

NORTH HERTS COUNCIL

WEEK ENDING FRIDAY 18 AUGUST 2023

MEMBERS' INFORMATION

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Produced by the Communications Team. Any comments, suggestions or contributions should be sent to the Communications Team at MIS@north-herts.gov.uk

NEWS AND INFORMATION

AGENDA & REPORTS

PUBLISHED WEEK COMMENCING 14 AUGUST 2023

None

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS WEEK COMMENCING 21 AUGUST 2023

None

CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS WEEK COMMENCING 21 AUGUST 2023

Date	Event	Location
Wednesday 23 August 2023 @ 7pm for 7:30pm	The Drawtones Album Launch Concert	The Icknield Centre, Icknield Way, Letchworth, North Herts SG6 1EF
Thu 24 Aug 2023 @ 18:30	Hertfordshire Constabulary - Special Constable Attestation Ceremony	Hertfordshire Police HQ, Stanborough Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6XF (OSB Conference Rooms A & B)

VICE-CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS WEEK COMMENCING 21 AUGUST 2023

Date	Event	Location
	None	

OTHER EVENTS WEEK COMMENCING 21 AUGUST 2023

Date	Event	Location
	None	



LEGAL AND COMMUNITY SAFEGUARDING

MEMBERS INFORMATION NOTE

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all NHC employees, volunteers and members have a duty to take action to safeguard children and adults at risk in our communities.

NHC offers two levels of training and the level of training required is determined by how much contact, be that direct or indirect (email, telephone, post etc.) you have with children and adults including access to personal and sensitive information about them.

The levels of training are:

Basic

- a 3-hour long course which is required to refresh every 3 years.
- This is for any member that has contact, either directly or indirect with children and adults and/or access to personal and sensitive information.
- There are separate basic courses for children and adults at risk.

Advanced

- a 6-hour course which is required to be refreshed every 3 years.
- This is for any member who manages another member or is a Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- There are separate advanced courses for children and adults at risk.

Safeguarding training courses YR23/24:

- Advanced Adult – 18th September 2023

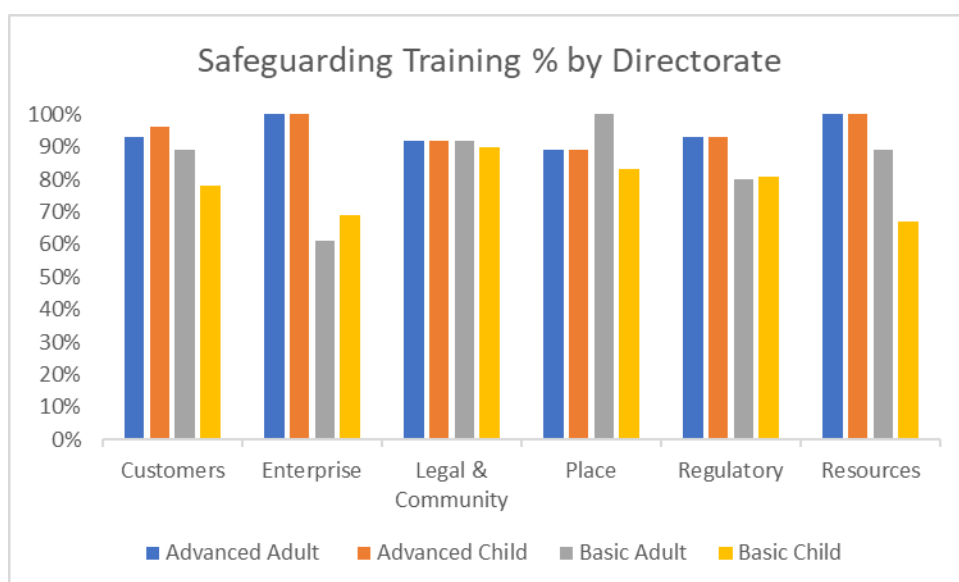
- Basic Adult – Wednesday 22nd November 2023
- Advanced Child – Wednesday 24th January 2024
- Basic Child – Monday 19th February 2024
- Domestic Abuse training (SADA) Virtual - Thursday 13th October 10am-1pm
- Domestic Abuse training (SADA) Virtual - Thursday 13th October 2pm-5pm

Places available on a first-come, first-served basis. To book on to any of the courses above, please email safeguarding@north-herts.gov.uk

Members safeguarding training compliance per requirement: (based on 49 Members)

- E-learning 29% up to date
- Children 10% up to date
- Adults 16% up to date

Safeguarding training by directorate:



Safeguarding Updates

- 45 referrals were received into safeguarding in July. Of those referrals submitted to HCC and out of county;
- 16 referrals accepted.
- 1 referral was not accepted.
- 18 external referrals, no feedback received at time of report.
- 10 internal incident forms only.

External Boards HSCP & HSAB

HSCP/HSAB L&D Newsletter July 2023 can be found at [HSAB and HSCP training and resources | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

HCC are hosting a **webinar** with presentations from Hertfordshire Constabulary and Trading Standards. The webinar will cover **recognising and responding to concerns around modern slavery, exploitation and fraud**.

This will be held online on **Tuesday 12th September 2pm – 3pm**. If you would like to attend please follow this link: [Register here for 12th Sept webinar](#)

For more information please contact:

Name Lisa McDonnell
Title Safeguarding Team Leader
Tel: 01462 474 142
Email: safeguarding@north-herts.gov.uk

Community & Partnership Executive Member briefing – August 2023

Community Safety

Community Safety

- There has been an increase in crime and ASB in Bancroft Park, Hitchin which has coincided with the school summer holidays. A meeting has been arranged with the police, NHC, councillors and Bancroft Park Tennis club to try and address the issues. There have been several assaults within the park that have been reported in the local press which has heightened concerns.
- Community Safety are dealing with reports of vehicle repairs on the highway in Oughton ward, Hitchin. Officers have identified a suspect who became aggressive towards staff. The person has been served with a Community Protection Warning to help improve the quality of life for residents in the area.
- ASB has also increased at The Lairage car park, Hitchin and work is under way with Community safety, parking, property services, Arena security and the police to address the problems.

Democratic Services

Committee Services

- A new part time Scrutiny Officer has been appointed, and commenced the role on Monday 7 August, to oversee the Scrutiny function at the Council.
- A new part time Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer has been appointed, who is due to join the team on Tuesday 22 August.
- Plans are underway for the Youth Democracy Event in November, and a hold the date email has been sent to Members for this.
- Meetings have taken place with the IRP to begin the Members Allowances review and meetings will be scheduled with relevant Members/Officers as required.
- The health check on the Auditel system in the Council Chamber has been concluded.

Electoral Services

- The annual canvass continues – where we have email addresses or mobile phone numbers, we have been sending reminders via email and text which have been successful. Individuals have the

option to opt out of this service if they no longer wish to receive emails or texts.

