead will be transformed through major regeneration and investment that will see it evolve into a Garden Town, with a vibrant and dynamic centre.

The Hemel Garden Communities partners – Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter - are working together with The Crown Estate, who are a major landowner, and other strategic landowners. Resident consultations and community engagement will play a key part in shaping these proposals, which will include delivery of truly affordable homes to meet the needs of the local community.

The project partners are working to create a greener, more connected New Town through the delivery of more than 11,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs by 2050. This will provide a variety of benefits to Hemel Hempstead including integrated neighbourhoods with new high-quality, mixed tenure homes and vibrant local centres providing facilities such as shops, schools, doctors' surgeries, green spaces and leisure activities. The communities will be connected through sustainable transport links, footpaths and cycle ways to encourage and enable more walking, cycling and trips by public transport, as we transform to a greener, healthier environment. For more information, please visit:

www.hemelgardencommunities.co.uk/about-us and [New Dacorum Local Plan \(to 2038\)](#)

6 National and local considerations

Whilst developing this strategy the housing Sector faces significant legislative change. The introduction of the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) will provide the legal basis for many of the measures set out in [the 2020 social housing white paper](#). The Act is intended to deliver 'transformational change' for social housing residents and fulfil the Government's [2019 manifesto pledge](#) to empower residents, provide greater redress, better regulation and improve the quality of social housing.

A large part of empowering residents and giving them greater redress is delivered through the Housing Ombudsman, who investigates and resolves disputes between tenants, leaseholders and landlords. We pride ourselves on putting our customers first, and learning lessons when things go wrong, so we will continue to work proactively with complainants and the Housing Ombudsman to ensure that our residents feel valued and heard.

Another way Dacorum will deliver its key value of customer focus, will be by demonstrating our performance against the new Tenant Satisfaction measures and [Consumer standards](#). [The Tenant Satisfaction Measures](#) will require Dacorum to collect and report data to the

regulator annually, starting in spring 2024. We will collect information from tenant perception surveys and landlord performance data will cover five main themes: repairs, building safety, effective complaint-handling, respectful and helpful tenant engagement, and responsible neighbourhood management. The Regulator of Social Housing will use this data to monitor us against the new consumer standards to ensure Dacorum is efficient, well-governed, and delivers homes to meet a range of needs. We will report our performance against this new regulatory regime via our [website](#) and our monthly Housing e-newsletter, 'Housing Matters'.

Focus on safety in our homes will continue to be a priority as the Building Safety Act reforms are rolled out, giving our residents and leaseholders more rights, powers and protections. In particular, we will work collaboratively with our residents in blocks which fall within the 'higher risk' category within the scope of the Act to deliver a tailored service to them.

In addition to these legislative changes, there are other factors at a national level that have influenced this strategy and action plan. The key current issues and legislation are:

- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- National Planning Policy Framework and the introduction of First Homes
- Welfare Reform, in particular the impact of Universal Credit on residents' incomes and arrears.

The Climate Emergency (Climate Change Committee, the IPCC and the UN Sustainable Development Goals)

- Local Housing Allowance and the impact on benefit levels and affordability
- Grenfell inquiry and the Hackett report
- The social housing white paper – 'A new charter for social housing'
- The Building Safety Act
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)
- The impact of COVID 19
- Refugees and those with no recourse to public funds.
- Increased cost of living
- The war in Ukraine

7 Affordability

There is significant demand for affordable housing across Dacorum, with more than 1,300 households currently on the housing register and another 100 needing a transfer due to changing needs (September 2023 figures).

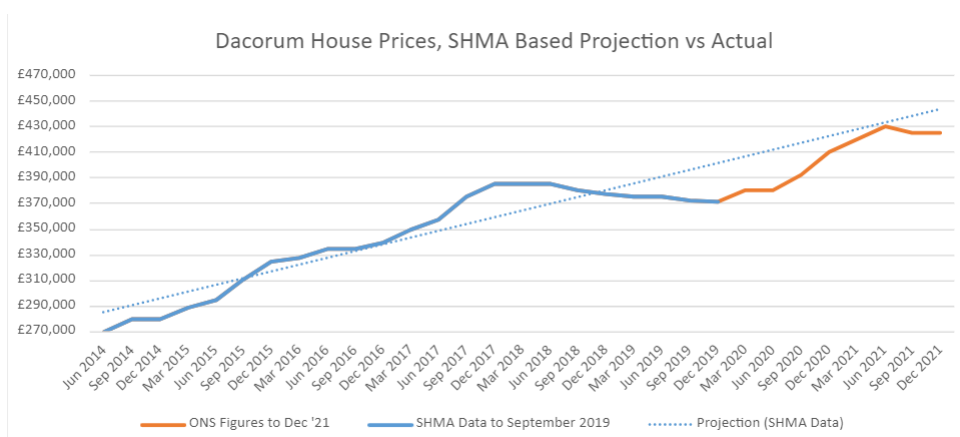
Although Dacorum has high employment, affordability is a major issue, with high rent levels in the private sector contributing to a growing affordability gap.

