

## MINUTES

### Dacorum Borough Council

#### Strategic Planning and Environment Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September

**Councillors:** Cllr Pringle  
Cllr Patterson  
Cllr Santamaria  
Cllr Gale  
Cllr Birnie  
Cllr Anderson  
Cllr Wyatt-Lowe  
Cllr Walker  
Cllr Timmis  
Cllr Birnie  
Cllr Mitchell  
Cllr C Hobson (Chair)

Also in attendance:

Cllr Bromham

Cllr Wilkie

**Officers: (6)**

Emma Walker – Head of Environmental and Community Protection

Robert Williams – Head of Environmental Services

Ian Ross- Head of Neighbourhood Management

Fiona Jump – Head of Financial Services

Clare Dempsey – Financial Planning and Analysis Manager

Sara Whelan – Assistant Director Development Management

James Doe – Strategic Director - Place

The meeting began at 19:30

### 1 **MINUTES**

Page 5, paragraph 7, Cllr Birnie noted that he did not say 430 residents out of 80,000 was a respectable sample.

Page 6, paragraph 3, Cllr Birnie noted this did not make sense, suggesting the wording should be, 'The charts and the report themselves contradict.'

Top of page 11, the person who mentioned antisocial behaviour and the need for youth facilities identified herself.

Page 4, bottom paragraph, Cllr Timmis noted the repetition on the paragraph beginning, 'The drivers for change included reduced footfall and decreasing footfall.'

The Chair advised that typos and minor errors on minutes should be sent to LFowell rather than waiting for the meeting.

Page 6, paragraph 8, Cllr Birnie wondered whether SWhelan had circulated the terms of reference regarding the Hemel Vision Board. It was confirmed they had been received today and that action points were in the process of being circulated.

There were no further comments regarding the minutes and they were formally approved as an accurate record.

## **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies from Cllr Riddick, Cllr Deacon and Cllr S Hobson

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest,

## **4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

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

None.

## **6 ACTION POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

As covered under item 1.

## **7 Q1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Q1 2023 General Financial Performance report was presented, the following was highlighted. There was a surplus across all committees of £766,000. Services that fall under strategic planning and environment had a pressure of £789,000 in the forecast, broken down from £520,000 on waste services, largely due to agency requirements. £175,000 was noted as being spent on vehicle hire due to fleet issues, the pressures were however offset with £700,000 surplus from garden waste subscriptions. Pressures on planning income were noted as around £550,000, linked mainly to current economic conditions. Capital for strategic planning was showing pressure of £100,000 reported due to the purchasing of domestic things due to high demand for replacements across the borough.

Cllr Birnie wondered whether housing and property should be under the HRA, the chamber fund. The response was that there were some services which were part of the housing and property directory and fell under the remit of this Committee which included things like allotments. It was correct that it would come before this Committee because it sits within the housing and property directorate.

Regarding the surplus on green waste, Cllr Birnie wondered whether the deficit of £545,000 was correct. The response was that the £700,000 of surplus was taken into account in the figures presented in the report. Under neighbourhood operations the overall variance was around £89,000 pressure, which included the impact of the £700,000 surplus.

The Chair felt it was important to understand the difficult economic situation, noting that she expected more questions from the Committee.

Cllr Birnie expressed that he was hoping to have the usual overall view of the budget, it was clarified that a snapshot had been presented today. Assurance was given that the full financial picture for the Council was taken to the Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well as to Cabinet.

## **8 Q1 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Environmental Services Performance report had been circulated.

The first quarter for the measured recycling rate had been projected at 53.2%, which was noted as favourable and a reflection on the amount of garden waste collected. Regarding the national indicator NI191, it was noted this figure was cumulative over the year, with the first quarter provisional figure being 107.17kg per household and the figure for the end of the year being 421kg per household.

Regarding missed bins per 40,000 collections, it was reported the first three months' average figure was 164. With regard to the measurement of fly-tip collections, the target of 95% had been missed, with 76.69% being collected within seven days. There had been a spate of fly-tipping and an increased resource had been allocated to that service to ensure a faster turnaround. The graffiti incidents cleaning target of 95% had been slightly missed in the first quarter, with 89.29% being cleaned within seven days of being reported. It was noted this was a standard pattern during summer months anticipating that this would decline with the shorter autumn days.

It was reported that a re-routing exercise had been done with the intention to service the same number of properties with the same frequency of collection but using fewer vehicles. The number of vehicles had been reduced by four, with an aggregated savings figure of around £180,000 (ph) per vehicle, creating an annual saving of £720,000 per annum. It was explained that the entire borough had been part of the re-routing exercise, however only 10,000 properties had experienced a change of collection day.