- Initial work continues regarding the review of polling districts review. Given our circumstances of having changes to both the parliamentary boundaries and the district boundaries, the plan is to have the report presented to November Council to tie in with publication of the Register on 1 December.
- At this Council meeting we also intend to present the Scale of Fees Report for the Elections.
- Prep work regarding the renewal ballot of the BIDs for Royston, Letchworth and Hitchin is requiring a significant amount of time.

Policy & Community Services

Throughout July, we have been busy coordinating various partnership networks and events and the provision of ongoing Community and Member support.

- Facilitating the first Area Forum meetings follow up delegated decisions with the Service Director.
- Setting up and hosting the first Needham House asylum seekers volunteer support group.
- Hitchin Eco Day event.
- Ward walks with councillors in Royston and Baldock.
- Initial planning for North Herts Heroes 2024.
- Supported relaunch of the North Herts Wellbeing Partnership.
- Attended various groups and AGMs including Rhythms of the World Legacy Group, RTC Youth Council working party, Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens, North Herts 50+, Letchworth Town Centre Strategy Group, Baldock Community Forum, Citizens Advice.
- Ongoing work to provide updates on the Climate Hive Engagement page – updates include: Hitchin Eco-fest; The Ecological Emergency; Letchworth Garden Shed; Green Courses; and the Green Flags awards.
- Delegated decision for the Community Investment Fund and the policy for the decision made on 14th.

Community Wellbeing

- The Healthy Hub drop-ins are now scheduled to the end of the year. Further information can be found [HERE](#)
- Delivering food education classes for adults with learning disabilities and older people are continuing.
- Park Play funding has been confirmed for Jackmans and working with Active in the Community to see if weekly play sessions can be established.
- Plans being developed for a celebration of Older People in October as part of national Silver Sunday programme including afternoon tea's, soft play for grandparents and grandkids and free badminton.
- Household Support Fund plans being developed to procure food education boxes and plan food education classes across the district.

Safeguarding briefing

- The finalised SIAS Audit report was received and the team are working through actions & recommendations identified.
- There has been Ongoing basic safeguarding training for staff and feedback to external training provider. *Members are encouraged to undertake the e-learning if they have not done so.*
- The Annual Safeguarding report has been drafted with the Service Director and will go through to Executive Member and Leadership prior to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September.
- 50 referrals were received into Safeguarding in June 2023. Of those referrals submitted to HCC and out of county:
 - 12 referrals accepted (none refused).
 - 23 external referrals, no feedback received at time of the report.
 - 15 internal incident forms only.



**North
Herts**
Council

**LEGAL AND COMMUNITY
COMMITTEE & MEMBER SERVICES**

MEMBERS INFORMATION NOTE

The Local Government Association is hosting a free online training session event on Wednesday 27 September 2023 at 2pm entitled 'Personal safety for Councillors'.

This session is being run as part of the LGA's Civility in Public Life Programme and links to the ongoing work following the passing of the Debate Not Hate motion at Council in May. The session will cover:

- General principals
- Personal safety technology
- Personal safety tips
- Surgeries and canvassing

The training session will be via Zoom and is free for Councillors to attend. Should you be interested in this, [you can book your place here](#).

Committee Services

Tel: 01462 474655

Email: committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk



RESOURCES

MEMBERS INFORMATION NOTE

COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID (REGISTER OF ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE)

A nomination has been received for Royston Hospital

I must inform you that the nomination has not been successful and will therefore be recorded on the Council's list as an unsuccessful nomination.

For more information please contact:

Rachel Cooper
Controls, Risk and Performance Manager
Tel: 01462 474606
Email: Rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk



LEGAL & COMMUNITY

MEMBERS

INFORMATION NOTE

Constitutional amendments:

This is to notify Members that following the confirmation of appointment / start date of the new Service Director: Housing & Environmental Health – Jo Doggett from 14 August 2023, the Constitution has been amended in line with the Full Council resolution of 13 July 2023 [item 225 resolution 2.2 [CLICK HERE](#)], namely:

That the Council delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to undertake any necessary amendments to the Constitution, in respect of the Service Director: Regulatory and the Service Director: Housing & Environment (to take effect on successful appointment/ commencement).

You can find a copy of the up-to-date Constitution on this [PAGE](#)

For more information please contact:

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community
Monitoring Officer

Tel: 01462 474370

Email: Jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

PAYMENT OF DISCRETIONARY COMPENSATION TO EMPLOYEES

POLICY ON EXERCISE OF EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS

North Hertfordshire District Council (“the Council”) as an employer is under a legal duty to prepare and publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers under the Regulations which apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme (“the LGPS”).

The Council is also under a duty to formulate, publish and keep under review the policy that the Council applies in exercising discretionary powers under Regulations relating to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated due to redundancy or certain other reasons.

This document is intended to comply with these duties and, in the following table, sets out the discretionary powers concerned, identifies the relevant Regulation that gives the Council the discretion and describes how the discretion will be exercised.

The policy set out in this document will not be departed from except as provided for in the policy or following a variation to the policy approved by the Managing Director and Service Director – Resources.

This statement is not a definitive statement of the law and is subject to the provisions of the relevant Regulations.

The Regulations that apply to the LGPS are:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (these are referred to as the “Pensions Regulations”);
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (referred to as the “Transitional Regulations”);
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applied to the LGPS before 1 April 2014, are preserved in part on a transitional basis by the Transitional Regulations and are referred to as the “Benefits Regulations”

The Regulations which apply to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated as a result of redundancy or other specified reasons are:

- The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (referred to as the “Compensation Regulations”).

In the table below:

- (1) “The Scheme” or “the Pension Scheme” means the LGPS and “the Fund” or “the Pension Fund” means the fund maintained under the LGPS.
- (2) “Member” means a member of the LGPS.
- (3) “Active member” means a member in employment and paying, or treated as paying, contributions to the LGPS, or absent from employment for a reason mentioned in Regulation 11 of the Pensions Regulations.
- (4) References to a member with transitional protection are those who can count membership accrued before 1 October 2006 and who have statutory transitional protection under the Transitional Regulations, wholly or partly, from changes that would otherwise be made to their pension entitlements and/or from actuarial reductions that would otherwise be applied to their pension benefits as a result of the coming into force of the Pensions Regulations on 1 April 2014.
- (5) References to a member meeting “the 85 year rule” are those members whose age in whole years when added to the member’s total membership in whole years is 85 years or more.

The power to exercise and to take any decision in relation to the each of the discretions lies with the Managing Director and Service Director – Resources.

This statement was approved by the Managing Director and Service Director – Resources and is intended to comply with the Council’s duties under Regulation 60 of the Pensions Regulations, Paragraph 2 (2) of Schedule 2 to the Transitional Regulations and Regulation 7 of the Compensation Regulations.

