

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND DISTRICT OF ST ALBANS**

held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3JE on Wednesday, 30 January 2013 at 7.00 pm

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### **Present:**

The Right Worshipful The Mayor (Councillor Eileen Harris) (In the Chair), Deputy Mayor (Councillor Bell); Councillors Allen, Altun, Brazier, Brewster, Mrs Burton, Calder, Campbell, Chichester-Miles, G Churchard, J Churchard, Clark, Clegg, Crawley, Daly, Donald, Ellis, Farmer, Featherstone, Gibbard, Gordon, Gray, Green, Grover, Harrison, D Heritage, T Heritage, Huddleston, Leach, Lee, Leonard, Lusby, Mills, Myland, Pakenham, Pawle, Perks, Poor, Prowse, Quagliozzi, Rahim, Read, Rowlands, Russell, Smith, Swendell, Turner, Wakely, Wartenberg, White, Yates and Young

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Councillors Bowes-Phipps, Day, Gaygusuz, Weaver and Zia

### **Officers in Attendance:**

Mr J Blake, Chief Executive  
Ms A Foley, Head of Human Resources, Customer Services and IT  
Mr M Lovelady, Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services  
Mrs G Mathers, Democratic Services Officer  
Mrs L Middleton, Strategy and Enabling Manager  
Mr S Rowberry, Interim Head of Planning & Building Control

## **1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

- (i) All Councillors declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 5 below – Scheme of Members' Allowances 2013-14 as members entitled to claim under the scheme.
- (ii) Councillor Ellis declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 - as a representative of the Council on the Hightown Praetorian and Churches Housing Association.
- (iii) Councillor Clark declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below as a representative of the Council on Home-Start.
- (iv) Councillor Pawle declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 – as a representative of the Council on both the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Council for Voluntary Service.
- (v) Councillor White declared a personal pecuniary interest in Minute 7 below – Strategic Local Plan – as he works for a company that works for a developer with interests in St Albans. Councillor White left the Chamber during discussion and voting on this item.

- (vi) Councillor Harrison declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 – as a Trustee of both Highfield Park Trust and the Council for Voluntary Service.
- (vii) Councillors Donald and Harris declared personal non-pecuniary interests in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 – as members of St Albans Credit Union.
- (viii) Councillor Prowse declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 – as a Trustee of Highfield Park Trust.
- (ix) Councillor Read declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 below - Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-16 – as his work has connections with the solar panel industry.

## 2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the following meetings of the Council were submitted:

- Meeting held on 28 November 2012
- Meeting held on 10 January 2013

### **COUNCIL DECISION**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 28 November 2012 and 10 January 2013 be taken as read and confirmed.

## 3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

- (i) The Mayor issued a reminder to those who had promised to make a donation to the Mayor's Sleep Out event but who had not yet done so.
- (ii) The Mayor thanked all those who had attended and supported the Carol Concert, which had raised £380.14 for Grove House Hospice.
- (iii) The Mayor gave advance notice of the forthcoming events:
  - 9 February – Interfaith event taking place in the Council Chamber from 6 to 8pm
  - 10 February – Charity meal at Lussmans (tickets £28.00)
  - 15 March – Civic Banquet and Ball at Sopwell (tickets £45.00)
  - 12 April – Beer tasting at the Old Town Hall (tickets £10.00)
- (iv) The Acting Chief Executive asked all members to stay following the conclusion of the meeting for an informal announcement.
- (v) The Acting Chief Executive advised that he had received helpful feedback from a number of members regarding the processes and procedure followed during preparation for Council meetings. In consultation with Group Leaders he would be undertaking a review of issues such as deadlines for submission of motions and questions, and

to ensure that officers communicate effectively with members where there are changes to the usual work programme. All members were invited to forward comments on these matters to the Acting Chief Executive.

4. **REFERENCE FROM EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE COMMITTEE 10 JANUARY 2013: RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Councillor Daly, as Chairman of the Employment Procedure Panel, moved the following recommendation of that Committee on 10 January 2013:

'To appoint James Blake as this Council's new Chief Executive'.

**COUNCIL DECISION**

That James Blake be appointed as this Council's new Chief Executive.

5. **SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR 2013/14**

Councillor Daly proposed and Councillor Read seconded the following recommendations:

- "(i) That the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2013-14 as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel be adopted as recommended by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 January 2013;
- (ii) That the approved scheme be publicised in the local area in accordance with regulations."

Upon put to the vote the recommendations were CARRIED.

On behalf of the Council the Mayor thanked the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for their work on this report.

**COUNCIL DECISION**

- (i) That the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2013-14 as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel be adopted as recommended by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 January 2013;
- (ii) That the approved scheme be publicised in the local area in accordance with regulations.

6. **CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET 2013/16**

Members heard a presentation by the Deputy Chief Executive (Finance) by way of introduction to the budget. This referred to a handout circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Daly as Chair of Cabinet moved the following recommendations:

"That Council:

- “(i) Agree the Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-18 as recommended by Cabinet on 17 January 2013, and to:
- (1) Delegate to the Chief Executive the updating of the progress sections of the Corporate Plan at the end of March 2013;
  - (2) Approve the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) agreed at Cabinet in October 2012;
  - (3) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) subject to the views of the Audit Committee on 23 January 2013 (set out in the note below).
- (ii) That in the event that the LCTSS agreed by Cabinet in October 2012 is not agreed by Council, then the finalisation of the Council's Tax Base in line with the LCTSS that is agreed be delegated to Deputy Chief Executive (Finance).”

**Note:** On 23 January 2013 the Audit Committee considered the TMSS and proposed the following three changes:

1. Paragraph 2.1 (TMSS) Capital Plans (page 138 of the Summons), delete paragraph 3 'From 2013-14 onwards....'

Replace with:

'General Fund capital spend is proposed to be £9.6 million in 2013-14 consisting mainly of replacement of Batchwood leisure facilities following the fire in 2012 (6.3 million) and the Council's contribution to the Cotlandswick leisure project (£1.3 million). The HRA business plan includes ongoing capital enhancement of council properties of around £11.0 million pa, which will be financed from rental income'.

2. Paragraph 3.7.3 (TMSS) Country Limits (page 148 of the Summons), delete paragraphs 2 and 3 'There are countries in the Eurozone.....'

