

Public Document Pack



SUMMONS

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday 13 November 2024

Council Chamber, The Forum

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Dacorum Borough Council in the County of Hertfordshire to be held in the Council Chamber, The Forum on Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 7.30 pm to transact the business set out below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Hamilton', written over a horizontal line.

**CLAIRE HAMILTON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**Contact: Democratic Services
ext 2209**

AGENDA

1. MINUTES (Pages 4 - 7)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council 15th October 2024

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To consider questions (if any) by members of the public of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director (Legal & Democratic Services)

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive announcements and business brought forward by the Mayor, Leader, and Members of the Cabinet or the Chief Executive.

4.1 By the Mayor:

4.2 By the Chief Executive:

4.3 By the Group Leaders: Any apologies for absence

5. CABINET MEMBER UPDATES (Pages 8 - 20)

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--|
| 5.1 | Councillor England | Leader of the Council (verbal update only) |
| 5.2 | Councillor England | Portfolio Holder Place |
| 5.3 | Councillor Smith-Wright | Portfolio Holder Transformation (People, Climate & Ecological Emergency) |
| 5.4 | Councillor Allen | Portfolio Holder Corporate & Commercial Services |
| 5.5 | Councillor Dhyani | Portfolio Holder Housing & Property Services |
| 5.6 | Councillor Bromham | Portfolio Holder Neighbourhood Operations |

6. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING (Pages 21 - 25)

To consider any business referred from the previous meeting

7. CABINET REFERRALS (Pages 26 - 29)

To consider the following referrals from Cabinet:

7.1 CA/72/24 23rd July 2024 Appointment of a Principal Contractor for the refurbishment of two Multi-Use Game Areas (MUGA) and construction of a canopy structure at Hemel Hempstead School

7.2 CA/90/24 14th Oct 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy & Fees & Charges

7.3 CA/95/24 14th Oct 2024 Dacorum Investment Partnership Proposals

8. REFERRAL FROM THE LICENSING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE (Page 30)

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS

To receive referrals from the Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

10. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To consider any proposals for changes to committee membership

11. CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATES

To consider any proposals for changes to committee dates

Agenda Item 1 Public Document Pack

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

15 OCTOBER 2024

Present:

MEMBERS:

Councillor England (Leader) Adeleke, Allen, Anderson, Banks, Barry-Mears, Bhinder, Bristow, Bromham, Capozzi, Cox, Deacon, Dhyani, Douris, Durrant, Freedman, Gale, Guest, Johnson, Link, Maddern, Pesch, Pound, Pringle, Reynolds, Riddick, Santamaria, Silwal, Smith-Wright, Stevens, Symington, Taylor, Timmis, Tindall, Walker, Weston, Wilkie, Williams, Williams and C Wyatt-Lowe (40)

OFFICERS:

Claire Hamilton	Chief Executive
James Doe	Strategic Director (Place)
Adelle Stapleton	Deputy Monitoring Officer
Cassy O'Neil	Democratic Services Manager
Kayley Johnston	Democratic Services Officer

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following delectations of interest were received;

Cllr Reynolds declared that his home address is opposite the Marshcroft site that will be discussed in the Local Plan this evening and therefore will not be able to take part in the discussion or voting on that item.

Cllr Wilkie declared that due to a possible conflict of interest of one of the developments near her home, she will not be taking part on those discussions this evening.

Cllr Symington declared that she is the Dacorum Borough council representative on the Chiltern conservation board and a Hertfordshire County council in Tring Division and has also previously spoken on behalf of Tring residents at the Marshcroft appeal for land East of Tring. Cllr Symington confirmed her understanding that she can take part in discussions and debate but wanted to be clear regarding her roles.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 The Mayor introduced the meeting and set out the reason for the extraordinary meeting and the way in which she expected it to be conducted.

This announcement can be heard in full by viewing the video minutes.

4.2 The Chief Executive announced a number of political changes within the Council;
Cllr Goverdhan Silwal, Ward Councillor for Grovehill has joined the Labour Party
Cllr Ron Tindall, Ward Councillor for Adeyfield West is now an Independent councillor

In addition, following their announcement at the Council meeting on 25th September 2024, the following Councillors have resigned from the Liberal Democrat party and will each stand as an Independent councillor representing their elected wards;

Cllr Sammy Barry-Mears, Highfield
Cllr Michela Capozzi, Tring East
Cllr Toni Cox, Apsley & Corner Hall
Cllr Claire Hobson, Boxmoor
Cllr Lara Pringle, Northchurch
Cllr Victoria Santamaria, Hemel Hempstead Town
Cllr Carole Weston and Cllr Sheron Wilkie both of Tring Central

4.3 The group leaders gave apologies on behalf of their members;

Cllr England gave apologies on behalf of Cllrs C Link, Patterson, Stewart & McArevey

Cllr Williams gave apologies on behalf of Cllr Elliot

Cllr Pesch gave apologies on behalf of Labour group leader Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Hannell

The Democratic Services Manager gave apologies on behalf of independent Cllr Hobson

3 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Leader, Cllr England, announced changes to his Cabinet and introduced the revised committee membership as circulated with the agenda.

There was some discussion on this matter which can be viewed via the video minutes.

Decision

The committee membership as published in the agenda was agreed.