No.	Area	Regulation	Discretion	Policy Summary	Explanation
1	Flexible Retirement	Regulations 30(6) and 30 (8) Pensions Regulations Regulations 3 (5), 11(2),11(3), and para.2(1A) of sch.2 of the Transitional Regulations Regulation 18(3) of the Benefits Regulations	<p>To agree to an employee aged 55 or over reducing their hours of work or grade so that they may receive all or some of their retirement pension while still employed. Specifically, where the employer consents to flexible retirement then, in addition to the benefits the member has accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw), the employer can also allow the member to choose to draw all, part or none of the pension benefits they accrued after 31 March 2008.</p> <p>However, benefits taken on flexible retirement will be subject to a potential actuarial reduction if they are being drawn earlier than the member's normal retiring age (flexible retirement provisions may be operated for members potentially up to a member's 75th birthday). The reductions applied will be in accordance with guidance issued by the government actuary.</p>	This discretion will be exercised, providing the employee receives the actuarial reduction to their pension in full, with there being no strain on the pension fund costs to the Council.	This means the council can agree to an employee aged 55 or over drawing their pension whilst they continue to work for the council on reduced pay / hours or grade providing their pension is reduced by the appropriate amount and there is no cost to the council.
2	Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVCs)	Regulation 17 of the Regulations	Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to SCAVC arrangements	The Council will pay SCAVCs where an employee has elected to pay AVCs by salary sacrifice. The amount of these employer	This means that each employee will be dealt with in accordance with the scheme criteria taking into account any financial implications

				SCAVCs will not exceed the amount of salary sacrificed by the employee. This is a Council discretion which is subject to the employee meeting the Council's conditions for acceptance into the salary sacrifice SCAVC scheme and may be withdrawn or changed at any time.	i.e. provided that the SCAVC contributions plus other salary sacrifice arrangements do not reduce the employee's salary to below the National Living Wage.									
3	Contributions payable by active members	Regulation 9 and 10 of the Regulations	An active member shall make contributions to the Scheme at the relevant contribution rate, from his pensionable pay, in each employment in which he is an active member. The contribution rate to be applied to his pensionable pay in any financial year is the rate determined by the employer with reference to the tiered contribution pay bands stated in the regulations.	A review of the pension contribution band to which an employee has been allocated will be made following a material change.	The Council will review									
			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Earnings 2023 - 2024</th> <th>Contribution</th> <th>In 50:50 scheme)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to £16,500</td> <td>5.5%</td> <td>2.75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£16,501 to £25,900</td> <td>5.8%</td> <td>2.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Earnings 2023 - 2024	Contribution	In 50:50 scheme)	Up to £16,500	5.5%	2.75%	£16,501 to £25,900	5.8%	2.9%		
Earnings 2023 - 2024	Contribution	In 50:50 scheme)												
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4	Early Retirement and Waiving of Actuarial Reduction to Pensions	Regulation 30(8), Pensions Regulations Schedule 2 paragraphs 1 (2), 1(1)(c), 2(1), 2(2) and	To agree to waive, in whole or in part, any reduction that would otherwise be made on the early payment of a pension to a former employee aged 55 or more (or having attained age 55 and have previously been awarded deferred benefits after 01 April 2014) to the pension paid to an employee	The Council will only agree to waive actuarial reductions and the application of the 85 year rule protections where there is a clear	This means the Council can agree to waive any reductions to an individual's pension where they have left employment and / or where they have																					

		Regulation 3 (1) of the Transitional Regulations, Regulation 30(5) and 30A(5) of the Benefits, Regulations	allowed to take flexible retirement under Regulation 30(6) of the Pensions Regulations.	financial and/or operational advantage to the Council in doing so. A request for early retirement on compassionate grounds will be considered on a case by case basis taking into account the circumstances and whether there is a financial and/or operational advantage to the Council in waiving any actuarial reduction.	requested and been approved for flexible retirement from age 55. The Council will however only do this where there is where there is a clear financial and/or operational advantage to the Council in doing so or on compassionate grounds.
5	Redundancy & Compensation Payments	Regulations 5 and 6 of the Compensation Regulations	These regulations provide a discretionary power to award a one-off lump sum payment of up to 2 years pay (104 weeks), inclusive of any statutory redundancy payment made. This applies to any member whose employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy, efficiency or in the case of a joint appointment (not job shares) where termination arises because the other holder of the joint appointment has left it.	These discretions will be applied. The Policy is stated in the Early Severance Policy.	This means the Council will enhance lump sum redundancy payments and base these on an employee's actual pay in all cases.

			<p>The provisions apply to all employees who are eligible for participation in the LG Pension Scheme, whether or not they are current members of the scheme.</p> <p>There is also a discretionary power to waive the weekly pay ceiling placed on statutory redundancy payments and to calculate, instead, on pay up to the actual week's pay.</p>		
6	Award of Additional Pension	Regulation 31, Pensions Regulations	<p>To award additional pension to an active member; or within 6 months of leaving to a former active member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.</p> <p>Note: Any additional pension awarded (including any additional pension purchased by the employer under Regulation 16 of the Pensions Regulations (see above) may not exceed the additional pension limit of £6,500 (figure as at 2014 - uplifted annually).</p>	This discretion will not be exercised.	This means the Council has power to award additional pension to either a current employee in the LGPS or an employee who has left by way of redundancy or business efficiency. The policy of the Council is not to do this.
7	Funding of Additional Pension Contributions	Regulations 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) Pensions Regulations,	To fund, in whole or in part, additional pension contributions on behalf of an employee where these are to be paid by regular contributions (Regulation 16(2)(e)) or by lump sum (Regulation 16(4)(d))	This discretion will not be exercised.	This means the council will not pay additional pension contributions of behalf of current employees.

			<p>Note: The amount of additional pension that may be credited to an active member's pension accounts may not exceed the additional pension limit of £6,500 (figure as at 2014 - uplifted annually)</p>		
8	Early Release of Deferred Benefits	<p>Regulations 30(2), (5), 30A(3) and (5) of the Benefits, Regulations and Regulation 3(5A)(c) and Schedule 2, of the Transitional Regulations</p>	<p>Where a member voluntarily draws benefits between the age of 55 and 60 who has then satisfied the 'Rule of 85' or will do so before their 60th birthday, the actuarial reductions will be calculated pretending that the member had instead satisfied the 'Rule of 85' on their 60th birthday. The employer has discretion to require the actual date upon which the member satisfied (or would have satisfied) the 'Rule of 85' to be used. This will have the effect of reducing the actuarial reduction. Should an employer exercise this discretion, the employer must pay to the fund a pension strain payment.</p> <p>In addition, employers can, if they choose, waive on compassionate grounds all of the actuarial reduction. If an employer does so, it must pay to the Pension Fund a sum representing the capital cost of waiving those reductions.</p>	These discretions will not be exercised	<p>This means the Council will not agree to the payment of unreduced pension benefits to a pension scheme member who is covered by the transitional protections who meets the '85 year rule' until they are aged 60.</p> <p>This means the Council will not agree on compassionate grounds, to waive any reduction to pension benefits that would otherwise be made to the pension payable to a member covered by</p>