The growing housing market affordability gap sees middle income households being squeezed out. Increasing interest rates will continue to compound this. Many are left with limited options for home ownership or in the private rented sector. Whilst average house prices have increased by 29.87% from 2014 to 2019 and median rent has increased by 17.50%, median income has only increased by 13.01% since 2013. This can clearly be seen in the median affordability ratio, which measures how many years of gross median income is required to purchase a median house. From 2013 to 2019, the ratio has worsened from 8.7 to 11.06. This is a significantly greater increase than in the years leading up to 2013, which saw the median ratio increase from 8.1 in 2005 to 8.7 in 2013. Median household income has seen a slightly larger increase from 2014 to 2019, rising by 18.79%, but this is still significantly lower than the increases in housing costs.

This pressure is even greater for lower-income households. Lower quartile house prices and rent have risen by 27.61% and 26.47% respectively, whilst lower quartile income has only risen by 2.10%. This has led to the affordability ratio growing from 9.4 in 2013 to 12.2 in 2019.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates across the borough vary, but the majority lies within the South West Herts LHA area. The average monthly rental cost of a two-bedroom property in Dacorum is consistently higher than the LHA rate, particularly in Berkhamsted, Tring and rural areas.

In 2022, the majority of demand on the housing register across the borough is for one-bedroom properties, representing 64.4% of current need. Two and three-bedroom properties have the next highest level of demand, at 17.4% and 14.3% respectively. 61.8% of housing register applicants are aged between 18 and 39 years.



Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates across the borough vary, but the majority lies within the South West Herts LHA area. The average monthly rental cost of a two-bedroom property in Dacorum is consistently higher than the LHA rate, particularly in Berkhamsted, Tring and rural areas.

In 2022, the majority of demand on the housing register across the borough was for one-bedroom properties, representing 64.4% of current need, due to the high number of single applicants on the waiting list. However the applicants with higher points allocated based on need require two and three-bedroom properties which are the next highest level of demand, at 17.4% and 14.3% respectively. 61.8% of housing register applicants are aged between 18 and 39 years.

8 Our Customers and Services:

To deliver a modern and efficient services which support the vision in our corporate plan 2020-2025 *“Working in partnership to create a borough which enables the communities of Dacorum to thrive and prosper”*, we have developed a vision for our customers, which is:

“To put the customer at the centre of our services in order to provide a positive and effective customer experience, and to empower our staff so they can deliver consistent and quality Council services.”

We have Set out our customer vision, principles, and approach to our customer engagement in our customer strategy, which will enable us to consistently design and deliver our services which meet the need of our tenants, whilst managing the ongoing financial pressures that local authorities face.

Our goals are to:

- Put the customer at the centre of our services
- Provide a positive and effective customer experience.
- Empower our staff so they can deliver consistent and quality Council services

- Establish a corporate approach to customer research, customer feedback and continuous improvement
- Influence customer behaviour to encourage increased adoption of online and automated channels
- Embed customer focus in all roles, teams, and services, and manage ourselves against this
- Provide us with customer insight and increase intelligence-led decision making
- Reduce the cost of interactions and remove inefficiencies

9 Our Commitments

To develop this strategy we considered a number of key changes in the housing sector, on both a national and local scale, as well as the needs of the service and our communities.

Based on this this we have developed five, outcome-based commitments:

Commitment one: To become an excellent social landlord, delivering services that meet the needs of our residents.

Commitment two: Demonstrate dedication to tackling the climate emergency in Dacorum. Reducing energy consumption of our existing housing stock, and take steps to ensure that all new homes meet excellent thermal efficiency standards.

Commitment three: Champion the provision of safe, warm and dry homes across the borough.

Commitment four: Champion a culture of collaboration, both internally and with external stakeholders to deliver services and positive outcomes

Commitment five: Seek to meet the diverse housing needs of everyone living in Dacorum

10 Commitment One: To become an excellent social landlord, delivering services that meet the needs of our residents.

We will:

· Acknowledge that change is required, and complete a transformational review of our Housing and Property Services directorate - known as the Housing Transformation & Improvement Project (HTIP) to deliver an excellent, open and co-developed with customers housing and property service.

· Listen to and act upon the voice of our residents. Ensure all feedback opportunities are maximised, and feedback data and insight from Tenants is fed into service improvement plans. Making 'You said – We did' real life and key to everything we do.

Co-design services with customers, seeking feedback and aligning those services with the people they serve.

Effectively use data to help us understand our customers, so we can consistently design and deliver our services that meet the needs of our residents.

- Work collaboratively with residents' via a range of engagement opportunities including formal meetings, survey responses, particularly Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), and embed the feedback and scrutiny from Tenants into service planning and budget setting.
- Work closely with industry professional bodies to deliver services delivering best practice.
- Develop tailored service plans for each department within the Housing and Property service which focus on meeting the needs of residents, and are developed through analysis and delivery of the Tenant voice.
- Empower residents to achieve their aspirations and goals by providing resources such as our free online learning portal, '[Dacorum Online Training \(DOT\)](#)'.
- Provide advice and support to help out Tenants minimise the impact to them of the cost of living crisis. In particular: provide guidance to maximise household income by accessing all benefits to which they are entitled, help with household budgeting, and a proactive approach by our rent and income team to tackle arrears empathetically and holistically.
- Use the outcomes of the Housing Regulator's new inspection regime to drive further service improvement, with the aim of becoming a top-performing landlord that is always the landlord of choice for home-seekers throughout Dacorum.