Replace with:

'Officers have considered the Audit Committee's request to take into consideration ethical issues when making investments. The mission of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is 'to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world' and their 'goal continues to be to build a stronger, cleaner, fairer world' (<http://www.oecd.org/>). Officers consider that, as suggested by members at the meeting, requiring banks to be from a country which had membership of the OECD would be a practical means of meeting some of the Committee's concerns and therefore propose restricting foreign investments to OECD member countries. There are 34 countries that have signed the OECD charter and therefore this would not unduly restrict the ability to place funds.

In light of the revised view on Eurozone countries (3.1 above) and to have a fair rating system applicable to all OECD countries, officers propose that the restriction on investing in Eurozone banks is lifted'.

3. Appendix 1 (TMSS) (pages 150-152 of the Summons):

Delete and replace with the appendix **attached at** Appendix 1 to the Order Papers (and attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes).

Councillor Leach proposed and Councillor Quagliozi seconded the following amendment:

"That the average Council house rent increase for 2013/14 be set at 3.1%. The cost of this of approximately £500k pa is to be funded by making use of the £500k under spend forecast in the HRA for 2012/13 shown in the Cabinet papers, allocated as £100k in each of the next 5 years, and also by allowing for approximately £400k pa of slippage in the HIP.

That this Council maintains existing eligibility for Council Tax Benefit in the new Council Tax Support Scheme in 2013/14 and funds the extra cost of doing this as it impacts on parishes. The cost of doing this estimated at £73k should in principle be funded from the increases agreed to empty home charges but as these funds have already been allocated it is recommended that this be funded from balances in 2013/14."

Councillor Daly did not accept the amendment.

Upon the amendment being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

Councillor Grover proposed and Councillor Swendell seconded the following amendment:

After the following words at recommendation (i) of the report (page 44 of the Summons):

'To agree the Corporate Plan.....'

Add the following:

Subject to:

*(i) One change of wording as follows:*

Under '**Planning for the future**' (page 67 of the Summons)  
Change 'Opposing the over-expansion of Luton Airport...' to 'Opposing the expansion of Luton Airport...'

*(ii) One additional 'five year' project as follows:*

Under '**Delivering for young people and families**' (page 69 of the Summons)  
Section: '**How we will deliver this over the next five years**'

Add: 'Working towards creating a Youth Centre in an area of St Albans identified as having a high concentration of young people.'

*(iii) Six additional priority projects as follows:*

Under '**Attracting and developing business and the visitor economy**' (page 70 of the Summons)

Add: 'Explore ways to give more opportunities to local business in Council procurement, if necessary using the Sustainable Communities Act to ask for a change in the law. To report to Cabinet by November 2013.'

Under **'Enabling and delivering transport improvements'** (page 74 of the Summons)

Add: 'Work with St Albans Cycle Campaign and other groups to review and update the council's cycling strategy and create an action plan to implement it.'

Under **'Keeping the District cleaner, greener, healthier and safer'** (page 76 of the Summons)

Add:

- 'Work with the district's schools and their PTAs to set up solar power projects, to produce savings and electricity for the schools.'
- 'Examine the business case for recruiting an energy efficiency manager, at least partly self-financing, working across Council departments and properties to manage projects and address issues such as billing and meters.'
- 'Take action to address the challenge of climate change and to meet our carbon reduction targets within the Council and across the district, initially by setting up a task and finish group to identify and pursue suitable projects.'

Under **'Ensuring value for money and excellent customer service'** (page 78 of the Summons)

Add: 'Develop Council's use of social media, to broaden access to our services, reduce our response times, and reduce our costs of letter-writing and phone calls.'

After the following words at recommendation (i) (page 44 of the Summons):

'Budget 2013-18 .....

Add the following:

"Subject to the following additional capital and revenue items:

	<b>CAPITAL</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Spend</b>	<b>Payback</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Energy/water efficiency</b> Further insulation and other measures to reduce energy and water consumption in Council property, beyond the 2012 budget measures.	TBA	Up to £50,000	3 years or less
<b>2</b>	<b>Renewable energy</b> Further investment in renewable electricity and renewable heat (biomass, solar thermal, air source, anaerobic digestion)		Up to £500,000	10 years or less

	<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>Spend</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Tree-felling information</b> Revenue budget to inform residents in the immediate vicinity of a neighbour who applies to fell a tree, to give them a chance to object. Inform the neighbours who are most affected. From existing budgets or reserves.	£3,000

<b>4</b>	<b>Community planting</b> A budget that community groups such as Residents Associations can apply for, to provide trees/ shrubs/flowerbeds in their local area. Limited fund for a trial year. From existing budgets or reserves.	£20,000
<b>5</b>	<b>Peahen signs</b> £1,800 is left over from last year's revenue budget for signs at the Peahen junction. These are unlikely to go ahead soon as DfT permission is needed.	-£1,800
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£21,200</b>

Councillor Daly did not accept the amendment.

A separate vote was taken on amendment (i) above and declared LOST.

Upon amendments (ii) and (iii) above being put to the vote they were declared CARRIED.

Councillor Donald proposed and Councillor Brazier seconded the following amendment:

#### **General Fund Budget**

"That the amendments set out below should either replace the items in the proposed General Fund budget or be added to the budget as appropriate. These items should be funded from a combination of the £461K additional money in Balances over the £1.5M level previously agreed and from the £300K additional budget for unspecified Asset Maintenance set out under Resources."