					the transitional protections.
9	Early Release of Deferred Benefits with Employer Consent for scheme members who ceased active membership on or after 1 April 1998 and before 1 April 2008 and active councillor members and councillor members who ceased active membership on or after 1 April 1998	Regulations 31(2) and (5) of the Regulations and Regulation 3(5A)(b), para.1(1)(f) and para.2(1) of sch.2 of the Transitional Regulations	<p>A policy decision concerning early release of benefits needs to be made in relation to active members who have left the scheme between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2008 with deferred benefits and councillor members who left after 1 April 1998 who make an application to release benefits on or after age 50* and before age 55.</p> <p>*It should be noted that benefits paid on or after age 50 and before age 55 would be subject to an unauthorised payments charge under the Finance Act 2004 and, where applicable, an unauthorised payments surcharge under that Act, and a Scheme sanction charge on any benefits built up after 5 April 2006.</p> <p>A policy decision is required to be made in respect of each of the following discretions:</p> <p>(1) Where a member voluntarily draws benefits between the age of 55 and 60 who has then satisfied the 'Rule of 85' or will do so before their 60th birthday, the actuarial reductions will be calculated pretending that the member had instead satisfied the 'Rule of 85' on their 60th birthday. The employer has discretion to</p>	These discretions will not be exercised	This means the Council will not agree to these changes to actuarial reductions.

			<p>require the actual date upon which the member satisfied (or would have satisfied) the 'Rule of 85' to be used. This will have the effect of reducing the actuarial reduction. Should an employer exercise this discretion, the employer must pay to the fund a pension strain payment.</p> <p>(2) In addition, employers can if they choose, waive on compassionate grounds all of the actuarial reduction. If an employer does so, it must pay to the Pension Fund a sum representing the capital cost of waiving those reductions.</p> <p>(3)</p>		
10	Discretions in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership before 1 April 1998	Regulation D11(2) (c) of the LGPS Regulations 1995)	<p>A policy decision concerning early release of benefits needs to be made in relation to active members who have left the scheme before 1 April 1998 who make an application on compassionate grounds to release benefits on or after age 50* and before age 60. Under these rules the sole discretion for an employing authority is that they may determine on compassionate grounds that benefits are to become payable on an unreduced basis.</p> <p>*It should be noted that benefits paid on or after age 50 and before age 55 would be subject to</p>	This discretion will not be exercised	This means the Council will not agree to the early release of benefits in these circumstances.

			unauthorised payments charge under the Finance Act 2004 and, where applicable, an unauthorised payments surcharge under that Act, a Scheme sanction charge will not be payable.		
11	Late Transfer Requests	Regulation 100(6) and 22(7) and (8) of the Regulations and Regulation 10(6) of the Transitional Regulations 2014	<p>The Regulations allow for the acceptance of transfer value payments into the fund (subject to the Pension Fund administering authorities' approval) to enable members to transfer pension rights accrued prior to joining the scheme into the LGPS, and thereby count additional pension. This election should be made within 12 months of first joining the LGPS in the employment.</p> <p>The discretion allowed under regulation 100(6) relates to the acceptance of transfers relating to non LGPS membership, where the member makes a request after the expiry of the first 12 months of joining the LGPS.</p> <p>In most situations, previous LGPS rights are automatically aggregated unless an election to keep those accrued benefits separate is received. Regulations 22 (7) and (8) allow an employer to extend the 12 month time limit within which a Scheme member who has a deferred LGPS benefit in England or Wales following the cessation of employment (or cessation of a concurrent</p>	These discretions will not be exercised.	This means the Council will not allow individuals longer than the usual 12 month deadline with regard to transfer requests.

			<p>employment) to elect not to have the deferred benefits aggregated with their new LGPS employment (or on-going concurrent LGPS employment) if the member has not made an election to retain separate benefits within 12 months of commencing membership of the LGPS in the new employment (or within 12 months of ceasing the concurrent membership).</p> <p>Regulation 10(6) of the Transitional Regulations allows a member to elect to aggregate a deferred benefit in respect of membership which ceased before 1 April 2014. Under this provision, the member would be awarded additional CARE benefits under the 2014 Scheme. The member must make the election to do so within 12 months of joining the 2014 Scheme (or such longer time as the employer may allow).</p>		
12	Shared-cost APCs to buy back lost pension	Regulation 16 (16) of the Regulations	<p>Members on the following types of leave which are not covered by APP are able to enter into an APC contract to buy back the lost CARE pension. If they make the election within 30 days of return, the employer must fund two-thirds of the cost.</p> <p>The employer has discretion to extend the 30-day deadline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional maternity leave during which no pensionable pay is received 	This discretion will not be exercised	The council will not allow the buy back of lost CARE pension in these circumstances

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional adoption leave during which no pensionable pay is received • Shared parental leave during which no pensionable pay is received • Authorised unpaid leave (excluding strike leave) <p>If the individual leave period lasted longer than 36 months, the employer is only required to share the cost in relation to the first 36 months of the leave.</p>		
13	Injury Allowance Payments	Regulations 3 to 7 of the Local Government (Discretionary Compensation) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011)	<p>Under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 Scheme employers must formulate, publish and keep under review a policy on:</p> <p>a) whether or not to make an injury award to those who sustain an injury or contract a disease as a result of anything they were required to do in performing the duties of their job and in consequence of which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suffer a reduction remuneration, or • cease to be employed as a result of an incapacity which is likely to be permanent and which was caused by the injury or disease, or • die leaving a surviving spouse, civil partner or dependant, and <p>b) if the Scheme employer has a policy to make such payments, how it will determine</p>	This discretion will not be exercised	The Council will not undertake this.

		the amount of injury allowance to be paid.		
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Declaration

It is understood that the above discretions are applicable to all eligible members of the Scheme. In respect of the mandatory policy requirements, a written statement should be published indicating the policy which is being applied by that employer in the exercise of its functions. A copy of the scheme employer's policy decisions should be sent to Local Pensions Partnership within one month of the date the policy is revised.

Any change to the discretions exercised under the LGPS Regulations can take immediate effect from the date the Scheme employer agrees the change.

Any change to the discretions exercised under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2000, the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2006 or the Injury Allowances Regulations 2011 cannot take effect until one month after the date the Scheme employer publishes a statement of its amended policy.

The policies made above:

- i. Must have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the discretions could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service;
- ii. Will not be used for any ulterior motive;
- iii. Will be exercised reasonably;
- iv. Will only be used when there is a real and substantial future benefit to the employer for incurring the extra costs that may arise;
- v. Will be duly recorded when applied.