11 Commitment Two: Demonstrate dedication to tackling the climate emergency in Dacorum. Reducing energy consumption of our existing housing stock, and take steps to ensure that all new homes meet excellent thermal efficiency standards.

We will:

- Ensure that all decisions around construction and maintenance of the Council's housing stock support the aims set out in Dacorum Borough Council's [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy](#) and milestone updates.
 - Support and encourage all landlords and homeowners to move to more sustainable energy sources, offering advice, information and exploring the potential for loans or signposting to grants where needed.
 - Play a proactive role in exploring available/emerging technologies to reduce reliance on carbon-based fuels
- Develop a robust affordable housing policy, to secure affordable housing through development.
- Tackle fuel poverty and the climate emergency by ensuring all Council-owned housing meets at least Energy-efficiency rating 'C' by 2030, and achieve net zero carbon before 2050.
 - Roll out insulation improvements across the council-owned stock. To support de-carbonisation and increase energy efficiency and affordability of utilities for Tenants.

- Continue to build new homes that go beyond current sustainable build standards, and aim to require our new homes to have passive provision for, or actually use, the latest green technology for heating and the proper climate change mitigation required for the future.
 - Develop a plan for greening housing estates to provide accessible and attractive outside space.
 - Incorporate permeable paving, wildflowers, bat and bird and other wildlife boxes into Dacorum's new builds, and current estates.
- Climate Generation instead of Climate Emergency. Work with Dacorum Climate Action Network (DCAN) partners and residents to reduce, re-use and recycle our consumption, make proper space for wildlife and generate renewable energy for the grid.

12 Commitment Three: Champion the provision of safe, warm and dry homes across the Borough

We will:

- Continue to ensure all Council-owned properties meet the Decent Homes standard and other regulatory standards.
- We will work towards a zero tolerance approach to damp, mould and condensation by improving thermal properties of our own less well-insulated older homes, and act quickly when problems do arise, as well as informing and supporting other landlords to maintain high standards.
- Explore potential for area/district heating schemes where this will deliver lower cost energy for individual households and reduce emissions.
- Ensure that each HRA Business Plan during the life of this strategy takes account of the need to upgrade the energy efficiency of our older housing stock.
- Continue to build more new homes than are sold under Right to Buy, and to use renewable technologies to ensure that these homes that are energy efficient and reduce costs.
- Work with RP partners to ensure that all housing association stock meets the Decent Homes Standard and other regulatory standards, hosting a regular Landlord Forum to facilitate this aim.
- Ensure that all Landlords in Dacorum, including RP's have robust process in place to tackle damp and mould, and ensure works are carried out efficiently to resolve problems.
- Continue to work with private landlords to ensure all privately rented properties meet all relevant legislative standards, offering advice and information as needed and using enforcement activity when appropriate.
- Continue to license HMOs to ensure they are of a good standard, safe and well-managed.
- Use stock condition survey data to inform decisions around the future of stock.
- Empower tenants through readily-accessible information and support to enable them to live well in their homes.
- Establish design codes with strong bias on homes that meet the needs of residents.

13 Commitment Four: Champion a culture of collaboration, both internally and with external stakeholders to deliver services and positive outcomes

We will:

- Champion truly affordable housing through collaboration between the housing & property services directorate and planning to maximise new affordable homes through S106 Agreements, delivering 'social' rather than 'affordable' rents where possible.
- Explore opportunities to make better use of land in Council and housing association ownership, including infill development and regeneration opportunities. Working proactively to bring forward affordable housing projects on appropriate brownfield sites.
- Explore all opportunities for new homes including empty homes, unused sites and conversion of commercial properties.
- Work to meet rural housing need; explore potential for supporting current and new Community Land Trusts in rural areas.

Complete the Strategic Asset Review to develop an action plan to regenerate housing estates, sheltered housing and garages to maximise the opportunities they offer.

- Continue to attract significant funding into the Borough from Homes England.
- Deliver 153 new homes which are currently under construction, and a further 145 in the pipeline, with plans to build more during the lifetime of this strategy
- Review existing [service plans](#) to explore opportunities for new affordable housing.
- Continue to promote affordable low-cost home ownership including '[Rent to Buy](#)', and similar schemes
- Continue to use [Modern Methods of Construction](#) where appropriate, and feed innovation and continuous improvements into future developments.
- Develop and host a regular forum for Registered Providers of social housing in Dacorum, building a network and encouraging collaborative working.

14 Commitment Five: Seek to meet the diverse housing needs of everyone living in Dacorum

We will:

- Recognise that Dacorum is becoming an increasingly diverse borough, and develop service plans which embrace the changing needs of our population.
- Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing for the diverse needs of residents in Dacorum including families, young people and single households. Putting the needs of residents at the centre of new build design.
- Work with partners, including Hertfordshire County Council, to make sure appropriate supported and specialist accommodation is available to those who need it, which promotes independence and takes a person-centred approach.

Make the best use of stock with adaptations to make sure those who need it, have a home which supports their needs.

