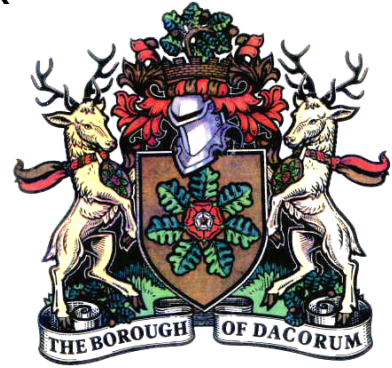


# Public Document Pack



## **SUMMONS**

### **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Wednesday 28 September 2016**

**Council Chamber - Civic Centre**

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Dacorum Borough Council in the County of Hertfordshire to be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Centre on Wednesday 28 September 2016 at 7.30 pm to transact the business set out below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sally Marshall".

**SALLY MARSHALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Contact: Jim Doyle**

**ext 2222**

# AGENDA

**1. MINUTES (Pages 6 - 18)**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council on 13 July 2016.

**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 Solicitor to the Council.

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

4.1 By the Mayor:

4.2 By the Chief Executive:

4.3 By the Group Leaders: Any apologies for absence

4.4 Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet:

Councillor Williams	Leader of the Council
Councillor Harden	Residents & Corporate Services
Councillor G Sutton	Planning and Regeneration
Councillor Marshall	Environmental, Sustainability and Regulatory Services
Councillor Elliot	Finance & Resources
Councillor Mrs Griffiths	Housing

**5. QUESTIONS**

To consider questions (if any) by members of the Council of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Solicitor to the Council.

**6. NOTICE OF MOTION**

To consider the following motion from Councillor Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services given in accordance with Standing Orders:

That a special meeting of the Council be convened on 26 October 2016 in order for the Council in pursuance of the powers conferred upon them by statute to admit to being an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Dacorum (the most honourable distinction which it is their privilege to bestow) double Olympic gold medal winning gymnast Max Whitlock for his outstanding sporting achievement and the example set to the youth of the Borough of Dacorum.

**7. WAIVER OF 6 MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE (SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972).**

## **WAIVER OF 6 MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE (SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972).**

Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a member of a Local Authority to attend at least one meeting of that Authority within a six month consecutive period, in order to avoid being disqualified as a Councillor. This requirement can be waived and the time limit extended if any failure to attend was due to a reason approved by the Authority, in advance of the six month period expiring.

Unfortunately, due to a serious illness and extended hospital admission Councillor Julian Ashbourn, Berkhamsted West Ward, has not been able to attend any Council or Committee meetings since the Council Meeting on 20 April 2016. A formal request has therefore been made for an extension to the six month rule to be approved in his respect.

Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 states that "if a member of a Local Authority fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance, to attend any meeting of the Authority they will, unless the failure was due to some good reason approved by the Authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the Authority." Attendance can be at any committee or sub-committee, or any joint committee, joint board or other body where the functions of the Authority are discharged or who were appointed to advise the Authority on any matter relating to the discharge of their functions.

Councillor Ashbourn has not been able to attend any Council or Committee meetings since the Council meeting on 20 April 2016, due to a serious illness and extended hospital admission. The Monitoring Officer has received a request for the Council to consider approving an extension to the usual six month attendance rule enabling him to remain in office until he is able to resume normal duties.

Council can only consider approval of any reasons for non-attendance before the end of the relevant six month period, which will be 20 October 2016. Councillor Ashbourn has confirmed that he will not be able to attend Council meetings for the foreseeable future and so this request has been submitted to approve an extension of the usual six month rule.

Councillor Ashbourn was elected to the Council in May 2015 and represents Berkhamsted West ward. In addition to full Council he also serves as a member of Finance & Resources, and Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to approve the reason(s) for non-attendance of a Member at any meeting of the Authority throughout a period of six consecutive months, provided that approval is given by the Authority before the expiry of the six month period.

This is the final Council meeting at which approval could be sought for an extension of the time limit. If approval to any extension is not therefore agreed at this meeting Councillor Ashbourn would, under Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 be disqualified after 20 October 2016 from office as a councillor.

Once any councillor loses office, through failure to attend for the six month period, the disqualification cannot be overcome by the councillor subsequently resuming attendance nor can retrospective approval of the Council be sought for an extension in time.