Signed on behalf of the Employing Authority:



Name in Block Capitals: ANTHONY ROCHE

Position: MANAGING DIRECTOR

Employing Authority: NORTH HERTS COUNCIL

Date: 15/8/23



Name in Block Capitals: IAN COUPER

Position: SERVICE DIRECTOR: RESOURCES

Employing Authority: NORTH HERTS COUNCIL

Date: 16/8/2023

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted – *None declared*

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: LEGAL AND COMMUNITY

1. DECISION TAKEN

To approve a Community Investment Fund Policy/ procedure for the use of the allotted £100K in the Councils 2023/24 budget (as appended as A).

2. DECISION TAKER

Elizabeth Dennis, the Leader in consultation with Jeanette Thompson, Service Director – Legal and Community
(NB consultation on the proposed Policy was also undertaken with the Executive Member for Finance & IT, the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships, their deputies, the Deputy Leader and the Service Director: Resources prior to being finalised).

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

14th August 2023

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 To provide a Policy that establishes the basis and process for the funds identified and approved in the Council budget 2023/24.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No alternative options considered appropriate, given a policy provides an appropriate governance and auditable process for the fund.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

6.1 As indicated above, consultation has been carried out with the Executive Members, deputies and officers. The Shared Internal Audit Service's (SIAS) Head of Assurance, have also been incorporated, has also seen and made comments on the Policy prior to approval.

7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 13 July 2023.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 As per the information above, the Council at its meeting on 23 February 2023 (item 189 revenue budget), the Council approved an additional investment fund (resolution 8) as follows:

(8) *Approved an additional revenue investment (for 2023/24 only) to create a Community Wealth Fund of £100k to support the local community in delivering projects that have wider community benefits.*

The relevant report and decision page can be accessed [here](#). This Policy therefore sets out the basis for and the approach to be taken to allow groups to apply for such funding.

- 8.2 The fund will be directed towards supporting community groups in North Hertfordshire to capacity build in order to enable wider and long-term community benefits. This is time limited funding; however, the Council will look to see if there is any other external funding sources for subsequent years to continue providing this benefit, if possible.
- 8.3 Community groups provide many important services to the local community. The events of recent years, including the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, have affected community groups' resources and ability to conduct their operations, while also increasing the need for their services amongst the community. There is a need for local community groups to be able to build their capacity and improve the long-term sustainability of their operations and services.
- 8.4 Capacity building is when organisations and communities develop and/or strengthen their skills, knowledge, abilities, processes, or resources in order to do new activities or improve the things they already do. It can help them adapt to changes they are experiencing, get into a better position to apply for other funding opportunities, and sustain their operations on a long-term basis.
- 8.5 The capacity building activities should ultimately enable the group or organisation to further deliver community value. This value could relate to economic support and opportunities, social opportunities, wellbeing, or environmental protection and improvement.
- 8.6 The Community Investment Fund Policy therefore seeks to improve the lives of individuals and enable responses to local challenges by improving the capacity of local organisations and community groups.
- 8.7 Grants will range from a minimum value of £5000 up to a maximum value of £20,000.
- 8.8 Full details of the Policy and criteria can be found at Appendix A: Community Investment Fund Policy and Criteria. Assessment of the grants will be done in accordance with Section 5 of the Council's [Community Grants Policy](#).

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Approval of this Policy is an Executive Function as per section 9D Local Government Act 2000 (as are approval of subsequent grants). This Policy would ordinarily be presented to Cabinet; however, given the desire to proceed with the allocations, and the next meeting being 19 September (and call in post leading to the first possible Grant Panel considerations to be after 27 September), the decision has been taken by the Leader as per 14.6.16.1 *"The scope of the Leader's responsibilities spans all Portfolios, ensuring co-ordination and a coherent approach to the Council's decision making. The Leader can make any decision which is delegated to any Executive Member."* and the statutory basis of this being section 9E(2) discharge of functions generally, *"(2) The senior executive member—(a) may discharge any of those functions,"*. The senior executive member being the Leader.
- 9.2 It should be noted that a wide internal consultation on the proposed Policy was undertaken with relevant Executive Members and their deputies as indicated, in any event.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The grants will be funded from a budget of £100k that was allocated as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process. The grants are generally expected to be revenue. But given the amounts could be up to £20k there is the potential for them to be capital funding. The Council is allowed to fund capital expenditure from revenue budgets.
- 10.2. This particular decision does not provide a Subsidy to any organisation (as part of the Subsidy Control Act) – as this is the Policy approval. The intention is that this scheme will provide grant funding to small organisations and they will be asked to confirm that they fall under the threshold for Minimal Financial Assistance. If there are any concerns, then advice will be sought before the decision to award the grant is made. Grants will not be awarded where they could contravene the Subsidy Control Act.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Approval of the policy/process will ensure there are appropriate governance arrangements in place for the allocation of funds. It will also help to remove a potential reputational risk of delaying support to community groups, by ensuring we are able to allocate funds earlier than if we went to Cabinet for a decision.
- 11.2 The risk of receiving too many applications is mitigated by setting the minimum grant amount at £5,000. The risk of not receiving enough applications due to the criteria set can be mitigated through working with organisations. Risks around determining the best use of the funding is mitigated by the potential to utilise Shared Prosperity Funding in 24/25. The risk of difficulties in assessing the outputs and outcomes achieved by the support will be mitigated by working with applicants to co-design appropriate measures.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 The Community Investment Fund looks to improve the lives of those within North Hertfordshire by building the capacity of community groups to deliver important services.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report. As stated under the criteria at Appendix A, action to restore natural environments or tackle climate change could be examples of community value.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 Staff resource impact will be amongst the Community Partnerships team who will assess the applications. It is expected that the minimum grant value of £5000 will prevent the team from becoming overwhelmed by applications, as well as helping ensure that applications are focused on meaningful capacity building activities.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 [The Community Grants Policy](#)

17. APPENDICES

17.1 Appendix A – Community Investment Fund Policy and Criteria

NOTIFICATION DATE


18 August 2023

Signature of Executive Member (the Leader)



Decision Taker

Signature of the Service Director Legal and Community



Date ...3.8.23.....

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted *[if applicable]: None*

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: *RESOURCES*

1. DECISION TAKEN

Agreement to suspend collection of £83,702.40 clawback in respect of the disposal of Property at 7, Hill View, Treacle Lane, Rushden, Hertfordshire SG9 0SJ to allow settle the opportunity to comply with the terms of an exemption namely applying the proceeds towards the provision of Social Housing or Community Benefit in the District of North Hertfordshire.

2. DECISION TAKER

Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

14//08/2023

4. REASON FOR DECISION

To allow settle the opportunity to comply with the terms of the exemption by applying the funds to the development of Social Housing.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The decision is in accordance with the protocol entered into between North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) and North Hertfordshire Homes (NHH), now known as settle, in respect of a proposed disposal by settle of an asset transferred under the Stock Transfer. Therefore, no other alternative options are applicable.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

Settle have been consulted regarding the level of the potential clawback payment and the details of the social housing scheme to which the funds will be applied. There is no obligation on the Council to carry out any wider consultation.