- Continue to provide an efficient and effective aids and adaptations service, working effectively in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, housing needs/adult care services and making efficient use of the Better Care Fund.
- Explore the use of rent flexibility for new and existing stock, to deliver homes for the diverse requirements of people in Dacorum.
- Ensure infrastructure (schools, GPs, transport etc) is delivered alongside new housing development.
- Continue to include fully wheelchair-accessible homes in all new housing developments, tailored to level of need via both the Housing Register and those awaiting a direct offer of adapted housing.
- Ensure all new Tenants are equipped with knowledge and skills to manage a tenancy, including awareness of availability and cost, and skills in managing finances. Offer extra support for those with additional needs who may be at greatest risk of being unable to sustain their tenancy.
- Deliver a multi-agency action plan to support those impacted by the increased cost of living. Signposting to cost of living support, using multi-channel communication methods. Ensure all households know of the information, advice and other services available to all including those who are 'just about managing'. Working with partners to ensure accessible toolkits and other online resources.
- Champion a move towards increased digital awareness and accessibility, including free WiFi provision in our own buildings.
- Engage with communities to champion community safety for everyone, working in partnership with residents to inform priorities and action plans.
- Offer a compassionate and practical humanitarian response to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers feel welcomed and supported whilst awaiting their next move.

15 Governance and monitoring:

The Housing Strategy will be supported by an action plan (attached at appendix 1) and governance arrangements to deliver outcomes needed.

The strategy will be reviewed annually, in order to respond to changes in guidance and legislation, and any changes in trends relating to need and demand for housing and services. We will ensure that the Strategic Housing Partnership have oversight of the delivery of the strategy, and we will actively work with them to achieve its aims. We will host an annual stakeholder conference to ensure that the partnership remains strong and focussed.

This strategy is a dynamic document, and will be reviewed as required in the event of a major change in legislation, external economic and social factors, or guidance. In addition to the action plan, we have identified key performance measures that will be reported upon to

demonstrate the outcomes being achieved on the commitments.

16 Conclusion

This strategy demonstrates the commitment of Dacorum Borough Council and its partners to make sure that everyone living in Dacorum has access to a safe, warm and affordable home. Through our commitments and the actions set out, we show how this can be delivered.

We do not underestimate the challenge in this period of economic uncertainty. We will work with our partners to make best use of available resources. We also recognise the need to be adaptable as circumstances around us change, and to work to continuously improve our services.

If you have any questions about this strategy, please contact talk-to-us@dacorum.gov.uk

Objective	Outcome	Target	Proposed Actions
Commitment one: To become an excellent social landlord, delivering services that meet the needs of our residents.			
Acknowledge that change is required, and complete a transformational review of our Housing and Property Services directorate - known as the Housing Transformation & Improvement Project (HTIP), to get the most from staff, systems and processes.	Efficient and modern service delivery	Year 1	Progress with the Housing transformation and improvement project to deliver an efficient and excellent target operating model for the delivery of the housing service.
Act upon the collective voice of our residents, adopting a 'You said – We did' approach to service improvement, with particular emphasis on responsive repairs and communication.	Tailored services built and developed by the residents voice	Year 1	Effectively collect and listen to the residents' voice, ensuring that feedback is fed into continuous service improvement across the housing landlord function.
			Learn from residents via a range of engagement opportunities including formal meetings, survey responses, particularly Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), and embed the outcomes into service planning and budget setting.
Better understand our Tenant population through accurate records and data to tailor services, and signpost to support services	Effective use of data to drive service improvement	Year 2	Expand our knowledge of our tenant population to ensure that our records are full and accurate to better tailor services, such as signposting those with complex needs or vulnerabilities to appropriate support.
		Year 1	We will develop tailored service plans that focus on meeting the needs of residents, and improve record-keeping to ensure that tenant records are accurate

			and that we build our knowledge of the people occupying our homes in order to address any vulnerabilities.
Deliver a continuous improvement environment where we strive to learn and improve our service to our residents	Deliver a continuous improvement environment	Year 1	Invest in best practice industry expertise, such as procuring engagement experts Tpas to carry out a 'SMART Review' of our resident engagement offer, leading to a refreshed engagement strategy.
		Year 3	Use the outcomes of the Housing Regulator's new inspection regime to drive further service improvement, with the aim of becoming a top-performing landlord that is always the landlord of choice for home-seekers throughout Dacorum.
Empower our residents to achieve their full potential	Empower our residents	Year 1	Empower residents to achieve their full potential by providing resources such as our free online learning portal, ' DOT '.
Support our residents during the cost of living crisis	Provide support to our residents	Year 1	Act upon our understanding that residents of social housing are more likely to feel the impact of the cost of living crisis and may need additional support to reduce the risk of unmanageable debt. In particular: guidance to maximise household income by accessing all benefits to which they are entitled, help with household budgeting, and a proactive approach by

			our rent and income team to tackle arrears empathetically.
		Year 1	Acting on resident feedback, we will ensure that information and services are readily-available to those unable to access them digitally.
Commitment two: Demonstrate dedication to tackling the climate emergency in Dacorum. Reducing energy consumption of our existing housing stock, and take steps to ensure that all new homes meet excellent thermal efficiency standards.			
Reduce the energy use of properties in Dacorum, by supporting and encouraging the transition to more sustainable energy sources.	Promote and champion the sustainable energy sources	Year 3	Support all landlords and homeowners to move to more sustainable energy sources, offering advice, information and exploring the potential for loans or signposting to grants where needed.
		Year 2	Play a proactive role in exploring available/emerging technologies to reduce reliance on carbon-based fuels.
Measure and take action to reduce the energy use of the service delivery of the housing service and sub-contractors	Reduce service delivery energy use	Year 2	Measure energy use of the delivery of the housing service, and create an action plan to reduce this over a 5-year period.
		Year 2	We will require our supply chain to demonstrate and develop an action plan to reduce its energy use over a 5-year period or before.
		Year 2	We will use our procurement processes to give weighting to more environmentally friendly organisations or suppliers.
	Green and pleasant spaces	Year 1	We will identify and maximise opportunity to create green open spaces