4 CABINET REFERRALS

4.1 CA/91/24 14th October 2024 Local Plan

The Leader, Cllr England, introduced the referral, which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani.

The Mayor then opened the floor to debate before Cllr England made his closing remarks and the recommendations were taken to a vote.

Vote

For: 25
Against: 13
Abstain: 2 (as declarations of interest given earlier in the meeting)

Decision

The recommendations as set out in the Cabinet referral were agreed.

A short recess was called at 9.20pm to allow members of the public so to exit the meeting should they wish to.

The meeting reconvened at 9.30pm, with the exception of Cllrs Barry Mears, Capozzi, Wilkie, Santamaria, Cox, Weston, Pringle and Tindall who did not return.

**4.2 CA/71/24 23rd July 2024
Provisional Financial Outturn 2023/24**

The Leader, Cllr England, introduced the referral, which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani.

Decision

The recommendations as set out in the Cabinet referral were agreed.

**4.3 CA/71/24 23rd July 2024
Dacorum Borough Council Corporate Plan: “Our Plan for Dacorum 2024-28”**

The Leader, Cllr England, introduced the referral, which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani.

Decision

The recommendations as set out in the Cabinet referral were agreed.

5 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES

The Mayor introduced the Portfolio Holder updates, as provided within the agenda pack and advised that there would be no verbal update from the Leader as this was already given to the ordinary meeting of the Council that took place on 25th September 2024.

The Mayor reminded Council that when asking questions of the Cabinet it must relate to the item on which they are providing an update, or a matter falling within their portfolio and that the right to ask a question on any matter over which the Council has powers and duties, or which effects the Borough, would be subject to the rules as set out within the Council’s constitution and proper notice would be required.

The Mayor then invited questions of each Portfolio Holder in turn, which can be viewed via the video minutes.

Actions;

The following actions were noted;

1. Cllr Guest addressed Cllr Bromham, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Operations in respect of parking solutions (verge hardening) and asked; is it legal information that the Council has highlighted regarding the status of leisure land that is preventing schemes being installed at the Galley Hill end of Spring Lane and the cul-de-sac end of Quinces Croft.

Cllr Bromham responded that due to the specific nature of the question, he would request that an email is sent setting out and requesting that particular information.

Cllr Guest requested that any response be sent to her ward Councillor colleagues. Cllr Douris pointed out that it is the general practice for answers to such questions asked at Council to be shared with all members.

2. Cllr Douris addressed Cllr Bromham, also in respect of the parking solutions (verge hardening) and asked; could you give us a timeline of this as you have mentioned some figures and funding but haven't said when it will come about and our residents will be very interested in that.

Cllr Bromham responded to advise he would provide a written response to that query.

3. Cllr Timmis referred to the River Gade restoration works and commented that there seems to be a great deal of work going on in Great Gaddesden and asked the Portfolio Holder for some indication of what is happening there as it looks like the river has been dried up. Cllr Timmis clarified this is not the work taking place in Gadebridge Park, this is further up in Great Gaddesden.

Cllr Bromham advised that he was not familiar with that, it may be that the Environment Agency is carrying out work but advised he would look into it and provide a written response.

6 MOTIONS

The Mayor referred to the motion and advised she had been notified of the intention of the mover of this motion to withdraw it, inviting Cllr Banks to confirm.

Cllr Banks confirmed that in light of the time passed since this was originally submitted, it is apparent that Council officers have worked tirelessly to engage with residents and has asked for her thanks to be passed on to all those concerned

Decision

The withdrawal of the motion was seconded by Cllr Anderson and agreed.

7 BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

The Mayor advised that all updates are provided in the action point update as published in the agenda pack.

This was noted and agreed.

The Meeting ended at 9.50 pm

Agenda Item 5



5. Cabinet Member Updates

Members of the Council may ask the Cabinet member any question without notice upon an item on the report as published in this agenda;

5.1	Councillor England	Leader of the Council (verbal update only)
5.2	Councillor England	Portfolio Holder Place
5.3	Councillor Smith-Wright	Portfolio Holder Transformation (People & Climate and Ecological Emergency)
5.4	Councillor Allen	Portfolio Holder Corporate and Commercial Services
5.5	Councillor Dhyani	Portfolio Holder Housing & Property Services
5.6	Councillor Bromham	Portfolio Holder Neighbourhood Operations



PLACE PORTFOLIO – COUNCILLOR ADRIAN ENGLAND

Strategic Planning

Significant service achievement since last Council meeting:

- Major milestone with majority approval for the Local Plan to proceed to Regulation 19.

Strategic or significant and operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- The pre-submission version of the Local Plan is to be published on 4 November (noon) and the publicity / consultation period will last for a period of six weeks, closing on Tuesday 17 December.
- Officers intend to consult on the draft Interim Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, at the end of November. The draft was agreed for consultation at a meeting of Cabinet in May 2024 but the consultation itself has been delayed due to priority work on the Local Plan.