7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 NHH changed its name to settle in May 2018.

8.2 Settle have submitted a request to agree an exemption to clawback in respect of Property at 7, Hill View, Treacle Lane, Rushden Hertfordshire SG9 0SJ stating that they intend for the proceeds from the disposal to be used for the provision of Social

Housing or Community Benefit in the District of North Hertfordshire. Settle are relying on exemption **xi** in the deed of covenant dated 31 March 2003 which imposes the obligation to pay clawback.

8.3 The proposed project to which the proceeds will be applied is the John Barker Place regeneration project. Whilst it is still considered appropriate to suspend payment of the clawback for three years to allow settle the opportunity to invest the proceeds into Social Housing, The Council cannot at this stage agree the specific details of the Social Housing provision as until the precise proposals for the later phases of the John Barker Place regeneration project are known the clawback cannot be committed to that project. Once the detail of the Social Housing to be provided by the John Barker place regeneration scheme is known, together with the financial modelling, then the Council will determine whether this clawback should be allocated to that scheme or an alternative scheme.

8.4 Clawback is 25% of the greater of the Disposal Gain or the Development Gain. In this transaction, there is no Development Gain to consider, so the only relevant calculation is the Disposal Gain. The clawback calculation for the property has been agreed between the parties as follows:

Property	Disposal Gain	Clawback @ 25%
Property at 7, Hill View. Treacle Lane, Rushden Hertfordshire SG9 0SJ	£334,809.59	£83,702.40

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Service Director: Resources has delegated authority for ‘Approvals for any overage, claw back or similar arrangement pursuant to the Stock Transfer Agreement’.

9.2 The value paid by settle for the housing at stock transfer was based on its continued use as Social Housing. The deed of covenant provides compensation to the Council for property disposals by settle that are above the equivalent value at stock transfer. As the principle of this is to protect the volume of Social Housing in the District, there is an exemption that allows settle to reinvest this money into Social Housing or Community Benefit (as defined by the agreement) schemes within 3 years. The parties have entered into a protocol which governs how this exemption will operate in practice. The protocol permits the Council to suspend collection of clawback to allow settle the opportunity to comply with the terms of the exemption. As long as the request is reasonable then it should not be refused. So, this does not provide an opportunity for the Council to obtain additional funding.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 A significant amount of clawback has been suspended for use on the John Barker Place scheme. This clawback would take the total to £2,772,934.79. It has also been agreed that £1,760,000 of previously suspended clawback will be used on phases 1 and 2 of the John Barker Place scheme. Within its capital programme, the Council has also allocated £1.096 million towards this scheme. The overall value of the Social Housing within the scheme will need to be reviewed when a final proposal is in place. This will determine whether it is appropriate to confirm the use of the suspended clawback and also the use of the Council’s own funding.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No security is being sought to ensure payment of the clawback in the event that the social housing scheme is not delivered. Therefore, there is a risk that settle will not

have the funds to pay the clawback if they are unable to deliver the scheme. However this is considered unlikely

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 *In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

12.2 *There are no equalities implications arising from this decision.*

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this decision.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no HR implications arising from this decision.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 *None.*

17. APPENDICES


17.1 None.

NOTIFICATION DATE

18/8/2023

Signature of Executive Member ConsultedN/a.....

Date

Signature of Decision Taker 

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

PAYMENT OF DISCRETIONARY COMPENSATION TO EMPLOYEES

POLICY ON EXERCISE OF EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted - None

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: RESOURCES

1. DECISION TAKEN

To amend the Council's Local Government Pension Scheme Payment of Discretionary Compensation to Employees Policy ("Discretions Policy" Appendix 1) so that a salary sacrifice shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme can be introduced as a staff benefit.

2. DECISION TAKERS

Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Service Director: Resources

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

14 August 2023

4. REASON FOR DECISION

The Council Pensions Discretions Policy covers shared cost additional voluntary contributions (SCAVCs). Under the Policy the Council had chosen not to exercise its discretion to allow SCAVCs until this decision. Such a scheme has been identified as a potentially valuable additional staff benefit which will aid recruitment and retention whilst its salary sacrifice nature *will also* bring a cost saving to NHDC in employer NI contributions. The Discretions Policy must be amended to allow this discretion to be applied.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative options were considered as amendment of the Pensions Discretions Policy is the only means of introducing the Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme staff benefit.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

The Leader of Council was consulted.

7. FORWARD PLAN

This decision is a non-executive decision, not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 During 2022 a review was undertaken of the Council's staff benefits offering to ensure it was positioned to effectively aid recruitment and retention and provide value for money. The review included a staff benefits survey to gather feedback on how existing benefits are regarded by staff and to gain their views on potential new benefits. One such proposal was for a salary sacrifice shared cost additional pensions contributions scheme which would encourage employees to save more for their retirement in a tax efficient way. The survey showed that almost 80% of those who responded would value the introduction of a shared cost additional voluntary contributions scheme.
- 8.2 The Local Government Pension Scheme includes provisions governing how employees can make contributions to their pensions benefits through paying in extra funds. These Additional Voluntary Contributions provide an opportunity for employees to supplement their pension and build up an additional retirement fund which can be taken as a tax-free lump sum, or to help them retire early. Shared cost additional voluntary contributions mean that these additional contributions are through a salary sacrifice arrangement (i.e. deducted from gross pay) leading to savings on Income Tax and National Insurance contributions for employees and in employer National Insurance contributions for the Council.
- 8.3 North Hertfordshire District Council as an employer is under a legal duty to prepare and publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers under the Regulations (see legal implications) which apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme. These discretionary powers cover shared cost additional voluntary contribution schemes.
- 8.4 The document at Appendix 1 - the Local Government Pension Scheme Payment of Discretionary Compensation to Employees - Policy on Exercise of Employer Discretions is intended to comply with these duties and sets out the discretionary powers concerned, identifies the relevant Regulation that gives the Council the discretion and describes how the discretion will be exercised.
- 8.5 Previously the discretion to allow a shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme had not been exercised. This needed to be amended if such a scheme was to be introduced as a new benefit for NHDC staff.
- 8.6 The current labour market is a difficult one for local government as limited scope to increase pay makes it hard to remain competitive in attracting and retaining high quality staff. The Local Government Pension Scheme is a significantly attractive element of the Council's remuneration package and is highly valued by employees. Enhancing this in a tax efficient way, which also provides savings for the Council makes a shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme a positive addition to our benefits offering.
- 8.7 There is a single supplier, AVC-Wise, which offers a service to set up and administer the shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme offered under the Local Government Pension Scheme. Procurement of this service will be via a Framework Agreement.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Under Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [2356] ('the Regulations) employers have certain obligations regarding the publication of a written policy statement outlining whether to exercise several discretions available to them within the Local Government Pensions Scheme. This Discretions Policy includes discretions relating to pension scheme members making SCAVCs. The Council included a statement on SCAVCs in its Discretions Policy but had (prior to

this decision) chosen not to exercise it. The decision to amend the Discretions Policy was taken by the relevant officers in the context of the legislation below.