Re-wild estates and create pleasant green spaces which support local wildlife and promote wellbeing by providing outside space for residents.	on estates to promote wellbeing and support local wildlife		and re-wild areas where appropriate to support local wildlife.
		Year 2	Use Tenant Improvement Grant (TIG) funding to roll out sustainable and green facilities on estates, like rainwater harvesting and community gardens.
		Year 4	We will consider wildlife-friendly measures such as fitting Swift/Bat boxes etc.
Deliver new developments which promote safe and climate-regenerative transport options	Enable residents and businesses to reduce carbon by 80%	Year 2	When developing new Council homes, we will include safe and sustainable travel options and local facilities to encourage people to access local services.
Commitment three: Champion the provision of safe, warm and dry homes across the Borough			
Continue to ensure all Council-owned properties meet the DBC Decent Homes standard and other regulatory standards.	Accurate stock condition survey information to inform planned works	Year 2	Use stock condition survey data to inform decisions around the future of stock.
		Year 1	Work with RP partners to ensure that all housing association stock meets the Decent Homes Standard and other regulatory standards.
		Year 1	Ensure that each HRA Business Plan during the life of this strategy takes account of the need to upgrade the energy efficiency of our older housing stock.

	New build specification	Year 1	Continue to build more new homes than are sold under Right to Buy, and to use renewable technologies to ensure that these homes are affordable to heat.
		Year 5	Tackle fuel poverty and the climate emergency by ensuring all Council-owned housing meets at least Energy-efficiency rating 'C' by 2030.
Tackle damp, mould and condensation by improving thermal properties of our own less well-insulated older homes, as well as informing and supporting other landlords to maintain high standards.	Improved thermal efficiency across DBC stock, RP's and private sector	Year 1	Delivery of grant funded scheme – Herts consortium.
		Year 2	Ensure that Landlords including RPs have robust process in place to tackle damp and mould, and ensure works are carried out efficiently to resolve.
		Year 1	Continue to work with private landlords to ensure all privately rented properties meet all relevant legislative standards, offering advice and information as needed and using enforcement activity when appropriate.
		Year 1	Continue to license HMOs to ensure they are of a good standard, safe and well-managed.
		Year 2	Empowering tenants through education to support them to live well in their homes.
Commitment four: Challenge ourselves and partners to work collaboratively to maximise the delivery of truly affordable new homes			
Maximising the supply and diversity of affordable housing options to ensure the right type of housing is available in the	Affordable housing	Year 1	Work with developers, landowners and Housing Associations to ensure that

right places. Exploring all opportunities for new homes including empty homes, unused sites and conversion of commercial properties.	negotiated through the planning system, acquisitions, grant funding, 141 receipts, RCGF etc.		affordable housing is delivered by the planning system. Cross referencing the local plan and SPD to ensure appropriate policies are included to meet this Commitment.
		Year 1	Continue to attract significant funding into the borough from Homes England.
		Year 3	Strengthen relationships with our Housing Association partners, ensuring that opportunities for truly affordable housing delivery are maximised. This will include introducing a Registered Provider panel to explore joint working and create greater housing opportunities across the housing sector.
		Year 1	Monitor the delivery and affordability of new affordable homes achieved through the planning process, acquisitions, grant funding, 141 receipts, RCGF etc.
	Diversifying the range of affordable housing options to provide greater affordable choice for local people	Year 2	Investigate the feasibility of different housing tenure options and promote as appropriate.
		Year 3	Work to meet rural housing need; explore potential for Community Land Trusts in rural areas.
		Year 1	Continue to promote affordable low-cost home ownership including 'Rent to Buy'.
		Year 5	Work proactively to bring forward affordable housing projects on appropriate brownfield sites.

Deliver Social rented new build properties	Deliver 400 new Council homes	Year 3	Review existing neighbourhood plans to explore opportunities for new affordable housing.
		Year 2	Deliver energy efficient new homes which will create savings for our residents in the future.
		Year 1	Continue to use Modern Methods of Construction where appropriate, and feed innovation and continuous improvements into future developments.
Commitment five: Meet the diverse housing needs of everyone living in Dacorum			
Deliver housing across Dacorum working with partners to meet the diverse needs of everyone living in Dacorum.	Enabling appropriate accommodation in Dacorum to meet diverse needs	Year 1	Work with partners, including Hertfordshire County Council, to make sure appropriate supported and specialist accommodation is available to those who need it.
		Year 5	Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing for families; aim to include outside space and sufficient storage in all new family homes.
		Year 1	Continue to provide an efficient and effective aids and adaptations service, working effectively in partnership with housing needs/adult care services.
		Year 2	Work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to make sure an effective and efficient aids and adaptations service, and efficient use of the better care funding.