		£	One off or continuing
<b>2.1</b>	<b>More Help for the Most Vulnerable</b> Help for those on low incomes, unemployed, the disabled, the homeless, special needs groups and frail elderly who will be especially hit by the changes in benefits from April and lose money on top of other increased costs caused by the recession.		
	Additional Grants to: (a) the Community Grants Fund administered by CVS.(£35K) and, (b) the Project Commissioning Fund administered by the Council (£35K).	70,000	One off
<b>2.2</b>	<b>More Help for Jobs and the Local Economy</b>		
(i)	Introduce Council Apprenticeship/Trainee Scheme. New Council programme for graduate management internship (4 interns x 6 months term) and modern apprenticeship (1 apprentice x 2 years' term).  Note: Officers to seek possible Government DWP grant assistance for this initiative.	45,000	Apprentice continuing and interns one off

(ii)	Facilitate the setting up of a new District wide Apprenticeship Scheme to include encouraging growth in tourism and the delivery of the new visitor strategy. The St.Albans and District Chamber of Commerce and Oaklands College to advise on this scheme and procure additional sponsorship.	20,000	One off
(iii)	Set up 'Inshops' employment initiative in Council retail premises to provide retail space for first time retailers or market traders at 50% reduced rent for initial period.	20,000	One off
(iv)	Support for current Management Forum (formerly executive job club) programme for redundant executives and managers.	10,000	One off
(v)	Do not introduce the increased Car Parking Charges proposed for the charges up to one hour (i.e. the charges for up to 30 minutes and up to one hour).	50,000	Continuing
(vi)	Retain capital support for the QNP for future projects e.g. swipe card through ticketing technology and additional screen information technology.	30,000	One off
<b>2.3</b>	<b>More Help for Healthier Communities</b>		
(i)	Do not introduce increased Parking Charges at Westminster Lodge and Amenbury Lane Leisure Centre car parks for the first three hours.	111,000	Continuing
(ii)	<p>Support for the implementation of recommendations in the 2012 Youth Mental Health Report, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of teachers and support staff on counselling skills, needs and training required,</li> <li>• Develop an information pack and subsequent communications campaign targeted at teachers/support staff and governing bodies to raise awareness of issues and signposting opportunities.</li> </ul>	15,000	One off
(iii)	Grant to enable the Council's Health and Well Being Partnership to implement school and community projects identified in their recently agreed Obesity Strategy, particularly in areas of health inequalities	15,000	One off
<b>2.4</b>	<b>More Help for the Environment</b>		
(i)	Programme for additional grass verge protection from car parking damage and provision of new parking facilities	150,000	One off



(ii)	Restore funding for Air Quality Scheme Holywell Hill/Peahen Junction, towards implementation of the traffic measures required following the current work	30,000	One off
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**Note:** Further proposals in the original amendment submitted by Councillor Donald and printed in the Order Papers, relating to a proposed reduction in Council housing rents and maintaining the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme at the current default level, were in the event not included in the amendment he proposed at the meeting. This was because similar amendments proposed earlier in the meeting had already been put to the vote and carried.

The amendment was not accepted by Councillor Daly.

Upon the amendment being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

At this point in the meeting at 9.20pm the Mayor called a recess. The meeting resumed at 9.35pm.

Upon the motion as amended being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

### **COUNCIL DECISION**

- (i) That Council agrees the Corporate Plan and Budget 2013-18 as recommended by Cabinet on 17 January 2013 but amended as set out above, and:
  - (1) Delegates to the Chief Executive the updating of the progress sections of the Corporate Plan at the end of March 2013;
  - (2) Approves the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) as amended.
  - (3) Approves the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) as amended by the Audit Committee on 23 January 2013 as set out at Appendix 1 to these minutes.
- (ii) That the finalisation of the Council's Tax Base in line with the agreed Local Council Tax Support Scheme be delegated to Deputy Chief Executive (Finance).

**Note:** As Cabinet's proposals regarding the budget were amended by Council the decision is deemed in accordance with Rule 2 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules to be an 'in principle only' decision. Council's decision will be referred to the Leader on behalf of Cabinet. The Leader then has the opportunity to object to the decision, and has a period of five working days within which to do so.

If the Leader objects to Council's decision within the five working day period it will not become effective and the Chief Executive will call a Council meeting for Council to reconsider its decision. If the Leader does not object within the five working day period Council's in-principle decision will automatically become effective. Council's decision regarding the Localised Council Tax

Support Scheme (LCTSS) is effective immediately. This is because Council is required by law to approve a LCTSS by 31 January 2013\*.

\* Section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act (1992) states that each billing authority in England must make a council tax reduction scheme no later than 31 January 2013, and the first financial year to which that scheme relates must be the year beginning 1 April 2013.

## **7. STRATEGIC LOCAL PLAN**

Councillor Daly proposed and Councillor T Heritage seconded the following recommendations:

"That Council agrees the suggested approach to taking forward Council's decision on 28 November 2012 to agree recommendations by the No Oaklands Housing Action Group, as set out in attached Appendix 4 to the Order Papers."

Note: Council on 28 November 2012 agreed to the following:

1. An independent review of Green Belt boundaries and a Green Belt Study of all potential housing locations needs to be undertaken now.
2. There needs to be clarity on how sites will be delivered and this is implied by an allocation of strategic sites.
3. Detailed delivery matters such as availability and infrastructure requirements need resolving.
4. Oaklands should retain its Green Belt green field status in any future policy review or boundary change to prevent urban sprawl and coalescence with Hatfield.
5. An alternative site should be considered.
6. Green Belt release should only be considered when the district has run out of sites within its urban land.
7. An independent commission of housing need in St Albans and its District should be set up to inform the evidence base.

Upon the recommendations being put to the vote they were declared CARRIED.

## **COUNCIL DECISION**

That Council agrees the approach to taking forward Council's decision on 28 November 2012 to agree recommendations by the No Oaklands Housing Action Group, as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

## **8. REPORTS OF THE CABINET**

Councillor Daly as Chair of Cabinet presented the decisions of the following meetings by way of report:

- Meeting held on 20 December 2012 at 7pm
- Meeting held on 20 December 2012 at 7.15pm
- Meeting held on 14 January 2013
- Meeting held on 17 January 2013

## 9. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

- (i) Councillor Lee moved and Councillor Yates seconded the following motion:
- i. "That Council strongly supports the current legal action proposed by the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services to challenge the decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government of 14 December 2012 not to have a conjoined Freight Terminal Inquiry for both the Colnbrook and Park Street sites.
  - ii. That Council deplores the Secretary of State's unexplained U-turn announced on 20 December just before Christmas, that he was now minded to grant the development of a freight terminal at Park Street subject to a Section 106 planning obligation being agreed by all the parties involved.
  - iii. That Council calls on the Minister to reverse this provisional decision in view of the disastrous impact we consider a freight terminal development would have on our District and environment. However should this still be his final decision, the Council will pursue all legal action available to it including a challenge in the High Court via a Judicial Review or a Section 288 challenge or other appropriate means and will pursue this as far and as long as it reasonably can on behalf of all local residents.
  - iv. That the County Council Chief Executive and Leader and local MPs Anne Main, Peter Lilley and James Clappison be informed accordingly of this Council's views."