Development Management

Significant service achievement since last Council meeting:

- A significant number of Major planning applications have been granted (with all necessary legal agreements signed) since the beginning of September. These include:
 - A permanent studio for film making at Bovingdon Airfield.
 - the residential / extra care scheme at Grange Farm, Bovingdon.
 - The SANG (suitable alternative natural greenspace) at Haresfoot Farm, Berkhamsted.
 - The SANG at Castle Hill, Berkhamsted.
 - The provision of a Special Educational Needs School at Felden Lodge.
 - The provision of a car park and associated infrastructure and landscaping at Hemel 465, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- The draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Long Marston has been completed, with that for Wilstone very close to completion. We are looking to consult on these documents post purdah.
- As part of the Service's successful bid for money out of the Planning Skills Delivery Fund, DM has two ongoing projects – one seeks to reduce the number of planning applications that have gone beyond their initial 8 and 13 week periods for determination. The other is an innovative training programme for staff that has been developed with Place Services, and which involves our DM colleagues from Three Rivers DC. On October 23rd DM hosted an all-day training event for both Councils on Urban Design.

Place and Enterprise

Significant service achievement since last Council meeting:

- The inaugural Dacorum Strategic Business Board was held on 25th September 2024 at Shendish Manor and was well attended by some of Dacorum's key businesses. This meeting set the ambition for the Board and started the strategic conversation with the business community. The next meeting will be held on 12th December 2024.
- The Maylands Masterplan was approved by Cabinet on 14th October 2024 which sets the 20-year vision and aspirations for the Business Park. A delivery plan including an engagement strategy will now be developed alongside a plan for some immediate opportunities identified.

Strategic or significant and operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- The Hemel Place Strategy is being reviewed to enable the document to be finalised and priority action plans to be completed. Initial review of the Think Hemel website completed.
- A date has been set for the next Hemel Place Board which is scheduled to be held on 5th December 2024.
- IdeasFest was held over 12th and 13th of September at Pendley Manor. The event featured interactive workshops as well as live music and festival acts. There were 3,000 attendees over the two days, exceeding the 2,000 target. Economic Development Officers participated alongside Herts Growth Hub and the University of Hertfordshire. The organisers have confirmed they will be returning to Pendley Manor in September 2025.

Communities and Leisure

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- Healthy Hub Project - Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has confirmed that there will be additional funding for the project for another 2 years (2025 – 2027).
- The Dacorum Prosperity Fund, administered by Community Action Dacorum – this is funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The grants panel met on 21 October and awarded circa £47,000 to nine different organisations.
- Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre – solar panel project - works to install the units will commence in November 2024 and be completed before the end of March 2025.
- Community Grants Training Bursary – the new guidance and application forms have been launched, and bids are currently being received and evaluated.
- Adventure Playground (APG) Service – Hertfordshire County Council has funded 'Mental Health' and 'Girl only Empowerment' projects which aim to support the children and young people who use the service. As part of the projects, the APG staff have been given 'Mentor' training to continue the support sessions once the funded pilot has ended.

Arts and Culture

Significant service achievements since last Council meeting:

- Dacorum 50Fest – Successful delivery of the Community Parade with over 350 participants including performers, musicians and residents of all ages in a colourful display of community spirit. Supported by acclaimed arts company *Handmade Productions*, local people made costumes, volunteers crafted props, young people learnt puppeteering skills and an artist intern was employed.
- Dance Relignite wellbeing project for older adults – In addition to performing in community venues, participants have recorded a short film to celebrate the choreography they have co-produced. Participants will join the County-wide Festival on 4th November at the Eric Morecambe Centre, Harpenden for the finale of this Arts Council funded project delivered in partnership with BEEE Creative and Dacorum Community Dance.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- Old Town Hall Theatre – The varied programme is continuing to attract good audience numbers with 7 sell-out shows in September. Promotion of the Christmas Show is ongoing.
- Arts and Culture Strategy - The survey is currently open to residents, and focussed workshops are planned during November to listen to the views of a wide spectrum of the community including older people, people with disabilities and young people.

Hemel Garden Communities

Service achievements since last Council meeting include the following:

- Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) are procuring consultant support to develop an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for HGC, this will build upon the Dacorum Borough and St Albans City & District Local Plans' IDPs and address the infrastructure needs of the area beyond the Local Plan periods (to 2050).
- Various workstreams are being developed that will inform a future Supplementary Planning Documents to ensure the qualitative output of future development plans. This includes green infrastructure; health and wellbeing; a strategic design code; and, stewardship strategies.
- On 24 September, Lead Councillors and Officers attended a workshop at the Highfield Park Trust, St Albans, on the topic of stewardship. Further engagement activities are being planned for November to assist in the development of the strategy, which will guide future management, place-making and community development.
- Work is also progressing on land assembly and delivery strategies, which will be important in delivering comprehensive development across Land North of Hemel Hempstead and securing developer contributions to site-wide infrastructure.
- On 2 October, HGC attended the Generation Dacorum Careers Fair and engaged with students around the topic of Future Careers and Skills.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- The Crown Estate have undertaken an initial round of public consultation for Land East of Hemel Hempstead (Hemel Garden Communities), which falls primarily within St Albans' boundaries. Dacorum residents, specifically around Woodhall Farm, Maylands and Leverstock Green have been engaged through public exhibition events. DBC Officers continue to be actively involved in the pre-application process.
- A planning application has been lodged by The Crown Estate for the development of a Community Garden at the Junction of Cherry Tree Lane and Redbourn Road, just over the boundary within the St Albans District. This includes a proposed new access to the Nickey Line. If approved, The Crown Estate plan to commence implementation later this year and have partnered with Sunnyside Rural Trust to deliver this project



**TRANSFORMATION (PEOPLE, CLIMATE & ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY) PORTFOLIO
COUNCILLOR CAROLINE SMITH-WRIGHT**

People

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- New management competencies have been agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team. These will be factored into a new mandatory training programme which will be launch in the New Year.
- We have set up a staff values and behaviours delivery group to help further embed these within the Council's desired culture – The Strategic Leadership Team has recently approved three new staff schemes drafted by the group – Staff volunteering, staff recognition and a mentoring scheme for staff development. Implementation has commenced on implementing the staff volunteering scheme.
- The Strategic Leadership Team has approved a new customer service training programme in line with customer charter and a new approach to undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. Both will be implemented across Autumn and Winter.