- 9.2 The Regulations are made under sections 7 and 12 of Schedule 3 to the Superannuation Act 1972. Under the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 [2853], responsibility for actions taken under these particular sections of the Superannuation Act 1972, are non-Executive (i.e. Council, Committee or Officer) as per Schedule 1, H “functions relating to pensions etc” and Regulations under section 7, 12 or 24 of the Superannuation Act 1972.
- 9.3 The Managing Director as Head of Paid Service has the overall managerial and operational responsibility for staff (under section 12.1.2 of the Constitution). Additionally, as per section 14.5.1 “*Functions set out under Schedule 1, of the Regulations 2000*” “*Power to appoint staff, and to determine the terms and conditions on which they hold office in accordance with approved Council policies*”, is a matter for the Managing Director, Service Directors or Council. Therefore, NHDC has delegated any functions relating to Schedule 1 H to the Leadership (to be exercised by them), or to Full Council – where the decision is significant/ a significant change. The Council already had a statement indicating that SCAVCs were part of the Discretions Policy adopted by this authority, it had just not previously exercised them. This amendment to the Discretions Policy therefore was/ is reasonably minor and can be exercised, as previously, by Officers – and has been made by the Managing Director as Head of Paid Service and the relevant Director Resources (with responsibility for both Finance and Human Resources).

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The costs of this benefit will depend on employee take-up and the length of the overall contract with the supplier. The fee charged by the supplier is 4.5% of the amount of salary sacrificed each month. Costs will be offset by savings made in employer’s NI payments and are predicted to be £11,109 per annum.
- 10.2 The costs given below are calculated using the following formula:
Average monthly Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contribution £250 = £3,000 per year x 26 employees (predicted take up after 3 years) x 4.5% AVC-Wise fee = £3,510 per year x length of contract in years
- 36 months - £10,530
 - 48 months - £14,040
 - 60 months - £17,550

Net savings per year (Employer NI Payments less 4.5% AVC-Wise fee) - £7,599

- 10.3 There are no revenue implications arising from this decision.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Scheme could be viewed as encouraging employees to commit funds to savings that are needed to meet current commitments and expenses in the existing difficult economic situation. This risk is significantly reduced by the fact that contributions cannot be made to the Scheme which would mean earnings drop below National Living Wage.

In addition, contributions can be changed on a month by month basis allowing flexibility in the amount added to the fund each month.

- 11.2 In formulating and reviewing its Policy an employer is required by the Pensions Regulations to have regard to the extent to which the exercise of their discretionary powers could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service. The exercise

of the discretion in respect of a shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme is not anticipated to result in this.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 This benefit will be available to all employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 12.3 Employees who meet the following statutory criteria will be auto enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme:
- Are age 22 to the State Pension Age.
 - Are working in the UK.
 - Are earning over £10,000 per annum.

Employees, who do not meet the above statutory Auto Enrolment criteria but have a NHDC contract of 3 months or more and are under the age of 75, will be contractually enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme. Employees who have a contract for less than 3 months and who do not meet the above statutory criteria, have the option to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Employees who do not wish to be part of the Local Government Pension Scheme can opt out. Every three years an auto re-enrolment exercise will re-join those employees back into the Scheme. Following this they can choose to remain in the Scheme or opt out once more.

- 12.4 All employees under the age of 75 can join the Local Government Pension Scheme and therefore take advantage of the shared cost additional voluntary contributions scheme. Employees over the age of 75 cannot be members of the Local Government Pension Scheme and therefore cannot access the shared cost additional voluntary contributions scheme. The Council are bound by the rules of the Local Government Pension Scheme so cannot make the shared cost additional voluntary contributions scheme available to those employees over age 75. As at April 2023 there was one Council employee over the age of 75.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

As the recommendations in the report relate to a contract below £100,000 the application of the “go local” policy should be considered. There is however only one supplier for the shared cost additional voluntary contributions scheme, AVC-Wise, and they are not based in the local area.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The introduction of a salary sacrifice shared cost additional pension contributions scheme would enhance the Council’s current benefits package and aid recruitment and retention whilst making savings in the Council’s employers’ national insurance contributions.
- 15.2 A Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions scheme offers the opportunity to improve the financial wellbeing of Local Government Pension Scheme members by

providing an opportunity for employees to supplement their pension and build up an additional retirement fund in a tax efficient manner.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

17. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Local Government Pension Scheme Payment of Discretionary Compensation to Employees - Policy on Exercise of Employer Discretions

NOTIFICATION DATE

18 August 2023



Signature of Executive Member Consulted

Date14/8/2023.....



Signature of Decision Taker
Managing Director



Signature of Decision Taker
Service Director: Resources

Please Note: THIS IS A NON-EXECUTIVE DECISION. Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: *Customers*

1. DECISION TAKEN

1.1 To purchase a low-code digital platform, called Liberty Create enabling greater digital evolution at North Herts Council.

2. DECISION TAKER

2.1 Jo Dufficy

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

3.1 17 August 2023

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 Following an extensive period of informal pre-market engagement with a number of suppliers, the decision to purchase a low-code digital platform has been made. This supports the Council's digital aims and enables the Council to accelerate its digital evolution.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 We engaged with a total of 6 suppliers over a period of 7 months. This helped to inform the type of technology we were looking for and what the art of the possible was. After meeting with all the suppliers and having demonstrations of the technology, we completed a desktop review to evaluate whether they could meet our requirements, covering essential, desirable, and technical criteria. This then informed our decision as the Netcall liberty create platform was able to satisfy all criteria.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Executive Member for Finance and IT, Cllr Ian Albert and Deputy Executive Member Cllr Matt Barnes have been consulted and support this approach.

6.2 The Senior Management Group were consulted for their views on our digital needs, which helped to inform the business case to move to a low code digital platform which was subsequently approved by the Leadership Team on 26 June.

6.3 The project Oversight Group gave approval to proceed following a final demonstration and discussion with another Council already using the platform.