Councillor Grover proposed and Councillor Swendell seconded the following amendment:

By replacing the word 'pursue' at paragraph iii line 4 with the word 'consider' (this amendment moves no changes to paragraphs i, ii, or iv of the motion).

The amended paragraph iii to read as follows:

- iii That Council calls on the Minister to reverse this provisional decision in view of the disastrous impact we consider a freight terminal development would have on our District and environment. However should this still be his final decision, the Council will **consider** all legal action available to it including a challenge in the High Court via a Judicial Review or a Section 288 challenge or other appropriate means and will pursue this as far and as long as it reasonably can on behalf of all local residents.

Councillor Lee accepted the amendment.

Upon the motion as amended being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

## **COUNCIL DECISION**

- i That Council strongly supports the current legal action proposed by the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services to challenge the decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government of 14 December 2012 not to have a conjoined Freight Terminal Inquiry for both the Colnbrook and Park Street sites.
  - ii That Council deplores the Secretary of State's unexplained U-turn announced on 20 December just before Christmas, that he was now minded to grant the development of a freight terminal at Park Street subject to a Section 106 planning obligation being agreed by all the parties involved.
  - iii That Council calls on the Minister to reverse this provisional decision in view of the disastrous impact we consider a freight terminal development would have on our District and environment. However should this still be his final decision, the Council will consider all legal action available to it including a challenge in the High Court via a Judicial Review or a Section 288 challenge or other appropriate means and will pursue this as far and as long as it reasonably can on behalf of all local residents.
  - iv That the County Council Chief Executive and Leader and local MPs Anne Main, Peter Lilley and James Clappison be informed accordingly of this Council's views.
- (ii) Councillor Donald moved and Councillor Brazier seconded the following motion:
- i "That an all party Council delegation, including a representative from STRIFE, led by the Mayor meets the local MPs Anne Main, Peter Lilley and James Clappison most affected to express their utter dismay and consternation at the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's announcement of 20 December 2012.
  - ii That the Acting Chief Executive be asked to arrange this meeting as soon as possible and not later than the end of February 2013."

Councillor Daly proposed in view of the decision at Minute 4 that the word 'Acting' be removed from ii above.

Upon the motion as amended being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

## **COUNCIL DECISION**

- i That an all party Council delegation, including a representative from STRIFE, led by the Mayor meets the local MPs Anne

Main, Peter Lilley and James Clappison most affected to express their utter dismay and consternation at the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's announcement of 20 December 2012.

- ii That the Chief Executive be asked to arrange this meeting as soon as possible and not later than the end of February 2013.
- (iii) Councillor Pakenham proposed and Councillor Smith seconded the following motion:

"That this Council supports the introduction of the Living Wage across the Country at current rates of £8.55 in London and £7.45 outside of London. To this end this Council will work to secure accreditation as a Living Wage Employer from the Living Wage Foundation and will encourage partners/contractors to do likewise."

The Mayor proposed and Council agreed in accordance with Rule 12.5 of the Council Procedure Rules that this motion be referred to the Internal Performance Scrutiny Committee for consideration and report.

- (iv) Councillor Grover proposed and Councillor Swendell seconded the following motion:

"This Council notes:

1. Approximately 13% of households in the district are in fuel poverty, meaning they need to spend more than 10% of their income on keeping their homes warm. The figure for the UK is 25%. The problem is likely to get worse, with 1 in 3 UK households projected to be in fuel poverty by 2016.
2. The main reasons for this crisis are that energy bills are high, and the UK's homes are some of the most energy inefficient in Europe – leaking heat from their doors, walls and windows.
3. Cold homes are damaging the health of vulnerable members of society, including children, older people and people with disabilities. Diseases such as asthma are made worse, and people are more likely to have strokes and heart attacks. Illnesses caused by cold homes cost the NHS nearly one billion pounds each year.
4. Over the next 15 years the Government will raise an average of £4 billion every year in carbon taxes through the European Emissions Trading Scheme and the Carbon Floor Price. Recycling this revenue back into households could bring 9 out of 10 homes out of fuel poverty, lower people's bills, cut carbon emissions and create jobs.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Energy Bill Revolution campaign calling for the Government to recycle revenues from carbon taxes into improving the energy efficiency of UK homes.
2. Notify local Members of Parliament of its support for the campaign and urge them to sign Early Day Motion 47 – ‘Reducing Fuel Bills through Energy Efficiency’.”

Councillor G Churchard proposed and Councillor Brazier seconded the following amendment:

By adding the following new paragraph 5 after the words ‘....cut carbon emissions and create jobs’ in existing numbered paragraph 4:

“5. The coalition new Green Deal energy saving scheme for homes and businesses, launched on 28 January 2013. This provides that energy saving improvements, including the following, can be paid for by off-setting against reduced energy bills over a number of years:

- Insulation of lofts and cavity walls
- Improved heating systems including replacement boilers
- Double glazing
- Renewable energy installation including solar photo-voltaic panels and solar hot water panels.”

And by adding the following resolution 3. after the words ‘ ....Energy Efficiency’ in existing numbered resolution 2:

“3. Publicise the coalition new Green Deal energy saving scheme for homes and businesses.”

The amended motion to read as follows:

“This Council notes:

1. Approximately 13% of households in the district are in fuel poverty, meaning they need to spend more than 10% of their income on keeping their homes warm. The figure for the UK is 25%. The problem is likely to get worse, with 1 in 3 UK households projected to be in fuel poverty by 2016.
2. The main reasons for this crisis are that energy bills are high, and the UK’s homes are some of the most energy inefficient in Europe – leaking heat from their doors, walls and windows.
3. Cold homes are damaging the health of vulnerable members of society, including children, older people and people with disabilities. Diseases such as asthma are made worse, and people are more likely to have strokes and heart attacks. Illnesses caused by cold homes cost the NHS nearly one billion pounds each year.
4. Over the next 15 years the Government will raise an average of £4 billion every year in carbon taxes through the European Emissions

Trading Scheme and the Carbon Floor Price. Recycling this revenue back into households could bring 9 out of 10 homes out of fuel poverty, lower people's bills, cut carbon emissions and create jobs.