Strategic or significant operational matters which the service would like Full Council to be aware of:

Local Government Pay Award 2024/25

- Unison and Unite members voted to reject the employers' full and final pay offer. They are both balloting their membership on whether to take industrial action – closes mid-October 2024.

Digital

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- The Digital Team has rolled out a new mobile app that can be downloaded to users' personal mobile devices. Bring your own Smartphone (BYOS) represents a significant shift in workforce technology supporting remote and hybrid work arrangements by enabling our workforce to work flexibly in a way that better meets customer need. This new app enables our entire workforce (including Councillors) to access work emails, take calls and manage their diary securely without having to log onto their laptop.
- Next step will be to reduce the number of devices on our estate. People who work predominantly on Wi-Fi will no longer need access to a DBC mobile device. Users who work in the community will continue to have access to a mobile device (phone or tablet) which we plan to review and upgrade over the next 12 months.

Communications & Engagement

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- External Communications – Continued support across all services, supporting on communication, marketing and engagement activities for corporate projects, campaigns and operational service delivery. View our website for all news during this period [All news \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk)
- Delivery of 50 Fest to celebrate 50 years of Dacorum - highlight of 50 Fest was a spectacular parade, featuring a wonderful array of colourful handmade puppets, led by community groups and performers. In Market Square, there was a variety of local market, food and drink and community stalls. There was also a wide range of entertainment and activities on offer in Market Square and the Water Gardens, including a BMX stunt show, acrobatic street dancers, Cloud 9 inflatables, high ropes and fairground stalls.

Transformation

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- We celebrated National Customer Service Week with a range of activities, drop-ins at the Forum and blog posts to ensure all staff across Dacorum recognise the importance of delivering excellent customer service
- We have introduced a new mandatory Customer Service training module for all staff to complete and introduced a new 'Customer Promise' which sets out a series of commitments to ensure we can improve customer experience across the council.
- We continue to implement measures to improve customer experience, introduce better self service capabilities and enable process efficiencies through our Future Dacorum transformation programme. Significant progress has been made on our Year 1 road map relating to the transformation of services and our Digital Platform.
 - We are improving our process for reporting abandoned vehicles, including automating processes via our Digital Platform
 - We have created self-service options for Council Tax, and we are now expanding more self-service options in relation to Benefits and Business Rates
 - We are developing a new system to enable easy search and renting of our garages
 - Establishing a new corporate complaints system that will improve the user experience for customers whilst enabling a more efficient process to investigate and respond to complaints
 - We are also ensuring that work on self-service capabilities is linked to our IVR so that customers can have a consistent experience regardless of the entry point into the Council.
- Average call wait time in Q2 was just under five minutes (290 seconds) against a target of seven minutes (420 seconds). This was lower than the previous quarter's wait times of six minutes (367 seconds) and less than half of the average call wait time of 12 months ago when it was over ten minutes (611 seconds in Q2 2023)

Climate and Ecological Emergency

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- Various feasibility surveys grant-funded by Salix into gas-consuming built assets worth £50K. These studies prepare the CEE team to apply for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for the most competitive assets. Further built asset investment will be shaped by the Strategic Asset Review.

- Our understanding how we can transition the vehicle fleet from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) to electric has progressed. Environmental Services is arranging a site survey to establish charging capacity at existing sites, and the Depot Transformation project identifies ideal times for vehicle transition in the fleet replacement programme.
- The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has completed stakeholder engagement and will go to public consultation in January and February 2025.
- We are engaged in the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) project with partners across Hertfordshire. LARA's goal is to produce a strategy to increase speed of housing retrofit.
- The Green Community Grant is relaunching in November 2025, in line with Round Three of the Community Grant. The grant value available to applicants has increased, widening the scope of projects which could be funded.
- Our Electric Vehicle Charge Points in car parks, 12 sites are operational. Three further sites due by end October, six sites delayed with outstanding issues with UKPN or Herts County Council.
- We are working closely with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) to identify additional on street locations throughout Dacorum that would be suitable for EVCPs. HCC have been allocated £6m of funding through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding.

Strategic or significant operational matters which the service would like Full Council to be aware of:

- The CEE team is developing tools to provide better assurance on the climate programme, in response to the recent audit. This includes a practical roadmap to net-zero as an organisation, project ranking tool, and more rigorous reporting.



Financial Services

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- The Finance Service is supporting the external auditors through the audit of the 2023/24 Financial statements. The issue of the audit opinion on the accounts is expected in November.
- The external audit opinion on the 22/23 accounts has now been received and the final accounts for that year published on the Council's website.