The Council is asked to approve Councillor Ashbourn's non-attendance at meetings of the authority due to ill health for a six month period up to 20 April 2017 pursuant to Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**8. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

To consider any business referred from the previous meeting

**9. CABINET REFERRALS (Pages 19 - 22)**

To consider the following referrals from Cabinet:

<b>Minute No:</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
7.1 CA/077/16	26 July 2016	Medium Term Financial Strategy
7.2 CA/079/16	26 July 2016	Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document: Clarification Statement

**10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS**

None

**11. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

To consider any proposals for changes to committee membership

**12. CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATES**

To consider any proposals for changes to committee dates

# Agenda Item 1

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## **DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**13 JULY 2016**

\*\*\*\*\*

Present -

#### **MEMBERS:**

McClean (Mayor), D Collins (Deputy Mayor), Adeleke, G Adshead, Anderson, Banks, Mrs Bassadone, Bhinder, Brown, Chapman, Clark, Conway, E Collins, Douris, Fantham, Fethney, Fisher, Mrs Griffiths, Guest, Harden, P Hearn, S Hearn, Hicks, Howard, Imarni, Link, Maddern, Mahmood, Marshall, Matthews, Mills, Peter, Ransley, Riddick, Silwal, G Sutton, R Sutton, Taylor, Timmis, Tindall, Whitman, Williams, C Wyatt-Lowe, W Wyatt-Lowe. (44)

#### **OFFICERS:**

Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Finance and Operations), Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Group Manager (Democratic Services), K Norval (Communications and Consultation Officer), K Johnston and K Mogan (Minutes)

The meeting began at 7.30pm.

#### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 May 2016 were confirmed by the Members present and signed by the Mayor.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Matthews declared an interest in item 5 'Petition'. He said he was a member of the Berkhamsted Parking Forum which is working with Dacorum Borough Council to develop the Berkhamsted Multi Story Car Park. Councillor Matthews said he was a member of the Development Control Committee and would not be speaking or voting when the application goes to that committee.

#### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

#### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### **4.1 By the Mayor**

None.

#### **4.2 By the Chief Executive:**

None.

#### **4.3 By the Group Leaders:**

Councillor Williams gave apologies on behalf of Councillors S Adshead, Ashbourn, Barnes, Bateman, Birnie, Elliot, and Ritchie.

#### **4.4. Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet:**

##### **Councillor Williams, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership**

Councillor Williams spoke of his shock, anger and disappointment at The Gazette's front page 'Stuck in Swamp' headline about the supposed failings of The Forum project from the Labour Party Spokesman. The police did not take the Forum space due to operational reasons as they wanted to keep their service together which would have required 600sqm of space when the Forum could only provide 200spm. The regeneration of the whole town is something to be proud of. The Town Centre, the Old Town, the Water Gardens, the Forum and the 100% occupation rate at the Maylands Business Centre are all huge achievements and praise should be given to the great project management skills and sheer hard work of the relevant council departments.

*Councillor Williams was happy to take questions.*

Councillor Guest asked if the Portfolio Holder agreed that it would be good for the people in Dacorum to have a new hospital on a new site along with the options of the refurbishment at Watford.

The Portfolio Holder gave it a warm welcome and thinks that it is good. It is a step in the right direction, Hemel's services are inadequate and we need a more comprehensive provision at Hemel Hospital. We need to look at a realistic solution and will bear the services in mind at Hemel.

Councillor Tindall asked if it was true that the Hertfordshire Police were planning to join with Bedfordshire Police to create a new location on junction 10 of the M1.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that it was true. However, it was dependant on Bedfordshire relocating their custody suites and this option was not pursued.

Councillor Mrs Griffiths asked if the Portfolio Holder will be writing to the new Prime Minister welcoming her and looking forward to constructive relations with her and her government.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed he will and will also express his passion for housing.

Councillor Tindall asked that in that letter could you include the possibility of getting rid of the Housing and Planning Bill that contains so many unnecessary clauses in planning.

The Portfolio Holder said the Housing and Planning Act was at the forefront of everyone's minds. He said that Councillor Tindall joined him at the Local Government Association conference last week and the 'pay to stay' and sale of high value assets are to be confirmed.

### **Councillor Mrs Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing**

#### **Tenant and Leaseholders**

**Get Involved Strategy** - July will see the completion of a new Get Involved Strategy which set out how we will work to encourage as many tenants as possible to get involved in helping us improve the service we provide to our tenants. The development of this strategy will also see the relaunch of our high level tenant committee (previously called the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee).

We are excited how the next phase of development of tenant involvement at Dacorum Borough Council will progress as increasingly we have new, talented and enthusiastic tenants to work with – further updates will follow.