5. The coalition new Green Deal energy saving scheme for homes and businesses, launched on 28 January 2013. This provides that energy saving improvements, including the following, can be paid for by off-setting against the reduced energy bills over a number of years:
  - Insulation of lofts and cavity walls,
  - Improved heating systems including replacement boilers,
  - Double glazing,
  - Renewable energy installation including solar photo-voltaic panels and solar hot water panels.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Energy Bill Revolution campaign calling for the Government to recycle revenues from carbon taxes into improving the energy efficiency of UK homes.
2. Notify local Members of Parliament of its support for the campaign and urge them to sign Early Day Motion 47 – 'Reducing Fuel Bills through Energy Efficiency'.
3. Publicise the coalition new Green Deal energy saving scheme for homes and businesses."

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Grover.

In view of the amendment proposed by Councillor G Churchard and accepted by Councillor Grover proposing a new paragraph 5, Councillor Chichester-Miles removed wording in paragraph 5 of his amendment as set out on the Order papers referring to the Green Deal. Paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 in his amendments were re-numbered 6, 7 and 8.

Councillor Chichester-Miles proposed and Councillor Daly seconded the following amendment:

"By adding the following new paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 after the words '....cut carbon emissions and create jobs' in existing numbered paragraph 4:

5. That residents should be aware of the following schemes available to the most vulnerable households if suffering in fuel poverty Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home discount and the Cold Weather payment.

Further to this, that this Council takes an active role in promoting and encouraging more efficient ways of keeping our homes warm, through a robust publicity campaign over the last few years and

maintaining a regularly updated resource of information for rate payers at:

[www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/)

This Council:

6. Welcomes the much needed 'Keep Warm Stay Well Campaign', whereby Hertfordshire County Council, St. Albans District, the NHS and Herts Help are working in partnership to provide amongst other things: Free Seasonal Flu jabs and extra funding to ensure that elderly and vulnerable residents of the district are not left unable to heat their homes this winter.
7. Strongly urges those in need of any help above or those who are aware of someone who might, to call the following hotline 0300 123 4044.

And by deleting the following word at line one of existing numbered resolution 1 'Support ..... ' and replacing it with the following words:

'To ask the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee to investigate further any opportunities offered by .....

And by deleting the following words at line 2 of the existing numbered resolution 1 '....calling for the Government to recycle revenues from carbon taxes into improving the energy efficiency of UK homes' and replacing them with the following words:

'....and any possible benefits this will have for the residents of St Albans City and District as a matter of urgency; and if appropriate recommend a way forward to Cabinet.

And by deleting existing numbered resolution 2.

The amended motion to read as follows:

"This Council notes:

1. Approximately 13% of households in the district are in fuel poverty, meaning they need to spend more than 10% of their income on keeping their homes warm. The figure for the UK is 25%. The problem is likely to get worse, with 1 in 3 UK households projected to be in fuel poverty by 2016.
2. The main reasons for this crisis are that energy bills are high, and the UK's homes are some of the most energy inefficient in Europe – leaking heat from their doors, walls and windows.
3. Cold homes are damaging the health of vulnerable members of society, including children, older people and people with disabilities. Diseases such as asthma are made worse, and people are more likely to



have strokes and heart attacks. Illnesses caused by cold homes cost the NHS nearly one billion pounds each year.

4. Over the next 15 years the Government will raise an average of £4 billion every year in carbon taxes through the European Emissions Trading Scheme and the Carbon Floor Price. Recycling this revenue back into households could bring 9 out of 10 homes out of fuel poverty, lower people's bills, cut carbon emissions and create jobs.

5. That residents should be aware of the following schemes available to the most vulnerable households if suffering in fuel poverty Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home discount and the Cold Weather payment, in addition to which the nationwide Green Deal encourages all households within the District to make improvements to their energy efficiency at a low cost, supported by the Energy Company Obligation subsidy (ECO) for those households with the lowest income.

Further to this, that this Council takes an active role in promoting and encouraging more efficient ways of keeping our homes warm, through a robust publicity campaign over the last few years and maintaining a regularly updated resource of information for rate payers at:  
[www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/)

This Council:

6. Welcomes the much needed 'Keep Warm Stay Well Campaign', whereby Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans District, the NHS and Herts Help are working in partnership to provide amongst other things: Free Seasonal Flu jabs and extra funding to ensure that elderly and vulnerable residents of the district are not left unable to heat their homes this winter.

7. Strongly urges those in need of any help above or those who are aware of someone who might, to call the following hotline 0300 123 4044.

This Council therefore resolves:

To ask the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee to investigate further any opportunities offered by the Energy Revolution Campaign and any possible benefits this will have for the residents of St Albans City and District as a matter of urgency; and if appropriate recommend a way forward to Cabinet."

Councillor Grover did not accept the above amendment.

Upon the amendment being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

Upon the motion as amended being put to the voted it was declared CARRIED.

## **COUNCIL DECISION**

"This Council notes:

1. Approximately 13% of households in the district are in fuel poverty, meaning they need to spend more than 10% of their income on keeping their homes warm. The figure for the UK is 25%. The problem is likely to get worse, with 1 in 3 UK households projected to be in fuel poverty by 2016.
2. The main reasons for this crisis are that energy bills are high, and the UK's homes are some of the most energy inefficient in Europe – leaking heat from their doors, walls and windows.
3. Cold homes are damaging the health of vulnerable members of society, including children, older people and people with disabilities. Diseases such as asthma are made worse, and people are more likely to have strokes and heart attacks. Illnesses caused by cold homes cost the NHS nearly one billion pounds each year.
4. Over the next 15 years the Government will raise an average of £4 billion every year in carbon taxes through the European Emissions Trading Scheme and the Carbon Floor Price. Recycling this revenue back into households could bring 9 out of 10 homes out of fuel poverty, lower people's bills, cut carbon emissions and create jobs.
5. The coalition new Green Deal energy saving scheme for homes and businesses, launched on 28 January 2013. This provides that energy saving improvements, including the following, can be paid for by off-setting against the reduced energy bills over a number of years:
  - Insulation of lofts and cavity walls,
  - Improved heating systems including replacement boilers,
  - Double glazing,
  - Renewable energy installation including solar photo-voltaic panels and solar hot water panels.
6. That residents should be aware of the following schemes available to the most vulnerable households if suffering in fuel poverty Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home discount and the Cold Weather payment.