Legal and Democratic Services

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

Hemel Hempstead Town and Bennetts End By-Election

- The Notice of Election for the Bennetts End and Hemel Hempstead Town wards has been published. Polling day will therefore be held on Thursday 21st November 2024.
<https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/elections-and-voting/elections-2024>
- Preparations are now well underway, booking polling stations, appointing staff and ensuring that all elements of the process and count are thoroughly prepared.
- The Statement of Persons nominated was published on 28th October 2024.

Strategic or significant operational matters which the service would like Full Council to be aware of:

- The count for the Hemel Hempstead Town and Bennetts End By-Election will take place at **10am on Friday 22nd** November at The Forum.

Commercial Development

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- EVCP Programme – The implementation of the EVCP programme continues to progress, with several Connected Kerb locations being connected during Q2.
- Garage Portfolio Review – A review of the Council's garage portfolio will be completed this autumn. This will allow further feasibility work on sites deemed most suitable for potential alternative use; aligning with other work streams within the Council's Strategic Asset Review programme, such as plans to seek an Investment Partner to work with the Council on future place development, regeneration and housing growth. The review also identifies opportunities for growth and improvement to the retained garage portfolio, and will inform development and delivery of a new Garage Business Plan.

- Commercial Income Review – Work continues on a multi-year programme of review of all services generating commercial income for the Council, with the aim of identifying opportunities to improve efficiency and net income. This work fed into the scrutiny of fees and charges for 25-26, resulting in identification of increased opportunities for income generation.

Strategic or significant operational matters which the service would like Full Council to be aware of:

- New Parking Proposals – The statutory consultation commenced on Wednesday 10 July 2024 and closed on 31 July 2024. Following conclusion of the consultation and review of comments received, the Portfolio Holder and Leader made the decision that the project progress to implement the proposed changes. Details of the decision were published as per normal procedures. Notification was received on 9th October 2024 that the PH Decision has been called in, and the Call-In scheduled to be discussed at the next available Finance & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 5th November.
- Parking Enforcement and Smart Technology Commissioning – The tender documentation was published in late August and advertised on national portals requesting expressions of interest from the parking enforcement market. The tender closing date is early November.
- Preparation continues for the Procurement Act 2023, which was due to go live in October but has been delayed by Government until 24 Feb 2025. Procurement, Commissioning and Contract Management procedures are being reviewed, and further detail and timelines for updates and approvals of Standing Orders are being developed, to align with the new go live date in 2025.

Commercial and General Fund Property Services

- General fund occupancy remains strong circa 97% end of Quarter 2
- Income generated to date c£3.5m
- Current Debt level 13% and a lot of work going on to support those in debt to the council.
- Strong compliance performance across all key areas -



General Fund Portfolio

Performance

Area	Description	Target	Perfor- mance	Trend
Fire	Percentage of properties covered by valid FRA	100.00%	100.00%	↔
Legionella	Percentage of water installations covered by risk assessment	100.00%	100.00%	↔
Asbestos	Percentage of known asbestos locations re-inspected	100.00%	100.00%	↔
Gas	Percentage of properties with valid gas or combustion certificate	100.00%	100.00%	↔
Electrical	Percentage of properties with satisfactory EICR	100.00%	100.00%	↑
Lifts	Percentage of passenger lifts with current examination certificate	100.00%	100.00%	↔
Heating	Percentage of properties with current insurance inspection	100.00%	100.00%	↔

- Bennetts Gate window replacement and concrete repairs are now complete.
- Planning permission has been submitted to replace the existing curtain walling and windows at Rossgate. This is Phase 2 following completion of the rear windows in 2023.
- Following our successful funding bid to contribute towards the cost of producing decarbonisation plans for our corporate assets work is progressing with an initial focus to produce the required decarb plan to inform a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme bid due to be submitted in November.



Council Briefing Note - 13th November 2024

HOUSING & PROPERTY SERVICES PORTFOLIO – COUNCILLOR SIMY DHYANI

Housing Operations

- An application has been made to the First Tier Tribunal (Property) seeking approval to vary the service charge provisions in the Council's leases. The council's 1800 leaseholders have been informed of the application and provided with copies of the application form and our witness statement. The Tribunal have confirmed receipt, and we await their response.
- Successful achievement of Platinum Pawprint award in collaboration with Animal Welfare Team.
- Official opening of the 'Butterfly Garden' has taken place to mark 50 years of DBC.
- Housing allocations to newbuild at Mountbatten View are underway, in preparation for expected completion in December 2024, with full occupation expected by mid-January 2024.
- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) training roll out for front line Officers.
- Motivational interview training in progress for Officers across Supported Housing.

Safe Communities

- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) training roll out for front line Officers.
- Partnership intervention & prevention activity – 16 successful preventions in September, inc.: assistance via management move and Housing First
- Collaborative partnership activity & focus groups, supporting the development of Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping strategy
- Successful Landlord Forum held, providing useful information and guidance to over 40 landlords from 20 marketplace stalls.
- 1 Final Civil Penalty Notice served and paid of £7225 due to breach of Management regulations – Midco Care Limited
- 2 x Final Civil Penalty Notice's for management regulation breaches - paid in full (£22,750) following payment plan completion - Pendley Manor
- 7B High Street, Hemel – Emergency Prohibition Order made and warrant of entry to evidence compliance through works. Due to change in occupancy of property Order was revoked and an Improvement Notice served. Police made 2 arrests during warrant execution for immigration offences and case referred to Home Office.
- Suspended Prohibition Order served for overcrowding at 93 Elstree Road
- Hazard Awareness Notice served on 21 Hilldown Road

Strategic Housing & Delivery

- Our newbuild scheme of 8 new homes at Sleddale, Wensleydale handed over on the 17th of September. The scheme provided 2 x 3 bed houses, 3 x 1 bed flats and 3 x 2 bed flats, all

heated via Air Source Heat Pumps. The scheme also provides on-site parking and landscaping.