**Recharges** - July will also see the recruitment of a Recharge Officer into the Housing Income Team. The Recharge Officer's remit will be to ensure that money owed for damage caused to Council property by existing or former Council tenants is collected. Much work has already been done to prepare for this imminent arrival by strengthening our existing recharge procedures and ensuring that all parties involved (such as Osborne and our Empty Homes Team) are ready to make this a success.

**Month of Policy reviews** - We have designated August our 'Housing Policy Month'. Recent changes in housing legislation (such as the Housing and Planning Act 2015) has impacted on many of our existing policies. As a consequence we will be seeking to work with a whole host of stakeholders, including Councillors on updating these existing documents. Staff from our Policy and Participation Team will be contacting particularly Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee members through the Chair shortly to ask for contributions on policy changes.

#### **Strategic Housing**

Following on from the success of Strategic Housing's Peer Review assessment, the Housing Advice & Options team were asked to showcase the service at the NPSS national conference on the 4/5 July. This is an excellent opportunity for the service to share the positive work that we are doing to improve service delivery in this challenging area and provide details to key stakeholders on areas of good practice that have been identified.

#### **Property and Place**

##### **Osborne - Total Asset Management.**

- 2016/17 will see an increase in the efficiency of some of our hardest to treat homes
- Across the year Osborne will complete External Wall Insulation to another 60 solid wall properties
- This will help our tenants manage their fuel bills whilst supporting the reduction to our carbon emissions.



- The first properties we are tackling this year are on St Albans Road. This will conclude the wider programme of efficiency works at the Crabtree estate and has provided thermal improvements to the estate and our stock.

There have been two major adaptations completed, to provide ground floor extensions with specialist equipment and facilities, for two families in the borough. The facilities have dramatically improved the quality of life for these families and have been completed to a high standard.

The year-end performance report for 2015-16, Total Asset Management and Gas servicing and installation contracts will be presented to the Housing and Community Scrutiny Committee, later this month and whilst the overall performance remains strong, some areas in the TAM contract have declined and will be subject to ongoing monitoring and intervention as appropriate.

### **Sun Realm - Gas Servicing and Installation**

The servicing and installation contract has been delivering consistently high levels of compliance, currently 99.97%, with two properties overdue, and customer satisfaction with the service remains high.

*Councillor Mrs Griffiths was happy to take questions.*

Councillor Mahmood asked if the Portfolio Holder agreed that the work from the Tenant Liaison Committee (TLC) was very good and the feedback from them compliments the work of the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Portfolio Holder was delighted to endorse the comments. The TLC will be included in the new strategy but this also allows for tenants to become more involved.

### **Councillor Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services**

Reports of race hate incidents have not increased in Dacorum since the EU Referendum results. Between 29th April 2016 and 29th May 2016 there were 3 reports and between 29th May 2016 and 29th June 2016 there were also 3 reports. The Council have been made aware of one other incident where a note was put through a letterbox of a family however this has not been formerly reported. According to Police figures, reports of hate crime across the whole of Hertfordshire between 1/4/2016 and 5/7/2016 have increased 15% but reports in Dacorum are down 20.6% from 63 reports for the same period last year to 50 reports for the same period this year.

The Patron's Lunch on 12<sup>th</sup> June at Adeyfield was a great success despite poor weather and was well attended and received. A Great Royal Bake off and a Royal themed fancy dress were judged by Cllr Chapman and Dacorum Community Choir, Lets Dance Group and BURP (Berkhamsted Ukelele Random Players) all attended the event to entertain the community along with zorbing, go karts and fairground rides.

A further Premises Closure Order was obtained in court on 6<sup>th</sup> July for a property in Adeyfield where anti-social behaviour and drugs were impacting on neighbouring properties. There is a clear message being sent by Dacorum Borough Council that drug dealing and any associated behaviour will not be tolerated regardless of tenure.

The Old Town Hall has achieved a 74.5% attendance rate for the first quarter of 2016/17 and the Dance project called Lets Dance for age group 55+ goes from strength to strength and they have visited the Mayor of London with young people from Hemel Hempstead School.

Two Adventure Playgrounds are having all weather sports surfaces (football, basketball and mini tennis) installed and will be available to rent outside of playground hours. The playgrounds will also be offering a range of additional paid opportunities such as Laser Tag sessions and Go Karts without reducing the hours of their core services.

*Councillor Harden was happy to take questions.*

Councillor Timmis asked the Portfolio Holder if he agreed that hate crime should not be tolerated and that there should be a huge emphasis on victims to report hate crimes to the police.