Further to this, that this Council takes an active role in promoting and encouraging more efficient ways of keeping our homes warm, through a robust publicity campaign over the last few years and maintaining a regularly updated resource of information for rate payers at:  
[www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/greenerliving/energy-efficiency/)

This Council:

7. Welcomes the much needed 'Keep Warm Stay Well Campaign', whereby Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans District, the NHS and

Herts Help are working in partnership to provide amongst other things: Free Seasonal Flu jabs and extra funding to ensure that elderly and vulnerable residents of the district are not left unable to heat their homes this winter.

8. Strongly urges those in need of any help above or those who are aware of someone who might, to call the following hotline 0300 123 4044.

This Council therefore resolves:

To ask the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee to investigate further any opportunities offered by the Energy Revolution Campaign and any possible benefits this will have for the residents of St Albans City and District as a matter of urgency; and if appropriate recommend a way forward to Cabinet."

## 10. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following 3 questions had been received under Council Procedure Rule 11.2. Prior to this item of business being taken, the meeting ended at 10.45pm under the guillotine provisions set out at Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules.

The questions with written answers provided by the Portfolio Holders are set out below.

- (1) Question from Councillor Rowlands to Councillor T Heritage, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Conservation:

"What is the view of the SADC administration about Harpenden Town Council's decision to apply for planning permission for a road across Westfield Playing Field, Harpenden even before the Town Green Public Inquiry result is declared?"

Answer:

"I can confirm the Council's planning department has received an application for a new vehicle access route and alterations to landscaping at Westfield Recreation Ground by Harpenden Town Council. The planning application will be determined by the planning department in the normal way either by officers or at planning committee. It is not appropriate for me to give a view before the planning application is decided".

- (2) Question from Councillor Rowlands to Councillor Daly, Portfolio Holder for Resources:

"Why is the District Council insisting that Mencap be included in the proposed development of the Wildlife Site at Westfields?"

Answer:

"There is a recognised need in Harpenden for affordable housing and the type of development identified by Harpenden Mencap. Harpenden Town Council expressed a wish to help by using their former allotments at Westfield. I assume Councillor Rowlands is referring to this derelict land.

In 2010 the Liberal Democrat administration frustrated the Town Council's wish by denying access across District Council land.

In 2011 the Conservative Cabinet agreed it did not wish to be used to frustrate the development of social housing at Westfield. Cabinet agreed to allow access for a development on the basis proposed by the Town Council, i.e. affordable housing and a facility meeting the needs identified by Harpenden Mencap."

(3) Question from Councillor Rowlands to Councillor Wakely, Portfolio Holder for Sports, Leisure and Heritage

"In view of the widely reported debacle at Westminster Lodge in late December when the swimming pools were closed to public use from 3pm on a Sunday afternoon, could you please confirm whether or not a decision has been taken to ensure that public access is protected on Sunday afternoons until 5pm?"

Answer:

"We are sorry that the pools were closed to the public earlier than advertised on 30 December 2012. The Sports Leisure Management (SLM) Duty Manager chose to close the pools at 3pm, rather than the advertised 3.30pm, to allow for a private children's pool party.

It is accepted this was a mistake.

SLM and the Council are reviewing the current pool programme to ensure there is a balanced programme of open public swimming and booked swimming activities.

A key change under consideration is to cease private pool party hire before 5pm on Sundays, to allow public open swimming up to 5pm.

We have party bookings until the end of March 2013. The new programme will be implemented from 1 April 2013."

The Meeting ended at 10.45 pm

**(SIGNED)**

**MAYOR**



# Minute Annex

## APPENDIX 1

### Revised Appendix 1 to Treasury Management Strategy Statement

#### Sector listing of Qualifying Counterparties (as at 14/12/12)

Showing suggested maximum duration of investment.

	A Suggested Duration no adjustments	B Suggested Duration (Watch/Outlook Adjusted)	C Suggested Duration (CDS Adjusted with manual override)
<b>Australia</b>			
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
National Australia Bank Ltd	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Westpac Banking Corporation	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Belgium</b>			
Fortis Bank	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Canada</b>			
Bank of Montreal	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Bank of Nova Scotia	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
National Bank of Canada	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Royal Bank of Canada	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Toronto Dominion Bank	P - 24 mths	P - 24 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Finland</b>			
Nordea Bank Finland plc ~	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>France</b>			
BNP Paribas	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Credit Industriel et Commercial	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Germany</b>			
Deutsche Bank AG	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
DZ Bank AG	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
Landesbank Berlin AG	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
Landwirtschaftliche Rentenbank	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Luxembourg</b>			
Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Clearstream Banking	P - 24 mths	P - 24 mths	G - 3 mths
<b>Netherlands</b>			
Bank Nederlandse Gemeenten	P - 24 mths	P - 24 mths	G - 3 mths
Cooperatieve CRB BA	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
ING Bank NV	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths

Norway			
DnB Bank	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Sweden			
Nordea Bank AB	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken AB	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Swedbank AB	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
Svenska Handelsbanken AB	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Switzerland			
Credit Suisse AG	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
UBS AG	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
U.S.A			
Bank of New York Mellon, The	P - 24 mths	P - 24 mths	G - 3 mths
HSBC Bank USA, N.A.	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
JP Morgan Chase Bank NA	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Northern Trust Company	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
State Street Bank and Trust Company	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Wells Fargo Bank NA	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
U.K banks and Building Societies			
Bank of New York Mellon (International) Ltd	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Barclays Bank plc	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
Credit Suisse International	O - 12 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
HSBC Bank plc	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
MBNA Europe Bank	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Standard Chartered Bank	O - 12 mths	O - 12 mths	G - 3 mths
Sumitomo Mitsui BCE Ltd	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths	G - 3 mths
UBS Ltd	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
Nationwide BS	R - 6 mths	R - 6 mths	G - 3 mths
AAA Rated			
Collateralised LA Deposit	Y - 60 mths	Y - 60 mths	Not Applicable
Debt Management Office	Y - 60 mths	Y - 60 mths	Not Applicable
Supranationals	Y - 60 mths	Y - 60 mths	Not Applicable
UK Gilts	Y - 60 mths	Y - 60 mths	Not Applicable
Nationalised/part nationalised			
Bank of Scotland Plc	B - 12 mths	B - 12 mths	Not Applicable
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc	B - 12 mths	B - 12 mths	Not Applicable
National Westminster Bank Plc	B - 12 mths	B - 12 mths	Not Applicable
The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	B - 12 mths	B - 12 mths	Not Applicable
Ulster Bank Ltd	B - 12 mths	B - 12 mths	Not Applicable