Regarding the garden waste subscription service introduced at the end of February, it was reported that there were now 33,851 households subscribed. The total revenue from the service was reported to be just over £1.5 million, which it was thought was due to the cost to each household being £45 where other boroughs were charging £70-80.

The opening of a new cemetery was reported, the first since 1963, at Bedmond Road. Dacorum Borough Council were in a consortium of five authorities with the crematorium, the lead authority was Three Rivers.

Regarding the re-routing exercise, Cllr Wyatt-Lowe wondered whether there had been a plan-B if residents felt the changes were not satisfactory or efficient. The response was that there were expected to be a small number of properties where issues were anticipated for the first two or three collection cycles. There had been a small issue with transfer of data onto the difficult access crews with regard to assisted collects, those had all been resolved. Rounds were working well, there was an option to rebalance work if there was an imbalance. Moving forward, it was anticipated domestic wheelie bin rounds would be brought into the estates recycling collection in order to take another vehicle off the road and make further savings. Commercial waste collections were also in line for crew saving measures.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe wondered what would happen with the £1.5 million surplus with regard to the green waste. The response was that the money was revenue gained and would ultimately go into the general fund and could be used to finance other council projects.

Cllr Timmis wondered whether there was the possibility to consider continuous green waste collection over the winter months. The response was that they would like to run through to December to deal with autumn leaf fall, however because of the driver CPC requirement the green waste crew were shuffled around during winter months to enable refresher training for other crews. It was clarified that the Hertfordshire green waste site was open throughout the year for residents to dispose of garden waste.

Cllr Timmis wondered whether the additional resources for fly-tipping included CCTV, it was confirmed the approach was more basic, with a 3.5 tonne van being deployed for collection of fly-tipped waste.

Cllr Timmis raised the question of who was responsible for hedges, it was clarified that Dacorum Council Environmental Services used to receive payment to look after trees on Hertfordshire County Council verges, however those had been passed to the care of Hertfordshire County Council. Hertfordshire County Council had given the contract for tree maintenance to Ringway, who had subcontracted the work to Gristwood & Toms, the Dacorum contractor.

Regarding re-routing and the reduction in vehicles and crews, Cllr Mitchell wondered what had happened to the people employed in those roles. It was clarified that the core fleet had been supplemented by a large number of hire vehicles, at a cost of £1,000 per week for each vehicle. Savings had been made by taking those vehicles off hire, along with not employing agency people. There had been no redundancies.

Cllr Mitchell wondered what was happening for people who had no intention of participating in the green bin scheme and wanted the bin collected. There was reference to the strategy from 2018, where it was included that there could potentially be free garden waste collection and the decision had been taken not to take away the bins in the event of that happening. It was now anticipated that the new Environment Act would not be put onto statute until possibly after the next general election. If someone particularly wanted a bin removed they could refer it to their local ward councillor for action.

Cllr Pringle noted the success of the re-routing exercise, wondering whether there would be developmental revisions. The response was that the current expectation was that Dacorum would progressively grow by 50% over the next 30 years. There was allowance for growth built within the rounds, however if it was found that rounds were being stretched there would need to be another exercise and recalculation with the possibility of adding another crew.

Cllr Pringle wondered whether flexible working would allow elasticity within the workforce. It was noted that there were difficulties in offering flexibility within a Monday to Friday service.

Cllr Pringle questioned whether analysis had been done on causal factors of fly-tipping, wondering whether there was a more cost-effective solution than enforcement. July's figures were produced, which showed that there were 106 fly-tipping incidents classed as domestic other waste, three green waste fly-tips and some electrical white goods. The definition of fly-tipping was clarified as the size of two or more bags of rubbish.

Cllr Pringle raised a concern about trees where it was known they were dangerous and they were being monitored, whether those would be followed up on if they were transferred to another authority. Cllr Pringle wondered whether the duty of care was passed on properly. The response was that Dacorum Borough Council used the Ezytreev database for tree management, all of the information on the 30,000 trees previously managed was on that database and would be transferred to Hertfordshire County Council.

There was a question around what additional funding was available for trees that were on DBC land and were being maintained by Dacorum Council. It was confirmed that a report was in progress to take to the corporate leadership team with regard to those trees detailing legal obligations. The Chair noted that ward councillors would know where current hotspots for troublesome trees were, suggesting they follow agreed processes and contact the portfolio holder, Aidan Wilkie, for issues on a case by case basis and not wait for the strategic plan. It was noted that there was a plan of action to catch up with the backlog of work regarding tree management.