The Portfolio Holder agreed and said even three reports are too many. He expressed how seriously it's taken and the force of law ensures the right course of action and sentence. He encouraged everyone to report any kind of hate crime to the police.

Councillor Tindall joined with the Portfolio Holder in expression of disgust against hate crimes. Hertfordshire County Council has a motion next week to deal with hate crime. Councillor Tindall corrected the Portfolio Holder and said it was the Liberal Democrats that encouraged the government to take the low paid out of the tax threshold.

Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe said that an increase in physically and mental wellbeing should deliver financial dividends.

The Portfolio Holder agreed and said it reminded him of Eric Pickles 'thriving families' project. It is hoped that by improving lives, you can save money which is a bonus. It is hoped that this can be achieved by being specific on delivery targets.

Councillor G Adshead wanted to thank the Portfolio Holder for the successful event for the Queen's Birthday which took place in the Queen's Square at Adeyfield. He also congratulated Councillor Brown for coming second in the bake off competition.

**Councillor G Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration**

**Town Centre news**

Following the regeneration works in the town centre, it's really pleasing to see how attractive the town is looking and how vibrant it is becoming. Since the works completed there has been private investment in the town, not only from the recent major acquisition of the Marlowes Centre and other shop units by Capital and Regional, but also from a number of independent businesses. Chairman, I am pleased to announce that across the town centre, only 7% of retail units are vacant. In the main pedestrianised shopping area this figure drops to only 3%. All signs that the works we have done under the Hemel Evolution programme are having a real positive effect on the health of the town centre and the facilities available to our residents.

The new fountain at the new town square – with lights and music – is now operational and this will be opened formally by the Mayor this Saturday 16 July. I hope that everyone will join us to Celebrate the switch-on at the 'Making a splash on Marlowes' free family fun day, including children's games, face painting, and a magic & puppet

show. There's music on the Rainbow Stage, followed by the first official fountain display at 2pm.

### **Water Gardens**

Work continues to progress well on the water gardens restoration. Planting in the flower garden opposite to Bank Court has started and the vibrant colours of Mrs Susan Jellicoe's original planting scheme are now starting to re-emerge. The new, extended terrace facing the river is being installed and looking bright and fresh.

### **Maylands Business Centre**

Work has now begun on clearing the site adjacent to the business centre for the construction of five new small business units. The planning application has been submitted to the Council, and subject to a favourable outcome, we intend to start work later this year on construction with a view to opening in 2017.

The Business centre continues to go from strength to strength with a waiting list of prospective tenants keen to take up space. There are currently 15 companies on the waiting list for offices and 27 for the units. For the first quarter of this business year, 18 training courses were held at the MBC generating 10k income, resulting in the up-skilling of 154 people, and 192 business meetings were held.

### **Dacorum's Den**

The annual Dacorum's Den judging day was held last week with 7 successful businesses sharing £10k sponsored by FFEI, Sopra Steria, Abode bed and continental, Lumiere Developments and McDonalds. As ever this proves to be a popular event with small businesses providing those with the best ideas a useful grants to help them to grow and develop.

### *Councillor G Sutton was happy to take questions.*

Councillor Tindall said he had received an email from Visit Herts as they are concerned about the referendum result. Can the Portfolio Holder discuss with the two MPs serving Dacorum to ensure positive trading conditions remain and to allow tourism to continue.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed he will be seeing the two MPs later this week and will discuss this issue with them.

Councillor Mahmood asked the Portfolio Holder if he agreed that Hemel Hempstead has the best shopping centre in the area; he noted the town was swamped with people from other towns and it is one of the best for disabled access.

The Portfolio Holder thanked Councillor Mahmood and will pass his comments onto the Regeneration Team. He said everyone should be proud of the Town Centre from Riverside to the Old Town.

Councillor Madden wanted to pass on her thanks to the Friends of Jellicoe Water Gardens. They have invited the Scouts to put Geocaching in the Water Gardens.

The Portfolio Holder said he would pass on Councillor Maddern's thanks and said once the work was complete in the Water Gardens, he hoped it would become a magnet for visitors.

Councillor Fisher said she is taking an optimistic approach; she likes the new bus interchange as she is a regular user of buses. She would like to know what planned works there are for the Market Square as the Salvation Army is really suffering from a drop in footfall, she would like reassurance that in the next year something will be done.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that it is regularly discussed and it's not something that can be rushed to make a decision on. Once any plans have been decided, then members will be updated.