- Quarterly 1:1 meetings have been held with the Council's Housing Association partners to monitor affordable housing delivery and encourage further investment in housing in Dacorum.
- The team have contributed to the consultation on the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy and those comments have been added to those submitted by the Council's Strategic Planning team.
- Preparations are being made to mark the completion of the 400th new Council home with an official opening of Randall's Ride on the 16th of October.

Strategy, Quality and Assurance

- C2 Grading result communicated to H&COSC and Audit Committee, as well as celebrated with a well-attended Housing Breakfast Club to thank staff involved.
- Housing Strategy launch event held 8th October, with keynote speaker Lara Oyedele. Actions to continue to support, promote and deliver the Housing Strategy with a 6mthly partnership forum being fed into the Housing Strategy action plan.
- Preparations for Housing Open Day well underway, with the event to be held on 13th December. Based on last year's successful event, the Open Day will have a variety of stalls from across the Housing directorate including Responsive Repairs (and CARDO), Community Safety, Tenancy Management etc., as well as relevant DBC services including Clean Safe and Green and Waste. External stakeholders including Sunnyside Trust to be included.

Property

- Continued strong performance across all areas of compliance with 100% gas compliance for the month of September.
- Improving performance in key areas of the current Cardo contract, of note is the large reduction of overdue repairs and work in progress numbers and improving customer satisfaction scores.
- The procurement process for the repairs and maintenance contract is progressing, however the service improvement plan with Cardo is still very much a focus for the teams.
- SHDF Wave 2 funded works are progressing well, and we are on target to achieve completion on time March 25.
- SHF (The revised name for SHDF Wave 3) works are to be delivered over a 3-year period. Bidding closes in November and we are currently pulling together a Dacorum led bid.



NEIGHBOURHOOD OPERATIONS PORTFOLIO - COUNCILLOR ROBIN BROMHAM

Neighbourhood Management

- River Gade restoration/re-routing in Gadebridge Park has commenced. Officers are liaising daily with the Environment Agency who are managing the project. Main works are currently focused on the diversion of the river channel.
- The playground refurbishment project continues with works at Miswell Lane and Apsley Lock . The final project will then be delivered at Warners End Upper.
- Dacorum Council is supporting HCC with the initiative 'Your Tree Our Future' tree giveaway, which is happening on Saturday 7th December. The DBC collection point is Poppy Fields Cemetery with residents being able to collect their allocated trees from 10am – 1pm. 260 residents have been allocated 4,840 trees to collect. The 'Your Tree Our Future' project has given away over 324,000 trees to Hertfordshire residents since the initiative was launched, with the aim of giving away 1.8 million trees by 2030. More information about signing up for the 2025 giveaway can be found on the HCC website, searching for 'Your Tree Our Future'.
- Work is underway to develop a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) delivery programme. The delivery is focusing on management plan implementation and improvements adopted for Bunkers Park and Chipperfield Park. The team is also working with colleagues to develop management and delivery plans for proposed SANG sites at Gadebridge Park and Margaret Lloyd Park/Marchmont Farm.
- Six of Dacorum Borough Council's car parks have retained their Park Mark accreditation for another two years after a recent inspection. This means all 26 of its managed car parks within the borough have now successfully achieved this recognition for high safety standards for customers and their vehicles.
The car park accredited this year are:
 - Durrants Hill car park
 - Cowper Road car park
 - Lower Kings Road car park
 - Bournside car park
 - High Street car park
 - Queensway car park

The Safer Parking Scheme sets a UK standard for car parks. It aims to reduce crime and improve safety for people and vehicles. Specially trained police assessors conduct a thorough evaluation of each car park. Only those that meet the strict criteria get a Park Mark.

Environmental Services

- Waste services continue to perform well and missed bin collections are at their lowest recorded level, at only 63 per 100,000. This is a significant improvement and a commitment to great customer service.
- A campaign to promote recycling took place in recycling week at the end of October. 11 posts were shared across DBC social media channels with a total reach of 19,193.

Regulatory Services

- The Air Quality Action Plan 2024-29 for Dacorum is in preparation in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council. DEFRA has recently reviewed criteria for the development of Air Quality Action Plans. The new plan will include the new requirements and will be published in the new year.
- KPI's are being achieved across all areas of service and investigations/prosecutions are continuing across all areas of the service. These relate to Health and Safety accident investigations, Food Safety and Fly tipping offences.

