



Council Briefing Note - 13 November 2024

CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL PORTFOLIO – COUNCILLOR WILLIAM ALLEN

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.