### **Councillor Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability and Regulatory Services**

A small herd of 10 Belted Galloway, a rare breed of Scottish cattle were kindly loaned by the Boxmoor Trust and released into Bunkers Park in Nash Mills in an area known as the Mattens. The animals have a placid temperament and will be there until about October. The herd was released in a special ceremony on the 14 May, officiated by the then Mayor, Councillor Adeleke, and I wish to record the Council's thanks to the Boxmoor Trust.

This month, the campaign "the Love Food Waste Challenge" was started as part of a national campaign to encourage less food waste and saving on money. Waste food costs the average household £470 per annum. Residents that take part will keep a food waste diary and be given goodies and tips to reduce food waste. In just five days, 23 families have expressed an interest in taking part. Further information can be found on the Council's website, [www.dacorum.gov.uk/LFHW](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/LFHW) where you can also find the link to the "Waste Not, Want Not" cookbook written and published by Astley Cooper School.

An Environmental Protection Day was held on 27 April in Adeyfield. Five tonnes of fly tipped waste and litter was picked up in four hours and several items of graffiti were noted for action. Two teams carried out the work, comprising of officers from Environmental Health, Environmental Services, Housing, ASB and Resident Services together with two councillors and local residents from the Adeyfield Neighbourhood Action Group. There are plans to have more such events later this year.

The additional garden waste collection service started in June costing a mere £35 this season for each additional bin emptied. Additional garden waste bins can also be purchased at £25 each. So far, there have been 277 subscribers.

Phoenix Roundabout has been rejuvenated with fresh colourful planting of shrubs, perennials and begonias. This is now a splendid gateway from the M1 into Maylands and Hemel Hempstead. For the rest of the Borough, the summer bedding is now complete.

*Councillor Marshall was happy to take questions.*

Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe emphasised that we live in a beautiful borough and that the entrance to the town from the M1 looks beautiful. There is a bank at the side of the roundabout not planted – can a scheme be put in place to plant this area.

The Portfolio Holder hesitated to give assurance but appreciates the question.

Councillor Tindall said there had been irregularities in bin collections in Highfield and could this issue be looked into.

The Portfolio Holder said to provide her with the details and she will look into this issue.

Councillor Douris said the Phoenix roundabout was an excellent entrance into the town. He asked if the Portfolio Holder would join him in acknowledging the excellent and efficient work of the Clean, Safe and Green team.

The Portfolio Holder thanked Councillor Douris for his kind comments and would certainly pass them along to the team.

Councillor Ransley said the Memorial Gardens in Tring look wonderful but some roundabouts on the boundary between Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire are rundown and this is another gateway into Dacorum that should look good.

The Portfolio Holder said she would seek clarification on what roundabouts Councillor Ransley means as some of these are not under Dacorum's remit.

Councillor Mrs Bassadone said it was lovely to see the cows in Bunkers Park but questioned where the cows had gone from Boxmoor.

The Portfolio Holder said the Boxmoor Trust has a huge estate and they are probably somewhere else.

Councillor Maddern said how much excitement and joy had been generated in Nash Mills after the cows had been brought to Bunkers Park.

The Portfolio Holder thanked Councillor Maddern for her comments.

### **Councillor Williams presented on behalf of Councillor Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources**

#### **Finance**

The Annual Statement of Accounts were produced and approved on 29 June at Audit Committee in advance of the statutory deadline.

After successful go live with the new Payroll provider in April, the system was updated to include a new payroll for staff working on the Elections. Payments were successfully made in June.

#### **Revenue & Benefits**

Working with the Digital Dacorum team, the benefits team has introduced an online form where residents can easily tell the Council about changes in their circumstances.

#### **Commercial Assets & Property Development**

Work is ongoing to realise capital receipts and the disposal of garage sites is progressing within expected timeframes. To date we have receipts or bids in process

for three garage sites at Montgomery Avenue, Turners Hill and Juno Road in the sum of £1.8m. This is in line with the programme of disposal for this financial year.

Matters are currently in hand to secure planning permission for the proposed Multi Storey Car Park in Berkhamsted and we have been working with colleagues in planning and HCC Highways to progress the scheme. We have responded to the comments of Herts Highways and are looking to submit the application to the next suitable Development Control Committee.

We have now acquired Bunkers Park to ensure there is suitable cemetery provision for the next 50 years and will explore other options for the land within the parameters of the Local Plan.

### **Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance**

Work has continued to consider the scope of the Facilities Management Service in the Forum and the specification and contractual performance indicators are being finalised by a cross council team. The documentation has also been quality assured by both Cushman & Wakefield from a technical perspective and by Eversheds from a legal perspective.