Cllr Birnie reported his co-councillor had encountered difficulty in establishing whether a tree belonged to a council or adjacent landlord, wondering whether it was sufficient for him to give an address and ask whether it was one of their trees. It was confirmed that there was a record of all DBC trees. The Chair added that until further notice that phone call should be to the strategic senior leadership person.

A concern was raised about what happened where a tree was a risk to life and an immediate danger, who would have the emergency duty. It was reported that DBC had dealt with it via principal or local contractors. Reassurance was given that if there were a risk to life, the Council would act quickly. The Chair suggested requesting a short statement from the leadership team as to what they should do if there was an immediate risk. The Chair requested that if there were specific issues, Councillors should treat it in the same way as a ward issue. There was a suggestion to include instructions for if there was an emergency situation on a Sunday or outside office hours.

There was praise for Councillor Bromham's work on repositioning the responsibility for Hertfordshire's trees. Assurance was given that all safety work was being done, the backlog consisted of non-safety work and was due to cost and the fact that the money had to come out of revenue. Regarding complaints about trees, the Council had said it would not do works unless there was a safety element, a hope was expressed that the revised strategy would not result in the loss of trees just because somebody didn't like them. The Chair summarised that trees which were dangerous or spoiling somebody's quality of life would be the types of trees identified by ward councillors.

There was a call for trees to be given the full import they need, it was noted that the Council were championing the planting of trees in the borough.

A question was raised as to who was responsible for trees which concealed road signs, the Chair suggested speaking to the County Councillor or to Aidan Wilkie from the senior leadership team.

Regarding dog waste bins, a question was raised as to whether they could be combined with a refuse bin where they were sited closely together. The response was to confirm that dog waste could be put into a litter bin. It was noted that the Canals and Rivers Trust had cuts made from central government and were taking dog bins away from towpaths.

With regard to ID checks for using waste tips, it was noted that Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead never asked for ID, whereas the waste site in Bucks did. The response was that borough or county boundaries were more likely to experience problems with people from other boroughs using them, with the example given where controls were introduced at Harefield tip because there was around £100,000 of waste from Bucks.

Cllr Mitchell reported that a bin review was happening in the autumn, it was confirmed a mapping exercise was being done. The Chair suggested the Committee continue to monitor that.

Cllr Mitchell noted that a tree had been chopped down in her ward and she didn't know why, feeling there was a communication gap as she could not answer residents' questions. The Chair seconded

that forewarning would be useful and appreciated. There was reference to the previous issue of a monthly bulletin of trees that were to have works done to them, suggesting that be reviewed.

A question was raised as to whether chalk was considered as graffiti, with a report of a resident being told she had to remove chalk art from a pavement. The response was that as chalk was a marking, under the law it would be considered as graffiti. It was suggested that if somebody wished to artistically enhance the pavement they could make a request.

## **9 ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Environmental and Community Protection Performance report had been circulated and was taken as read.

ECPO9, the KPI for environmental community protection, had increased this quarter and was now at just over 87%. The food safety recovery plan had been running to target and had now been withdrawn by the government, the expectation was to return to pre-COVID levels by the end of quarter 2. The annual air quality status report for 2023 had been submitted to DEFRA for ratification, work was continuing with partners on the installation of the new air quality analyser scheduled for Apsley, and the PM2.5 monitors scheduled for Swingate Lane, Bennetts End Road and Lawn Lane. A report had been drafted and sent to the the Committee on air quality at the beginning of the summer, the Chair apologised she had not done that, requesting that the report be re-sent to her and she would pass it to LFowell to circulate.

The Corporate Safety and Resilience Team had been working with other district and borough councils to implement a memorandum of understanding between all partners in case of an emergency plan activation, in order to finalise agreements for mutual aid. There was a continued reduction in filthy and verminous complex cases, with six in Q1. It was noted that numbers had been increasing throughout the pandemic, numbers were usually higher in the summer. Prosecutions had been brought by the Operations Team, on 5th July at St Albans Magistrates' Court Edward Meredith of Priory Orchard, Flamstead, pleaded guilty to unauthorised deposit of publicly controlled waste in Caddington Common, he was ordered to pay £2,222 consisting of a fine, costs and a victim surcharge.