\* Currently invested with at 14/12/12 see appendix 3

Includes Foreign banks in OECD countries

Maximum non-UK investment to be 20% of total investments at time of investment

**Column C will be used for all investments.**

Y	Yellow	60 months
P	Purple	24 months
B	Blue	12 months *
O	Orange	12 months
R	Red	6 months
G	Green	3 months

\* Nationalised and part nationalised



# Minute Annex

## APPENDIX 2

### **Summary of Approach to taking forward 28 November Council's decision on a petition by the No Oaklands Housing Action Group**

#### **1. An independent review of Green Belt boundaries and a Green Belt Study of all potential housing locations needs to be undertaken now.**

##### **From 17 January 2013 Cabinet Report**

Regarding motion point 1, the 20 December Cabinet Report set out that the two studies should be carried out in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The report estimated that the studies would take six to nine months and could cost approximately between £45k and £80k.

Following the 20 December Cabinet a review of other councils' Green Belt boundary studies carried out by independent consultants (including the Coventry area and Gloucestershire) has been undertaken and common features have been identified. In those reviews, parcels or sectors of Green Belt adjoining urban areas are measured against how they contribute towards the five purposes of Green Belts as set out in paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). For clarity, the five purposes as set out in the NPPF are essentially the same as those in the previous Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts and reflect the longstanding approach to Green Belts at a national level. They are:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into each other;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Green Belt reviews carried out by consultants have detailed scoring methodologies to identify how significantly parcels of Green Belt land (using an agreed methodology to identify boundaries) perform against each of the purposes. These Green Belt parcels should adjoin settlements which are not washed over by the Green Belt. The parcels would then be graded by the extent of their contribution they make to the purposes. Identification at this stage would not automatically mean that any parcels would necessarily be developed or lose their Green Belt status.

This piece of work would form the Independent Review of Green Belt Boundaries. This strategic assessment would provide an objective and independent review of Green Belt boundaries to facilitate clear decision making and option testing once other evidence is available, including the Independent Commission of Housing Need. The output of this study would be a report, with executive summary and maps, which would set out a review and analysis to identify parcels of the Green Belt and their contribution towards the

purposes. Subject to detail, this is the suggested high level methodology that this Council should follow.

The Council motion point 1 also required a Green Belt Study of potential housing locations (Green Belt Sites Study) to be carried out. It is recommended that the Independent Review of Green Belt Boundaries and the Green Belt Sites Study would form two parts of an overall Green Belt Study. The Green Belt Sites Study would follow as the second part being informed by the Green Belt review. This is what other authorities who wanted to carry out a review of Green Belt boundaries as well as a potential development sites study have done. This second part would then look at the parcels of land which least met the purposes of Green Belt. Informed by housing need figure/figures and a current understanding of the potential for fulfilling housing need on urban sites, it would assess and score each of these parcels against a range of environmental and physical constraints that might prevent future sustainable development.

In order to fulfil the requirements of the NPPF, the study must examine if there is a need to identify areas of Green Belt that may be required to meet development needs beyond the plan period. Green Belt boundaries would need to be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

Because the Green Belts Boundary Study is of a strategic nature, it would be more appropriate if it were carried out jointly with adjoining authorities covering a strategic area of the Green Belt. Discussions will therefore be held with adjoining authorities but the Council recognises the need to minimise delays in carrying out the studies.

Following the outcome of their Core Strategy examination in public, Dacorum Borough Council has indicated that they would be willing to work with St Albans District on this. A joint study could also involve Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council as they have yet to carry out a Green Belt review and both authorities share a Green Belt boundary. A joint study will have benefits and will be seen as meeting the "duty to cooperate" legal requirement of the plan making process. As well as these two adjoining councils, joint work with other adjoining councils will be further considered and explored. However, as the southern adjoining authorities of Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford have recently adopted core strategies, there may be less of a need for them to consider joint studies at this stage. For clarification, further consideration will be given to boundaries and possible joint working with Central Beds and North Herts.

Outline terms of reference for the Green Belt Studies are set out at the end of the document.

**2. There needs to be clarity on how sites will be delivered and this is implied by an allocation of strategic sites**

From 30 January 2013 Council Report, paragraph 4.5

That no further action be taken at present in relation to this point. When studies agreed by Cabinet have been completed, Cabinet should consider the most appropriate way forward.

**3. Detailed delivery matters such as availability and infrastructure requirements need resolving**

From 30 January 2013 Council Report, paragraph 4.7

That no further action be taken at present in relation to this point. When the studies agreed by Cabinet have been completed, Cabinet consider the most appropriate way forward, including what updates might be needed to the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule as part of any future local plan documentation.

**4. Oaklands should retain its Green Belt green field status in any future policy review or boundary change to prevent urban sprawl and coalescence with Hatfield**

From 20 December 2012 Cabinet Report

The Independent Review of Green Belt Boundaries and Green Belt Study of all potential housing locations, required by point 1, must not be pre-judged in one geographical location.

There is a clear risk that any evidence based work which was pre-judged at one location (unless there is an overwhelming reason to exclude the site, for example if it has Site of Special Scientific Interest status or is at flooding risk) would be found unsound at examination.

With regard to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the decision, the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services advises that the terms of reference of the review of Green Belt boundaries and Green Belt Study of potential housing sites must include all sites which are reasonably capable of inclusion. This would clearly include Oaklands.