The Further Competition tendering period for the Facilities Management Service will be live by Friday 8 July 2016 with a tender return date of mid-August.

Work is progressing well with planning the transfer of the Parking Shop from its current location into the Forum. Discussions have taken place between Dacorum Borough Council, Watford Borough Council and Indigo Parking Services with regards to the layout of the working environment and embracing the new ways of working that the Council have adopted.

*Councillor Williams was happy to take questions.*

There were no questions for the Portfolio Holder.

## **5. PETITION**

***To acknowledge receipt and consider a petition containing 1000 signatures from Dacorum Residents (1415 signatures in total as at 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016) regarding the proposed development of a Multi Storey Car Park in Berkhamsted. The petition gathered on 'Change.org', addressed to Andrew Williams, Leader of the Council is worded as follows:***

***"Stop high-rise car park in historic Berkhamsted conservation area"***

***<https://www.change.org/p/andrew-williams-stop-high-rise-car-park-in-historic-berkhamsted-conservation-area>***

Wendy Conian

Thank you for the opportunity for letting me speak, I started the petition and I hope to give a voice to the opposition which comes from across the spectrum and the town's community. It is concerning that Dacorum believes an expensive multi storey car park in an historic market town is the only answer. There has been no consideration given to cheaper, less disruptive solutions. It is not good enough; Dacorum Borough Council is not just ignoring residents but their own Urban Transport Plan. There has been no

wider public consultation as promised and with the deep cuts within local government, Dacorum Borough Council has spent £350,000 on consultancy fees and £3.5 million has been allocated to the development of the car park. Dacorum should be learning from other councils and their innovative travel plan in Maylands. I hope that members intervene and stop the plans and the process, set up an inquiry into the process and ensure there is wider consultation.

#### John Higgins

I was a Berkhamsted Town Councillor until 2015 when I resigned over several issues, the car park being one of them. I was happy to support the Conservative manifesto promise of a new car park for Berkhamsted but I was assured there would be a phased programme of residential parking. I was informed that there were no further plans to revisit the issue in the next ten years. Efforts to discuss other options were dismissed by senior borough councillors. There has been no public consultation and the Berkhamsted borough councillors have favoured commercial interests over the opinions of residents. There are just four routes in the town centre which all end up in one central crossing. There has been a significant increase in traffic in the past years and a car park close to this junction will only add to congestion. I am urging the council to halt development and take control of the process until these issues have been addressed.

#### Jon Rollit

I am a resident of Berkhamsted and I want the council to consider other options. I use Lower Kings Road most mornings and the traffic backs up from the junction to the canal bridge. The area chosen for this car park is well used by pedestrians as a cut through and the development would have a detrimental effect and would make it a dark and dangerous place in a conservation area. The current car park is rarely full so do we really need another one? The money could be spent more wisely with informative signs pointing people to current parking and creating spaces across the town to distribute parking. Encouraging walking, cycling and implementing a bus hopper and removing cars should be a priority.

#### Comments from Councillors

Councillor Matthews said he was a member of the Berkhamsted Parking Forum. There have been meetings with residents, employers, DBC officers and the Portfolio Holder every few weeks to try and come up with a solution. Councillor Matthews has spoken to many residents who support the plans for a car park from newcomers to people who have lived in Berkhamsted all their lives. Can Councillor Williams confirm that he has received a letter of support from the Chamber of Commerce?

Councillor Marshall asked if there was a need for a car park and if it was in the right place? She said Berkhamsted was a vibrant town popular with shoppers. Additional parking in Berkhamsted has been before the council for many years. The current car parking is at 92% occupancy at peak times which does not allow for any more visitors. It is clear that the need for car parking is undeniable. Having car parking away from the town centre would be pointless and it is down to the Development Control Committee to assess the plans. Should there be a car park? To me, the obvious answer is yes.

#### ***Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe arrived at 8:35pm***

Councillor Mahmood said he had read the reports after being made aware of the petition. He said that he visits Berkhamsted on a fortnightly basis and his observation –

although not scientific – is that there is a need for a car park. It is one of the few towns in Hertfordshire without adequate car parking.

Councillor Anderson said he had listened to the comments made by the speakers and feels the issues are over the concept, not the design of the car park. He echoed previous comments from members about the evident need for a car park. The pleas from the speakers about encouraging use of public transport may well be served by this new car park. It is a paradox situation where more commuters can park in the car park and make use of the trains. I support the need for more parking.