Business from the last Council meeting

Action reference	Date of meeting	Action	PH responsible for action	Response/update
FC11	15/10/2024	<p>Cllr Guest addressed Cllr Bromham, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Operations in respect of parking solutions (verge hardening) and asked; is it legal information that the Council has highlighted regarding the status of leisure land that is preventing schemes being installed at the Galley Hill end of Spring Lane and the cul-de-sac end of Quinces Croft.</p> <p>Cllr Bromham responded that due to the specific nature of the question, he would request that an email is sent setting out and requesting that particular information.</p> <p>Cllr Guest requested that any response be sent to her ward Councillor colleagues. Cllr Douris pointed out that it is the general practice for answers to such questions asked at Council to be shared with all members.</p>	Cllr Bromham	Please see attachment 'FC11 response' as attached.
FC12	15/10/24	<p>Cllr Douris addressed Cllr Bromham, also in respect of the parking solutions (verge hardening) and asked; could you give us a timeline of this as you have mentioned some figures and funding but haven't said when it will come about and our residents will be very interested in that.</p> <p>Cllr Bromham responded to advise he would provide a written response to that query.</p>	Cllr Bromham	<p>The next steps as per the Cabinet report are below:</p> <p>Conclusions and next steps:</p> <p>12.1 Physical delivery of any projects in the current financial year will be minimal, and it will be necessary to reprofile the projected spend of the current allocated within the Capital Programme – a reprofiled spend will need to be agreed.</p> <p>12.2 To deliver successful schemes, which this proposed policy underpins, will require staff resource. Within the current establishment is a project manager for implementing this policy (it is within the associated capital budget), officers need to ensure this position is filled so that the policy and its implementation can be properly managed and avoid undue delay.</p> <p>12.3 A marketing and communications plan will be developed to cover the policy including how engagement will be carried out especially when schemes are consulted on – this will allow further transparency on all aspects of the policy and its implementation. This could include how new schemes are nominated, possibly via an online form. The Council website will be updated accordingly</p> <p>Officers are currently reviewing the job description of the project manager for delivering the policy and schemes, it is anticipated this is advertised and an appointment is made before Christmas with work on assessing scheme commencing in later late Q4 of 2024/25 or early Q1 of 2025/26.</p>

Business from the last Council meeting

FC13	15/10/24	<p>3. Cllr Timmis referred to the River Gade restoration works and commented that there seems to be a great deal of work going on in Great Gaddesden and asked the Portfolio Holder for some indication of what is happening there as it looks like the river has been dried up. Cllr Timmis clarified this is not the work taking place in Gadebridge Park, this is further up in Great Gaddesden.</p> <p>Cllr Bromham advised that he was not familiar with that, it may be that the Environment Agency is carrying out work but advised he would look into it and provide a written response.</p>	Cllr Bromham	<p>I note from the minutes of the Full Council meeting last night that Cllr Timmis raised the issue of works being undertaken to the River Gade in Great Gaddesden. The works are associated with the removal of a weir to the grade II listed South Bridge on the Leighton Buzzard Road at Water End and include channel restoration works and habitat improvements as per planning permission 22/02836/MFA. The main objectives of the proposed scheme are to reinstate chalk stream characteristics and remove obstructions to fish passage.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is needed to contribute towards improving the River Gade Water Framework Directive (WFD) waterbody status from “bad” to “good” as required by the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>The works do not have any impact on the foundations of the bridge and will not undermine the structural integrity of the bridge itself; the central weir being a latter addition.</p> <p>I am currently dealing with a planning condition to allow a reduced scope of works to occur within the upcoming salmonid spawning season (1st November to 28th February) in accordance with advice from the Herts and North London Fisheries team at the Environment Agency. Works are being undertaken by Affinity Water and are expected to be completed just before Christmas.</p> <p>The scope is as set out in the screenshot below (24/02162/ROC)</p>
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Full Council Question (ref. FC11) from Cllr Guest on Tuesday 15 October:

Cllr Guest addressed Cllr Bromham, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Operations in respect of parking solutions (verge hardening) and asked; is it legal information that the Council has highlighted regarding the status of leisure land that is preventing schemes being installed at the Galley Hill end of Spring Lane and the cul-de-sac end of Quinces Croft.

Cllr Bromham responded that due to the specific nature of the question, he would request that an email is sent setting out and requesting that particular information.

Cllr Guest requested that any response be sent to her ward Councillor colleagues. Cllr Douris pointed out that it is the general practice for answers to such questions asked at Council to be shared with all members.

Response:

The protection of parks and open spaces is covered by legislation (specifically the 1906 Parks and Open Spaces Act) and national and local planning policy.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states (paragraph 103):

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

The areas referred to in the question form part of playing fields that are used for formal sports and information recreation. They are considered as open space/leisure space and were included within the Dacorum Open Space Study Assessment 2019. The saved leisure policy that reflects the requirements of the NPPF can be found in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 2004.

Policy 75 Retention of Leisure Space

Building on leisure spaces will not be permitted unless:

- a) the proposal is ancillary to the leisure use of the land;
- b) a sufficient proportion of the site with appropriate facilities is retained in open use to meet the formal and informal leisure needs of the local population (see Policy 73 (b));
- c) there is a demonstrable surplus of sports pitches and informal leisure space;
- d) leisure space lost is replaced to an equivalent or better standard in an accessible alternative location; or
- e) there is an overall benefit to sport as a result.

In all cases the amenity, landscape and nature conservation aspects of the site will be taken into account.

Any proposal for development on leisure space would need to demonstrate how they meet the criteria detailed in Policy 75.

In addition, the areas identified are designated as open land within the Local Plan, and are protected by Policy 116.