		Year 3	Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing for the diverse needs of residents in Dacorum including families, young people, single households and residents with long-term health conditions that impact on their ability to carry out everyday tasks. Putting the needs of residents at the centre of new build design.
		Year 2	Continue to include fully wheelchair-accessible homes in all new housing developments, tailored to level of need both via the Housing Register and those awaiting a direct offer of adapted housing.
Deliver sustainable communities in Dacorum	Deliver thriving and sustainable communities	Year 5	Ensure infrastructure (schools, GPs etc) is delivered ahead of or alongside new housing development.
Support all Dacorum residents to tackle the cost of living crisis	Signpost and support residents to manage the increased cost of living	Year 1	Ensure all new Tenants are equipped with knowledge and skills to manage a tenancy, including awareness of availability and cost, and skills in managing finances.
		Year 2	Deliver a multi-agency action plan to support those impacted by the increased cost of living. Signposting to cost of living support, using multi-channel communication methods. Ensure all households know of the information, advice and other services available to all

			including those who are just about managing. Working with partners to ensure accessible toolkits and other online resources.
		Year 3	We will champion a move towards increased digital awareness and accessibility, including free Wi-Fi provision in our own buildings.
		Year 4	Explore potential for area/district heating schemes where this will deliver lower cost energy for individual households.



Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report for:	Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Voluntary and Community Sector Commissioning Approach
Date:	6th December 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Sheron Wilkie, Portfolio Holder for Place
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	1. Review of Services Findings
Background papers:	None
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector

<p>Report Author / Responsible Officer</p> <p>Diane Southam – Assistant Director Place Community and Enterprise</p> <p> </p>

Corporate Priorities	Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Wards affected	All wards
Purpose of the report:	To provide details of the proposed direct grant award approach for the Voluntary and Community Sector
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. That Members note the report and identify any comments or recommendations to Cabinet
Period for post policy/project review:	N/A

1. Background

- 1.1. In 2016 the Council agreed to formalise its relationship with the voluntary sector through contracts rather than grant giving and the Council's standing orders were updated to reflect this change. A procurement process was undertaken to commission Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) providers to deliver a range of services.
- 1.2. Four contracts were commissioned:
 - Information, Advice and Advocacy, delivered by **Citizens Advice Dacorum**
 - Supporting the Voluntary Sector, delivered by **Community Action Dacorum**
 - Reducing Social Isolation for Older People, delivered by **Age UK Dacorum**
 - Promoting Healthy Relationships, delivered by **Relate London North West and Hertfordshire, and Mediation Herts.**
- 1.3. These contracts were awarded in 2016 on a 3 year plus 2 year extension basis and were further extended due to COVID-19.
- 1.4. Following a decision by Commercial Board in March 2023 and a subsequent Portfolio Holder Decision, the contracts will be extended to allow the a review of services to determine the best commissioning approach and subsequently undertake a commissioning process.
- 1.5. A summary of the findings from this review of services is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.6. On 26 July 2023, SLT agreed that a grants based approach should be taken for the commissioning of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) services.
- 1.7. This followed reports to Commercial Board and consultation with VCS partners including at the council facilitated conference in May 2023.
- 1.8. There is a need to ensure a mature, flexible, targeted and sustainable approach to supporting our VCS partners.
- 1.9. The recommended approach applies only to the four main current contracts and does not take into account separate commissions with the VCS partners.
- 1.10. On 11 October 2023, SLT agreed to the direct grant award process as set out in this report

2. Issue/Proposal

- 2.1. Following the SLT report on 26 July 2023, and further consultation, research and internal engagement with the AD Housing Operations and Safe Communities, it is recommended that a direct grant is awarded to the four existing contract holders (Citizens Advice Dacorum, Community Action Dacorum, Herts Age UK and Relate/Mediation).
- 2.2. This approach will come with a strict and in depth monitoring process to ensure the funding will support intended target groups and provides desired outcomes.
- 2.3. By implementing a robust monitoring approach, we will also be able to more effectively identify gaps in delivery and through the use of other grant funding, engage (where relevant) other VCS partners to deliver services to meet such gaps. Examples include delivery of activity for Humanitarian Response Programme, targeted skills based development, mental health and empowerment and support to developing social enterprise.

- 2.4. It is recommended that the grant awards are made for a period of 3 years with an option to extend for 2 years upon review.
- 2.5. This provides a mature approach to supporting the sustainability and resilience of our VCS partners, enabling them to plan in a longer term way. These points were raised at the VCS Conference in May 2023.
- 2.6. The council has developed a close working relationship with all four organisations who are experts in their fields and have local knowledge of local needs.
- 2.7. The proposed principles for this approach are as follows:
- Support a wider range of services and groups to ensure all sections of the community benefit from the grants scheme and address the challenges facing Dacorum residents.
 - Support services and activities that are inclusive and promote cohesion
 - Provide long-term funding to VCS organisations in return for efficient and effective services
 - Provide VCS partners with flexibility in the operations of their services, providing agility to respond to changing and emerging priorities and facilitate innovation (which might otherwise be constrained by strict adherence to commissioning based KPIs)
 - Achieve value for money
 - Improve partnership working between local VCS organisations and support the long term sustainability of the sector.
- 2.8. VCS partners will be required to:
- Provide detailed demographic data of clients and identify trends to be able to shift and flex provision
 - This will also support decisions around targeting relevant council services
 - This information will also support local GPs and health providers making decisions around targeted outreach or community based initiatives
 - Work with existing outreach networks across the council and partners to ensure maximum reach and engagement with all residents.
 - Provide strategic governance and policy statements including but not limited to safeguarding policies, engagement policies and annual reports and work programmes.
- 2.9. The council will need to
- Increase engagement with VCS partners and other council services such as Housing, as well as external partners such as local GPs and health providers to ensure a coordinated approach to the delivery of services that will avoid duplication and maximise outcomes
 - Develop a detailed monitoring and engagement plan and procedure to ensure sustainable and effective funding agreements and performance monitoring
 - Provide regular reports to SLT and members
 - Monitor trends and ensure VCS services are targeted accordingly.
- 2.10. The new funding agreements effective from 2024/25 will have outcomes based on the current services provided under the current contracts, allowing for the flex to respond to emerging issues described above.
- 2.11. The four funding agreements proposed are:
- 2.11.1 Information, Advice and Advocacy – Citizens Advice Dacorum
- Citizens Advice Dacorum provide general advice and information to local residents across a variety of areas and issues, and in particular over the last