Councillor Williams confirmed in response to Councillor Matthews question that he had received a letter of support. This petition calls on me to stop the process; I do not intend to stop the process. This car park meets a proven need and was a key part of the electoral campaign in 2015. There wasn't sufficient alternative parking and it is up to Berkhamsted Town Council to consult with residents to revisit these issues. This petition has received a significant number of signatures but this is only one side of the argument. I have been following the petition from the start and have followed the process and the comments on social media which I feel are more balanced. The council is currently working to try and satisfy the requirements of Herts Highways before the process goes any further. Successful towns need good parking. The population of Hertfordshire is set to increase 15% by 2030 and rise again another 15% by 2050. This will obviously cause an increase in demand. The £3 million allocated for the car park is capital funded which cannot be moved to other projects. I acknowledge receipt of the petition and it will be referred to the Development Control Committee to make the final decision.

**Resolved:**

The Council continue to proceed with the proposed development and refer the matter to a future meeting of the Development Control Committee for consideration of the planning application

**6. QUESTIONS**

None.

**7. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

None.

**8. CABINET REFERRALS**

The referrals from Cabinet on 24 May 2016 and 28 June 2016 were submitted. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

**Resolved**

That the following be approved:

**24 MAY 2016**

**8.1 CA/053/16 PROPOSALS FOR A DEVELOPMENT COMPANY**



## **Decision**

### **That the following be approved:**

1. A drawdown of 100K from the Invest to Save reserve, in order to fund the procurement of advice associated with the creation of a Development Company.

## **2 CA/054/16 CONSTITUTION UPDATE**

## **Decision**

### **That the following be approved:**

1. The changes to the Constitution as set out in paragraphs 9, 10, 14, 16 and 21 of the Cabinet report.
2. The changes to the Financial Regulations as set out in paragraphs 22 and 26 of the Cabinet report.

## **28 JUNE 2016**

## **8.3 CA/062/16 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

## **Decision**

### **That the following be approved:**

1. That the responses to comments received on the draft Statement of Community Involvement (2016) be agreed; and
2. That the new Statement of Community Involvement to guide future consultation on planning matters as annexed to the Cabinet report be adopted.

## **8.4 CA/064/16 NATIONAL GRADUATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

## **Decision**

### **That the following be approved:**

1. That £72,800 be drawn down from the Management of Change reserve.

## **8.5 CA/066/16 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME REVIEW**

## **Decision**

### **That the following be approved:**

1. Agree not to revise or replace the current Council Tax Support scheme for 2017/18.

2. Agree the proposed minor technical changes to the 2017/18 Council Tax Support Scheme as laid out in paragraphs 22 and 23 of the Cabinet report.

## **9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS**

None.

## **10. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

None.

## **11 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE DATES**

The following changes to committee rooms and dates were agreed:

### **1. Finance and Resources OSC**

To change the meeting date of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016 to 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

### **2. Strategic Planning and Regeneration OSC**

To add an additional meeting for Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 at 7.30pm.

### **3. Standards**

To change the meeting date of 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.

### **4. Housing OSC**

To add the meeting date of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 but to keep the meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

## **12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE**

### **Resolved:**

Paragraph 4.3 of the Treasury Management Strategy is not applied to the United Kingdom.

The meeting ended at 8:53 pm

## ITEM 7 – REFERRALS FROM CABINET

**26 July 2016**

### **7.1 CA/077/16 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

#### **Decision**

**Resolved to Recommend the approval of:**

- 1. The revised Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2016/17 – 2020/21**
- 2. The financial projections within the 5-year Medium Term Financial Strategy**
- 3. A General Fund savings target of £1.33 million for the 2017/18 budget-setting process;**
- 4. A four-year General Fund savings target of £3.6 million for the duration of this Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
- 5. A review of the Housing Revenue Account base budget and savings target be undertaken as part of the review of the HRA business plan and budget preparation cycle;**
- 6. The Corporate Director (Finance & Operations) working with the Council's Corporate Management Team and Portfolio Holders to deliver options that will achieve the saving targets identified within the strategy;**
- 7. Authority be delegated to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Budget Review Group, to consider Government's proposed four-year Settlement, and, subject to further guidance emerging before October, to accept the offer if appropriate;**
- 8. The Financial Planning Framework to support the budget-setting process for 2017/18;**
- 9. The Corporate Director (Finance & Operations) be requested to revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy and re-present to Cabinet and Council for approval if material changes to forecasts are required following future Government announcements.**

#### **Reason for Decision**

To present to Cabinet the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy for approval.

#### **Implications**

Contained within the body of the report.