Policy 116 Open Land in Towns and Large Villages

Open land forming part of the urban structure will be protected from building and other inappropriate development by applying the general provisions of Policy 9. Ancillary buildings and works, additions, replacement and redevelopment of buildings and changes of use must satisfy the conditions below:

- a) the location, scale and use of the new development must be well related to the character of existing development, its use and its open land setting;
- b) the integrity and future of the wider area of open land in which the new development is set must not be compromised;
- c) in addition, in the case of sites which accommodate existing uses regarded as inappropriate to an open land area, proposals must:
 - i. not have a significant adverse impact on the character and environment of the site or its open land setting; or
 - ii. result in overall environmental improvements to the site in relation to its open land setting.

Proposals to develop on other open land in towns and large villages will be assessed on the basis of the local contribution the land makes to leisure facilities, townscape, visual amenity, nature conservation and the general environment.

Measures to conserve and improve the attractiveness, variety and usefulness of all open land will be investigated, encouraged and promoted.

As a result any proposal would also need to meet the conditions set out in Policy 116.

There may also be other environmental considerations, such as the impact on nearby trees.

Agenda Item 7

Item 7 – Cabinet referrals

7.1 CA/72/24 APPOINTMENT OF A PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF TWO MULTI-USE GAME AREAS (MUGA) AND CONSTRUCTION OF A CANOPY STRUCTURE AT HEMEL HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL

23rd July 2024

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Agrees to award the main contract to refurbish the two existing Multi-Use Game Areas (MUGA) and construct a canopy area on the Hemel Hempstead School site to Velocity Sports.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

2. **Recommends to Council** to agree an increase to the current proposed budget of £530k to £673k - an increase of £93k.

3. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director (Legal & Democratic Services) to execute and complete all legal agreements ancillary to the JCT Intermediate Contract with Contract Design 2016 (ICD) and/or reasonably required to complete the Project, including (but not limited to):

a. all professional appointments;

b. collateral warranties; and

c. Agreements under;

S.38, & S.278, of the Highways Act 1980;

S.247, Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;

S.104 of the Water Industry Act 1991, and

S.50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

d. Dual Use Agreement (DUA) – Still in draft format

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

Building strong and vibrant communities

Ensuring economic growth and prosperity

Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The proposed award follows a regulated and competitive procurement process to ensure that the Council obtains value for money for the project. Post construction, the Dual Use Agreement (DUA) will be the main agreement to ensure that each parties' roles and responsibilities are agreed and implemented. The Legal Team will oversee the completion of the DUA to ensure that it documents the agreed terms.

Deputy S151 Officer:

The proposed circa £623k investment to improve and upgrade the existing sports pitches will bring vacant assets back into use for the benefit of the local school and community.

Advice

Recommendation agreed

7.3 CA/90/24 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND FEES & CHARGES

14th October 2024

1. Cabinet approved the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29 as set out in Appendix A to the report.
2. Cabinet noted a four-year General Fund savings requirement of £2.5m between 2025 – 2029.
3. Cabinet noted that the Chief Finance Officer will work with the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet to deliver options that will achieve the medium-term saving targets identified within the strategy.
4. Cabinet endorsed the Financial Planning Framework to support the budget setting process for 2025/26.
5. Cabinet agreed that the Chief Finance Officer be requested to revise the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and re-present to Cabinet for approval if material changes to forecasts are required following future Government announcements

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

6. Cabinet resolved to **recommend that Council** approves the fees and charges in appendices C-F, with the exception of garden Waste and garages fees that require further review prior to recommendation to Council. The car parking fees will be set through the ongoing parking tariff consultation and review process that is delegated to the Portfolio holder for Corporate and Commercial.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

Building strong and vibrant communities

Ensuring economic growth and prosperity

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

Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

No comments to add to the report

Deputy S151 Officer:

This is a S151 Officer report, and comments are included in the body of the report.

Advice

N Howcutt introduced the report.

Recommendation agreed

7.2 CA/95/24 DACORUM INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS

14th October 2024

Decision

1. Cabinet delegated approval to the Strategic Director (Corporate & Commercial), supported by Statutory Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Commercial Services, to design and undertake a competitive selection process to select a suitable Partner(s) to work in conjunction with the Council in an Investment Partnership model.
2. Cabinet approved the commissioning of suitable independent advice on the financial, tax, legal, procurement and governance arrangements to ratify the approach.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

3. Cabinet resolved to **recommend to Council** approval of a one-off drawdown of £230,000 from Council development reserves to undertake work related to creating and entering into the Investment Partnership(s)

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

Building strong and vibrant communities

Ensuring economic growth and prosperity

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

Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The Monitoring Officer's comments are included in section 6 of the report under 'Legal Implications'.

Deputy S151 Officer:

The S151 Officer's comments are included in section 5 of the report under Financial and value for money implications. The financial recommendation requests £230k of one-off funding to support the selection of an investment partner/s, the Dacorum Development reserve has funds to support this request, and this proposal is line with the rationale for this reserve.

Advice

N Howcutt introduced the report.

Recommendation agreed

Agenda Item 8

Referral from the Licensing and Health and Safety Enforcement Committee

4th November 2024

GAMBLING ACT 2005 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES - OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Decision

The committee unanimously agreed that the Gambling Act 2005 reviewed and updated Statement of Principles be referred to Full Council for adoption.

Recommendation Agreed