year in relation to the cost of living (including energy advice) and mental health. In particular there has been an increase in support sought from the 'Just About Managing' group of residents

- Required outcomes:
 - Residents can access information, advice and advocacy to resolve issues
 - People are able to resolve issues in the future
 - The Information, Advice and Advocacy offered has a positive impact on resident's health and wellbeing
 - The Information, Advice and Advocacy offered has a positive impact on resident's financial circumstances
 - Information, Advice and Advocacy can be accessed by all local people
 - People have access to additional support services following the Information, Advice and Advocacy they receive
 - People are satisfied with the service they receive
 - Dacorum Borough Council Housing tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy.

2.11.2 Supporting the Voluntary Sector – Community Action Dacorum

- Community Action Dacorum works closely with local organisations to ensure they are supported and sustainable
- Required outcomes:
 - Funding advice and guidance is provided to partners and local organisations
 - Support is provided to volunteering in the borough including recruitment and training
 - Local DBS checking service provided
 - Governance advice is provided to local charities and organisations
 - Connecting local charities with businesses
 - Helping people back into work or training
 - Giving learning to those who lack opportunities.

2.11.3 Reducing Social Isolation – Herts Age UK

- Target group is older people and funds Centre in the Park to provide day centre services to the elderly such as hot food, hairdressing, chiropody and bathing facilities
- Other required outcomes:
 - Handy man service providing general repair and garden services
 - Outreach services such as coffee and chat mornings at residential care homes and supported housing
 - Information and sign posting in particular in relation to benefits and energy advice.

2.11.4 Promoting Healthy Relationships – Relate Dacorum, Watford and Three Rivers with Mediation Hertfordshire

- Required outcomes:
 - To support residents in Dacorum to develop skills to effectively improve their relationships at home, in the community and in the workplace
 - Services to have a positive impact on people's mental health and drive positive behaviours, creating strong and vibrant communities
 - Also focussed on supporting Dacorum BC tenants and in particular in relation to neighbourhood disputes

- Relationship and couple guidance.

2.12. These outcomes will be further refined to align with the demographic data, trend analysis etc. that will be reporting requirements within the funding agreements.

3. Options

3.1 An alternative grant approach was considered that provided for an application process to be followed.

3.2 During the consideration to this approach, and in discussion with the AD for Housing Operations and Safe Communities, some challenges to this approach were highlighted

- The amount of budget available for the grant process, and to offer grants to any other VCS groups or services would mean a reduction in the grant funding available for the key services currently provided
- It is considered that any reduction in funding for these four main areas would result in a reduction in support from these four key partners and this would have a negative impact on residents and would likely increase the demand on council's statutory services and staff.
- An application process may raise expectations across VCS partners that cannot be met by allocating grant funding
- The outcomes and services as described in section 10 are still the core services we need the VCS to support, allowing for the flex in target groups or issues as described and the current providers are considered the best local organisations to continue with this service provision

4. Risks

As identified in the report

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Approval has already been given to include the inflation growth into the new grant payments.

5.2 If the recommended approach is approved, grant payments for 2024/25 will be as shown in the table below. The payments include 2023/24 inflation provision. Payments will be further increased for 2024/25 once inflation growth has been approved as part of the budget setting process.

	General Fund	HRA	Total
Citizens Advice Dacorum	175,400	25,300	200,700
Community Action Dacorum	143,100	0	143,100
Herts Age UK	79,500	28,100	107,600
Relate/Mediation	82,900	11,200	94,100
Total	480,900	64,600	545,500

5.3 These sums are currently included in the council's revenue budget.

- 5.4 Closer working across AD remits, with focussed monitoring and scrutiny will also ensure value for money is more effectively measured for the General Fund and HRS.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 There will be continued engagement with the VCS partners to set the requirements of the grant funding agreement.
- 6.2 A report will be presented to Cabinet in December to agree the proposed approach which will include a recommendation to Council to amend the Constitution as required.
- 6.3 This will provide for an outcome based approach and allow the flexibility to the sector to respond to demand, whilst providing the environment for collaborative working.