A multi-departmental task force consisting of officers from environment and community safety, district improvement, police colleagues and community safety and antisocial behaviour had been working on improvements in Gadebridge Park. Work had been done to turn negative behaviours, reduce littering and improving behaviour in the vicinity. Fixed penalty notices had been served for littering and breaches of public space protection orders. There had been 21 prosecutions brought by the council for littering or public space protection order offences, all of which were successfully taken through the single justice procedure. £3,220 total of fines, almost £3,000 in total costs had been awarded, plus a victim surcharge.

It was reported that on 14th June at Hatfield Remand Court, Dacorum Borough Council had successfully prosecuted Mr Jake Putnam of Hasedines Road in Hemel Hempstead for a fly-tipping offence that occurred last year. Mr Putnam was arrested and brought before the court, he pleaded guilty to unauthorised deposit of controlled waste and ordered to pay a £480 fine and £500 costs, with a £192 victim surcharge

Regarding the prosecutions, Cllr Pringle sought clarity regarding whether fines would go into central funds. It was confirmed that fines would go into central government coffers, the Council would receive the costs element and the victim surcharge would go into central funds. It was reported that the costs could only be calculated from after a certain point in the investigation, once an offence was suspected

there were charges for clear-up fees, officer time and lawyer time. The Chair suggested further questions regarding compensation be put in writing.

Cllr Santamaria wondered whether there was an estimate for when the new monitors would be in place and results would be seen from them. It was reported they were not in situ at the moment as the process for accessing the power source was more complex than anticipated. There was also work being done with Ringway and the Estates Department about the use of the space in front of the Apsley Community Centre. It was hoped the monitors would be deployed as quickly as possible, particularly as results would need to be gathered over a period of time before judgements could be made.

Regarding antisocial behaviour, Cllr Mitchell reported she had met with PCSOs who were keen to go into schools with a youth worker. It was reported this was outside of the remit of the Committee, it would be for Joshua Smith, Head of Safe Communities. It was reported the police already ran a programme for primary schools, the Mini Police.

Cllr Birnie noted that Bennetts End Road was due to have a monitoring device, wondering what the evidence was for that decision. The respondent believed it was because it was close to a road canyon, however she would check.

Cllr Timmis wondered whether regulatory officers could do spot checks in villages, rather than focus on Gadebridge Park. The response was that there was a KPI for the team around how often they needed to go to various wards based on the amount of littering in those wards.

Cllr Patterson noted the reporting of 500 fixed penalty notices in Q1, wondering what proportion of those were related to litter. The response was that the vast majority were related to littering. The Chair would work with LFowell to find documentation showing the breakdown of fixed penalty notices. A Councillor reported that he had a spreadsheet showing the detail, noting a high proportion was for cigarette butts, which raised the concern that enforcement officers were motivated by situations where fixed penalty notices may be easy to issue rather than the objective of improving the wellbeing of residents. The Chair noted that all reports she had seen were noting successes due to the number of notices issued. It was suggested the information be provided as an annexe to the minutes, the Chair would endeavour to get information to Committee members regarding the proportion of fines which were litter and what that litter consisted of if that information were available.

It was noted that the DBC website had a page for PSPOs which was mapped and annexed in order. Littering and dog fouling was across the entire borough, there was a separate mapping for the town centre. Additionally, there were by-laws listed on the website.

The suggestion was made that people using electric scooters were required to have a bell, it was noted that it was actually illegal for them to cycle on the road or pavement.

There was a comment that the canal towpath was a shared use between bicycles and pedestrians, the Canals and Rivers Trust had a code of practice for cyclists. The Chair noted the upcoming Cycling and Walking Plan.

## **10 Q1 PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION**

Apologies were extended for the report not having been circulated. A verbal update was given. Planning applications on time was running at green, in excess of target. Performance and reinforcement was low, there was recruitment in that team expected later in the year.

## **Luton Airport**

A verbal update was provided from Cllr Timmis, noting engagement from Dacorum's engagement in the Development Consent Order process. Work was being conducted with Herts County Council and North Herts Council on common interests. The examination of the draft Development Consent Order had begun on 10th August and was legally required to be completed within six months of that date. The examining authority had allowed the three councils to submit joint documents, to date the Herts authorities had submitted relevant representations on 23rd June, principal areas of disagreement, summary statements and written representations had been submitted on 22nd August, the local impact report had been submitted on 25th August. Representation would be confirmed at the issue specific hearing and would be on environmental matters through the use of expert consultants commissioned, WSP being the main consultants working on behalf of all of the authorities.