To exclude Oaklands would expose the Council to legal challenge that it had pre-determined the outcomes of the Review and Study. An SLP based on the findings of a Review or Study which excluded a site or sites would also be open to challenge before the Inspector that the Plan was unsound.

It is therefore suggested that Oaklands should not be excluded from the independent Green Belt review, for the above reasons. However, decisions on the Strategic Local Plan, such as the ultimate inclusion or exclusion of specific sites, are for councillors to take. Members would therefore be able to

ultimately make judgements in relation to specific sites, including Oaklands, in the light of the findings of the studies and evidence base.

**5. An alternative site should be considered.**

From 20 December Cabinet Report

See comments at 4 above.

**6. Green Belt release should only be considered when the district has run out of sites within its urban land**

From 30 January 2013 Council Report, paragraph 4.15

That no further action be taken at present in relation to this point. When the Green Belt Review and Housing Needs Study, jointly with adjoining Councils if possible, based on the attached outline Terms of Reference have been completed, Cabinet to consider the most appropriate way forward in the light of guidance in the NPPF:

**7. An independent commission of housing need in St Albans and its District should be set up to inform the evidence base**

From 17 January 2013 Cabinet Report

The 20 December Cabinet report noted that there were two potential types of study which could be used to fulfil point 7 of the November Council Motion. This could be an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) or a bespoke study of housing need carried out an expert consultant in the field.

Following on from this it is officer opinion that a SHMA update is the most suitable as it is the approach set out in the NPPF to assess housing need. Paragraph 159 of the NPPF states that:

*"local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should:*

- prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which:*

- meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change;*
- addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes); and*

*- caters for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand"*

The Council's current SHMA was carried out jointly with other southern and central Hertfordshire councils to cover a wider housing market area. However, it predates the NPPF and could be considered not to fully meet the above requirements as the level of need was restricted by the now revoked East of England Plan (EEP) figures. The SHMA update will also reflect 2011 census data, including changes in household formation and size, as well as a considered approach to an appropriate range of historic data.

Once a SHMA update has been prepared by independent consultants, it will then be possible to determine whether it is appropriate to seek to meet this unconstrained level of "need". The determination requires a judgement of the balance of social, economic and environmental objectives, in the pursuit of sustainable development. This will take account of the environmental and physical characteristics of, and constraints within the district.

This SHMA update can be carried out at the same time as the first part of the overall Green Belt Study. Alongside this in-house up to date urban capacity work it can be used to determine what level of Green Belt land would be required to meet the objectively assessed levels of housing "need".

As the current SHMA was undertaken jointly with surrounding Hertfordshire councils, an update to it could also be carried out jointly. However, if other councils did not wish to pursue this at this time then an update only covering a St Albans District housing market area could be produced. An outline terms of reference for the study is set out at the end of this document.

## **Studies Draft Outline Terms of Reference**

### **Green Belt Review (fulfils Council motion point 1)**

#### Purpose

To undertake an objective and independent strategic review of Green Belt boundaries, covering this and adjoining local authority areas, in accordance with the Council motion and guided by the NPPF. Subsequently it should identify whether Green Belt land is capable of being used to meet development need.

#### Objectives

- To be carried out jointly with adjoining authorities supporting the duty to co-operate
- To assess parcels of the Green Belt of their contribution towards the five purposes of Green Belts
- Identify the constraints and ability to accommodate development of those parcels which least contribute toward the five purposes
- Identify land that may be required to meet development needs beyond the plan period
- Should be more than a site finding exercise. The study will identify Green Belt boundaries which will endure significantly beyond the plan period

#### Stages

##### **Part 1**

- Identification of strategic Green Belt parcels adjoining settlements which are not washed over by the Green Belt using strong boundaries
- Assessment of parcels against criteria for the five purposes of Green Belts as set out in the NPPF
- Graded score for each parcel detailed on maps, with detailed justification
- Identification at this stage does not indicate that the parcel will be developed

##### **Part 2**

- Break down strategic parcels used in part 1 to smaller sites
- Identify constraints, opportunities, landscape value and ability to accept development for each site
- Identify sites which may be able and most appropriate to meet development need
- Identify land that may be required for development post the plan period and establish long term Green Belt boundaries

#### Outputs

Part 1 – Report, with executive summary, setting out parcels of Green Belt Land graded by how significantly they contribute towards the five purposes of Green Belt. This will be accompanied by presentations and progress reports. An interim draft report will also be produced.

Part 2 – Report, with executive summary, analysing each parcel of land. This will also include an analysis of each parcels landscape value. This will be accompanied by presentations and progress reports. An interim draft report will also be produced.

#### Timescales

Discussion with adjoining authorities is underway. Work on the brief and tendering will begin after Cabinet agreement. Work on Part 2 will follow after completion of the Housing Needs Study. Further detail will follow based on consultants' estimates. Estimated timescales in the 20 December Cabinet report were 6 to 9 months.

### **Housing Needs Study (fulfils Council motion point 7)**

#### Purpose

Produce an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), preferably jointly with adjoining authorities, which provides the Council with a clear understanding of its full housing "need" as required by paragraph 47 and 159 of the NPPF. This will be used as evidence base to inform the future local plan. The consultants will need to be an expert in demography and related disciplines.

#### Objectives

- Identify household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change;
- Provide an understanding of full unconstrained housing need taking account of migration and demographic change, including a considered approach to an appropriate range of historic data, as well as 2011 census data
- Identify the scale, mix and tenure of housing required to meet the full housing "need"
- Alongside in-house urban site capacity work, inform the Green Belt study of the level of housing that would be required to be delivered in the Green Belt to meet "need"
- Alongside other evidence base work, identify what potential level of need may be required to be met in adjoining areas if it cannot be suitably delivered in this district

#### Outputs

SHMA Report, with executive summary, clearly meeting the vision and objectives set out above. This will be accompanied by presentations and progress reports. An interim draft report will also be produced. The final output must meet the requirements of the NPPF and must be able to be used to support the Council's future local plan strategy at an examination in public.

#### Timescales

Discussion with adjoining authorities is underway. Work on the brief and tendering to begin post Cabinet agreement and the completion if these

discussions. Further detail to follow based on consultants estimates.  
Estimated timescales in the 20 December Cabinet report were 6 to 9 months.