#### **Risk Implications**

The updated strategy reduces the risk of forward projections becoming out of date.

## **Health & Safety Implications**

There are no health and safety implications.

## **Equality Implications**

There are no Equality implications.

## **Corporate Objectives**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy supports the delivery of all five of the Corporate Objectives.

## **Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments**

### **Monitoring Officer:**

No comments to add to the report.

### **S.151 Officer**

This is a Section 151 Officer report.

## **Advice**

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations explained that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) incorporated details of the proposed Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and four year settlement.

He explained that the Secretary of State had confirmed that the four year deal would not protect against any 'unforeseen events'. He referred members to the detail of the deal available to Dacorum from the Revenue Support Grant and the Transitional Grant. He noted that it was only £225k being received in 2017/18 however he felt that the council should still go forward with the deal. Other Local authorities all felt the same.

Members were referred to the proposed structure shown on page 96 of the report and explained that responsibilities would be split and would be discussed through the Corporate Review Group.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing noted the recommendation to Full Council but she queried the level of member involvement.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that he and the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources were included in the Budget Review Group.

It was highlighted that the recommendations included within the strategy would also be recommended to Full Council.

The Leader of the Council asked if the four year deal would avoid the council having a negative RSG.

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations said that if they did not do the deal then the situation could be worse than the current state. There would not be a huge amount of certainty provided from the deal, but it was still a worthwhile option.

## **Voting**

None.

**7.2 CA/079/16 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING  
DOCUMENT: CLARIFICATION STATEMENT**

**Decision**

**Resolved to Recommend to:**

- (a) Re-adopt the Affordable Housing Clarification Note as a material planning consideration in relevant planning decisions and for use in the preparation of future planning documents; and**
- (b) That authority is delegated to the Assistant Director, Planning, Development and Regeneration to make any necessary minor editorial changes to the current Clarification Note, prior to its re-issue.**

**Reason for Decision**

To agree the re-adoption of the Affordable Housing Clarification Note setting out how the Council will apply the changes to national affordable housing policy set recent changes to the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and as a result of a Court of Appeal judgement.

**Implications**

Financial

There are no direct financial implications for the Council in relation to this guidance note, although there will be a limited number of cases where the revised approach to affordable housing may reduce the ability to secure either on-site provision or commuted payments. The requirements to apply 'vacant building credit' may also reduce CIL income.

The application of the Clarification Note will however assist in the efficient determination of planning applications within the statutory decision periods, which will assist with the overall financial efficiency of the planning service. It will also reduce the risk of the Council having to defend appeals which may have occurred should measures not have been taken to bring the Council's approach in-line with revised national planning policies.

Value for Money

Up-to-date guidance on affordable housing will ensure the Council secures contributions from development where appropriate, but does not spend unnecessary time and money fighting appeals where there is a mis-match between the policies within the adopted Core Strategy and revised national guidance.

**Risk Implications**

There are no direct risk implications related to this guidance note. The note provides detailed guidance to support the application of policies within the adopted Core Strategy and Affordable Housing SPD. A separate Risk Assessment has been prepared for the Local Planning Framework (of which the Core Strategy is part). This is updated monthly as part of CORVU monitoring processes.

**Community Impact Assessment**

Equalities Impact Assessment prepared for the Core Strategy, which this guidance note supports. This will be translated into a new Community Impact Assessment in due course.

### **Health & Safety Implications**

There are no health and safety implications relating to this Clarification Note.

### **Corporate Objectives**

The Affordable Housing Clarification Note supports the 'Dacorum Delivers' and 'Affordable Housing' objectives. It will improve efficiency and effectiveness of services by enabling planning decisions to be approved within agreed time scales and through the provision of upfront and clear advice on the provision of affordable housing within new development. It also demonstrates that the Council is able to respond to changes in national policy in a prompt and effective manner.

### **Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments**

#### **Monitoring Officer:**

The clarification note will ensure that the Council is applying the most up to date and relevant government guidance and will assist consistent decision making on planning applications.

#### **S.151 Officer**

No further comments to add.

#### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration introduced the report noting that the purpose was to agree to re-adopt the Affordable Housing Clarification note and to set out how the council would apply the changes to national affordable housing policy. He added that they would not be seeking affordable housing in developments with less than 10 dwellings.

The Assistant Director for Planning and Regeneration supported what the Portfolio Holder had said, and added that the council would not also seek affordable housing for less than 5 dwellings in rural areas.

The Leader of the council said that this was part of government legislation and therefore must be applied.

#### **Voting**

None.