Hearings were scheduled to take place the week commencing 25th September. Work was also being done on the preparation of a draft statement of common ground for a deadline of 12th September. Cllr Timmis outlined the commitment to expressing concerns on environmental matters including impact the proposed growth of Luton Airport would have on matters such as noise, air pollution, climate change and surface access. Cllr Timmis noted that Steve Mendham from the Strategic Planning Department had been leading on this piece of work, however he had left the authority and Ronan Leydon, Team Leader for Strategic Planning, had now taken that on. Cllr Timmis reported there would be a consistent view, she would include verbal updates as the process progressed.

The Chair wondered whether there was documentation that could be shared to understand Dacorum's position, Cllr Timmis would let her know.

There was a request to share information regarding what Dacorum was doing with regard to Luton Airport, Cllr Timmis would action that with Ronan.

It was noted that the airport had put in a planning application to increase from 18 million passengers per year to 32 million passengers, which would be a huge impact.

## **11 SOUTH WEST HERTS JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN**

COuttersides had submitted the comprehensive Joint Strategic Plan, noting that this report was similar to that going through the process in each of the partner five districts, and was the first meeting in terms of the process. COuttersides outlined that the report was a summary of the Regulation 18 consultation undertaken last year and the strategic plan was looking long-term across the five districts and did not replace local plans. It was anticipated the JSP would guide the next round of local plans. COuttersides stressed the importance of thinking strategically and long-term across the geographical region, anticipating that strategic planning would become more of a focus if there were to be a change of government. The ability to look at infrastructure needed to deliver good growth was a key point to support growth across South West Hertfordshire across the next 15-20 years and beyond.

COuttersides noted the plan was Dacorum's rather than a county plan, outlining that if at any point in the process the Council didn't like anything they could object and have the veto right. COuttersides highlighted that there was a governance structure, adding that Cllr Wilkie was part of the lead member group that gave the political direction. The report had been approved by Cllr Wilkie, changes to vision and objectives having been endorsed by her as well as the wider membership across the partnership in terms of leadership and portfolio holders.

The Chair confirmed that about half of the Committee had been present at the briefing on Wednesday 31st (sic).



Regarding the section headed other sections of consultation on page 54, Cllr Birnie noted there was no reference to the need to make adequate provision for the treatment and disposal of wastewater, suggesting that in view of the reporting of poor performance of water companies that should be at the top of the agenda. COuttersides reported that an objective on page 39 had been strengthened to protecting and enhancing water resources. Cllr Birnie reiterated that this did not refer to wastewater. COuttersides responded that he would hope wastewater would be covered by one of the other objectives, which he noted were high level in terms of detail. COuttersides considered wastewater would be an issue that needed to be looked at, there was a need to look at what strategic issues meant in terms of wastewater and dealing with water resources. COuttersides thought when the detail of the next round of the plan was considered, he would look at objectives.

Cllr Birnie noted that whenever there were new areas of development the existing infrastructure for the disposal of wastewater was always deemed as inadequate. COuttersides reported that they were not sure when the end periods of the current local plan reviews were, once those were provided they could provide a definitive start point. The current view was probably around 2035-2050 as a time horizon. It was clarified that the JSP would inform the next wave of local plans for councils across South West Hertfordshire.

Cllr Birnie clarified that there was plenty in the report on water supply, he was talking about water disposal and the damage being done to rivers through overspill. COuttersides noted page 44 of the JSP, delivering robust and sustainable infrastructure. Four key objectives were outlined regarding delivering key infrastructure and promoting a circular economy. COuttersides read the section, 'Minimising waste by promoting the reduction, reuse and recycling of materials, delivering key infrastructure required to support new and existing growth, working with partners to deliver in a timely manner, ensure it meets local needs and adapts to the effects of climate change, green energy generation and digital infrastructure.' He hoped disposal of wastewater would be covered in those umbrella objectives at the next stage of the JSP. The Chair suggested COuttersides put that on his radar for future discussions and debate with the other local authorities, feeling the current document did not need to be changed, however wastewater was an area that was very important.

A question was raised regarding the autonomy of having local plans running underneath the JSP, with the suggestion that local authorities should retain autonomy over local plans and merge at joint strategic plan level to achieve the right level of infrastructure. The member was concerned at hearing that the joint strategic plan was going to guide and inform local plans. There was discussion around the semantics of guiding and informing, the Chair was of the opinion that guiding and informing was useful in gathering information, adding that guiding was taking advice from somebody who had looked at the broader picture and how that might impact. The Chair noted that they were the only group of authorities trying this joint approach.

