



Council Briefing Note - 13 November 2024

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