Review of Services - Findings

1. In line with the Commercial Board approval in March 2023, a full review of the current contracts was carried out (Appendix 1). This was followed by a questionnaire to VCS partners asking them to provide feedback on demand and to identify what they consider to be priorities moving forward (Appendix 2). Herts Insight platform was used to provide a statistical evidence background and set the framework for identifying priorities.
2. Having identified headline issues through the survey and research work, the council held a VCS Conference on 25 May 2023 to feedback on the research which had been undertaken, test thinking and explore ideas with sector leaders.
3. The aim of the session was to:
 - a. present key findings from Dacorum Borough Council work in relation to the Community and Voluntary sector, and test and confirm emerging priorities (as set out in 4 below);
 - b. explore the impact and effect these themes might have, and how they might develop over the coming 2-4 year timeframe;
 - c. secure greater commitment from and understanding between the VCS and the Council so that re-commissioning happens in a more targeted and coordinated manner.
4. The conference agreed on a set of key priorities to inform the future funding of the Voluntary and Community Sector;
 - a. Support the development and sustainability of the Voluntary and Community Sector.
 - b. Ensure advice, advocacy and support is easily accessible by all residents.
 - c. Supporting households who are just about managing - Individuals in lower paid employment with no access to benefits.
 - d. Addressing Health Inequalities and in particular mental health issues
 - e. Targeted interventions to support specific groups of residents
5. A number of areas of thinking and recommendations to be developed further, fell out of these key themes. This included the need for the council to develop a commissioning approach that sets out the strategic relationship between the council and the VCS, maximises its investment through an approach which develops the VCS and drives collaboration not competition.
6. At the conference, it was also suggested by a number of VCS partners that improved outcomes would be achieved through providing grants rather than commissioning contracts. It was felt that grants invest in the voluntary sector, allowing for greater agility and responsiveness, whereas commissioning contracts from the sector leading to output driven working practices. This needs to include a balance of core strategic investment to build the sector, and recognising the value of smaller pots to have impact in a more agile way.

Agenda Item 10

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Housing and Community OSC

Actions arising – 2023

Date of meeting	Action point	Responsible for action	Date action completed	Update on action point
<u>13/09/23</u> <u>HC/52/23</u>	Member development – a visit to the adventure playgroup to view the activities that are happening.	D Southam	To arrange a member development session for summer next year.	
<u>11/10/2023</u>	One of the questions asked of me during Housing OSC was how many solid wall properties do DBC own? I said I would include an update for the minutes – which is;	Mark Pinnell	10/11/23	<p>7692 Cavity Wall 533 Solid Wall 1644 System Build</p> <p><i>In the main this data is based on visual surveys undertaken to date and we are confident that it is largely correct. However, we do continue to update our records as we complete new stock condition surveys, if any new information becomes available relating to construction type the figures may change slightly over time.</i></p>
<u>11/10/2023</u>	Housing points training which was cancelled the other day will be re arranged	N Beresford		<i>Working with member support to get a date</i>
<u>11/10/2023</u>	Cllr Barradell asked when Diane's report (communities) would be coming to group as it was taken off the agenda. –	N Beresford		

<u>11/10/2023</u>	Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said about the training meeting that was cancelled recently. Cllr Dhyani apologised and said it would be re arranged.	Cllr Dhyani		
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Agenda Item 12

Housing & Community OSC Work Programme 2023/2024

Meeting Date	Report Deadline	Items	Contact Details	Background information
Wed 17 Jan 2024	Friday 5th Jan 2024			
		Action Points (from previous meeting)	Kayley Johnston	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Right to Buy Buyback Policy	David Barrett – Assistant Director – Strategic Housing and Delivery David.barrett@dacorum.gov.uk	
		Draft Interim Asset Management Strategy	Mark Pinnell – Assistant Director Property and Place Mark.pinnell@dacorum.gov.uk	
		Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards Update	Simon Walton Interim Head of Strategy, Quality and Assurance Simon.walton@dacorum.gov.uk	
		HRA Business Plan Refresh	Mark Pinnell – Assistant Director Property and Place Mark.pinnell@dacorum.gov.uk	
Wed 7 Feb 2024	Friday 26 January	Action Points (from previous meeting)		<i>To review and scrutinise</i>

	2024			<i>quarterly performance</i>
		Joint Budget <i>Ideally no further items to be added</i>		<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
Wed 13 March 2024	Friday 1 March 2024	Action Points (from previous meeting)		<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Q3 Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report	Fiona Jump – Head of Financial Services Fiona.jump@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Q3 People and Communities Quarterly Reports	Natasha Beresford – Assistant Director Housing Operations and Safer Communities Natasha.beresford@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Q3 Housing (Property, Strategic & Delivery, Operations) & Safe Communities Reports	David Barrett – Assistant Director – Strategic Housing and Delivery David.barrett@dacorum.gov.uk Mark Pinnell – Assistant Director Property and Place Mark.pinnell@dacorum.gov.uk Natasha Beresford – Assistant Director Housing Operations and Safer Communities Natasha.beresford@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>

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Public place protection order Revision -. Date tbc

Old Town Hall Review – Diane – TBC

Adventure Playground Review - Diane – TBC

Sports Strategy - Diane – TBC

Cultural Strategy - Diane – TBC

Leisure Contract Management – Diane - TBC

VCS Commissioning – Diane – TBC

Rent Policy Update – Oliver Jackson – TBC

Add climate change (from Oct minutes)