There was a question as to whether there was commitment to retaining green belt and areas of outstanding natural beauty. The Chair believed those were for the local plan rather than the JSP, which was confirmed. AONB was not set by council and was separate. COuttersides added that there was no plan for a top-down approach to development, this was a bottom-up approach to the capacity as to what growth they were prepared to accept. COuttersides reiterated it would be very much up to local plans to detail and work out whether they were feasible in real life, adding that the local plan would have ultimate autonomy as to whether potential areas of growth were deliverable.

Cllr Birnie was concerned to hear that the local plan would be postponed until the JSP was further down the road, assurance was given that they were getting on with the plan and they would be presenting to the Committee. The JSP work was happening in the background and by the time that was done it would inform the next round of the local plan. The current local plan was being

progressed through to adoption in the normal way, when the JSP was live it would inform the style and content of the next round of local planning.

Referring to the summary of comments and response, it was noted that green belt was mentioned, 'It's important to note that green belt is not a landscape issue, green belt land may be barren in this respect and was not a requirement or purpose of the designation. Furthermore, green belt is a policy designation, not an environment or sustainability designation.' The member had the impression that meant they would not discuss green belt in the final plan as it was overarching any consideration of what green belt might be. COuttersides reported that to date, green belt had not been a factor, the report was asking for endorsement on the vision and the objectives. COuttersides anticipated that the next phase of work would look at what strategic growth opportunities existed across South West Hertfordshire, as part of that process green belt would be looked at as a whole across South West Herts. There was a programme of work over the next year to eighteen months, the results of that would be brought back to this Committee.

The Chair asked whether anybody objected to the Committee endorsing the plan, there was one abstention due to not having enough clarity. The plan was passed by the Committee. COuttersides confirmed his details were in the document and that he would set up a one-to-one briefing if anybody required that.

## **12 WORK PROGRAMME**

### **12. Work Programme**

The Chair reported she had put a review of the infrastructure funding statement onto the agenda for next month, she would look at briefings. Cllr Birnie wondered whether the planning report should be on there, the Chair suggested planning should be a standing item on the agenda regardless of whether there was a report. The Chair requested that people contact the team if they have detailed questions about the planning report. The Chair outlined that she would like more detail on the air quality, a briefing on what was measured would be circulated, however there was a need to know what was being done in response to the measurements to improve air quality. It was suggested that it may be useful to have a short interim report regarding the trees, the Chair wondered whether they could have an update on where Ian had got to. It was noted there was a tree strategy and action plan which was reviewed every five years and was due to be updated in two years' time. There was comment that a full report was not necessary, it would be useful for the Committee to see the direction they were heading in. The Chair clarified she would ask Ian to come back in October.

There was the suggestion that water be put on the agenda, specifically the three chalk streams in Dacorum where only one was usually spoken about and wastewater. Regarding the re-routing of the Gade through Gadebridge Park, it was noted there had never been clarity on the route at the southern end of the park. It was suggested they request an update, the Chair agreed, adding that perhaps Thames Water could be invited as well. It was agreed they would invite Thames Water early next year, they would request an update from the Environment Agency. It was noted that the project was moving forward, there had been an officer meeting attended by DBC officers and the Environment Agency, it was not thought there was an agreed start on-site yet.

A question was raised as to whether the need for additional parking lay-bys was relevant to this Committee, it was suggested the query be sent to LFowell which had already been done. Regarding neighbour disputes around hedges not owned by DBC, it was noted the payment for the survey was £565, the Councillor noted the policy seemed unfair on residents. It was advised to contact Emma

and to gather background on the issue. The Chair explained that a policy change would need to go through the portfolio holder, it would then come to this committee. Advice was given regarding items for the agenda of this Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

### **Agreed Actions**

- Breakdown analysis of fly-tipping incidents to be circulated.
- A statement from the leadership team to be requested regarding trees which posed an immediate danger, to include instructions for Sunday and out of office hours.
- The issuance of a monthly bulletin of trees due to have works done to them to be reviewed.
- The report on air quality to be re-circulated by the Chair.
- Reasons for Bennetts End Road to have a monitoring device to be investigated and shared.
- Chair to work with LFowell to locate documentation showing the breakdown of fixed penalty notices and circulate that to Committee members.
- Cllr Timmis to check whether there is documentation that could be shared to show Dacorum's position on Luton Airport.
- COuttersides to include discussions on wastewater with other local authorities with regard to the JSP.
- An update on the re-routing of the River Gate through Gadebridge Park to be sought from the Environment Agency.