7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The initial project was simply looking at options to procure a CRM given the current contract expires on 02 March 2024. Once initial exploratory work had begun, it was clear that there was an opportunity to progress our corporate transformation aims by combining the CRM replacement with a low code digital platform that could enable much faster digital transformation. Within a number of platforms, the staple aspect is the ability to build your own applications to your own requirements. Our research demonstrated that the direction of travel for Councils across the country is moving to low code digital platforms.
- 8.2 The project team then met with a total of 6 suppliers to get a good understanding of what was available on the market, and narrow down requirements.
- 8.3 During this phase of the project, the business case was shaped based on findings from the research, as well as gaining an in-depth understanding of the problems the Council is facing and thinking about how these problems could be resolved through the use of a low-code digital platform.
- 8.4 The Senior Management Group were consulted on 20 June. This meeting was an opportunity for us to showcase some of the technology already available through our Microsoft 365 licences, as well as to understand what managers think digital transformation means for North Herts. We got some excellent output from this session and showed us that managers are thinking about the art of the possible. Some of the responses included:
- Better integration
 - Reducing duplication of work
 - One system to do more.
 - Sharing data between services
- This enforced our approach and formed a key part of the business case.
- 8.5 We are also aware that the public sector is facing challenges with recruitment in a number of areas, including IT. The low-code platform helps to address this issue as low-code development can be achieved without experience of traditional IT development.
- 8.6 Customer expectations are also increasing as technology advances. The platform will enable the Digital Team to build online processes in a user-centric and customer focussed way which will be designed to minimise processing for staff. This can be done in a much faster way due to the low-code environment. We will ensure that customers who do not have digital access are still able to contact the Council through their preferred method, we will not leave anyone behind, linking directly to our People First priority.
- 8.7 One of the key considerations is that the platform will enable the Digital Team to start rationalising the number of applications across the Council's estate. This will enable a more joined up approach on a common digital platform, as well as take control of the technology so that we can adapt as we need to without a reliance on external providers. Our aim is to enable a reduction in current and future costs by decommissioning as many legacy applications as possible, therefore removing licence and maintenance fees for the associated applications. We also have a need to replace a number of internally built applications which are at risk of becoming unsupported in the near future.

- 8.8 The platform will enable us to address the challenges the Council is facing; therefore, we can begin to achieve our project objectives and business needs, which include:
- Efficient processes by removing non value manual elements and duplication, enhancing employee experience.
 - Gain customer insight to provide a consistent and enhanced service in line with our People First objective, in turn providing us with better data
 - Faster development and accelerated innovation, with an agile, iterative approach
 - More agility and faster response to feedback and changes
 - Collaboration with other Councils and working together to achieve end-to-end service design for common customer interactions

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Section 14.6.4 (a) (ii) of the Constitution provides that Service Directors are delegated the authority to enter into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services within approved budgets.
- 9.2. TOR 14.6.6 (b) (ii) (a) of the Constitution provides that the Service Director: Customers shall exercise the functions powers and duties relating to: Customer Services, including A – the Customer Service Centre.
- 9.3. Section 14.6.6 (a) (i) of the Constitution also specifically gives the Service Director – Customers, the authority to manage, direct and control all resources allocated to the Directorate in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
- 9.4. The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014* (No. 2095) require officers undertaking non-executive decisions to record (amongst other things) an award of a contract that materially affects the Council's position in a written delegated decision. At North Herts, this is any award of a contract or financial decision that is or is likely to be above £50,000.
- 9.5. The Contract Procurement Rules at 14.9 require the publication of a Decision Notice for any spend with a value of above £50,000.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Netcall contract in year one requires a revenue payment of £101,495, and then years two and three will be £117,782. These payments will be funded through existing IT software budgets.
- 10.2. In year one, there will be initial implementation and training costs of £42,497 covering consultancy days, professional services, and training on the new platform. Again, this will be funded through existing IT budgets.
- 10.3. There are no further financial implications arising from the report.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There would be more of a risk to the Council if we were *not* to invest in a digital platform. The Council has reached the point of limited development opportunities with the current CRM provider and internal and external customer expectations have increased with the rise of technological advances. The Council needs to keep up with this to ensure these expectations are met.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 An equalities impact assessment was not carried out following advice from the Policy team.
- 12.3 There are no further equalities implications to this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Go Local does not apply to this decision given that the contract is over £100,000 in value.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 This project will affect most staff across the Council; therefore, a robust communications plan is being formulated with involvement from Human Resources. We aim to understand who may require additional digital training/assistance as we move into each service area and include this within the project. We intend to create digital champions across the Council to provide more localised support where needed.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 None.

17. APPENDICES

- 17.1 None

NOTIFICATION DATE

Date sent to all Members, put on website and appears in MIS – Committee, Member & Scrutiny Services can confirm this with you,

Signature of Executive Member Consulted

Date 17 August 2023

Signature of Decision Taker



LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
 DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023

EAST TEAM

Application No.	Applicant/Agent Address	Location Address, Applicant Name & Proposal
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Ashwell Parish Council

23/01896/TCA	Parish Clerk Parish Clerk 6a Back Street, Ashwell, Baldock, SG7 5PE, United Kingdom	Street Record Ashwell Footpath 012 Ashwell Hertfordshire Parish Clerk Parish Clerk Acer pseudoplatanus, x3 Fraxinus excelsior, Sambucus nigra - Cut back overhang to footpath
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23/01918/TCA	Christopher Ward 95 Selborne Road, Southgate, London, N14 7DE	35 Silver Street Ashwell Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5QH Lesley Jackson T1 Conifer - Height reduction 2.5m, side reduction 1m, crown lift 3m
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Baldock

23/01821/FPH	Houghton Architecture Ltd Mr Mark Houghton Suite 83, Enterprise House, 86 Bancroft, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1NQ	49 The Leas Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6HZ Mr L Allwright Single storey rear and side extension following demolition of existng conservatory and outbuilding
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Kelshall Parish Meeting

23/01911/AG	Sworders Ross Mayger The Gatehouse, Hadham Hall, Little Hadham, Ware, SG11 2EB, United Kingdom	Barn East Of Lower Heath Farm Therfield Road Odsey Hertfordshire Philip Franklin Erection of agricultural grain store
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Letchworth Garden City

23/01512/LBC	Mrs Rosanna Strong 15 Lytton Avenue, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 3HT	15 Lytton Avenue Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3HT Mrs Rosanna Strong Internal alterations including reconfiguration of dining room and kitchen and internal window opened-up and cill lowered.
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**LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023**

23/01564/FPH	Rosebury Thomas Postlethwaite 8 Woodland Way, Baldock, Herts, SG7 6LR	2 Cross Street Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4UD	Mrs Nikki Harrison	Single storey rear extension and alterations to fenestration
23/01828/FPH	Mr Ian Green Mr Ian Green Farnham House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ	34 Campers Avenue Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3SR	Miss Wilderspin	Single storey rear extension and installation of front ramp
23/01875/TCA	Mrs Georgina Gentry ROBINSON TREE SERVICES LTD Beech Farm, Coopers Green Lane, St. Albans, AL4 9HP, United Kingdom	18 Edwin Nott House Birds Hill Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PH	Mr David Bonner	E10 Silver Birch - Crown reduce all round by 2-3m. E11 Almond - Cut back and prune by 1-2m.
23/01876/TCA	Mrs Georgina Gentry ROBINSON TREE SERVICES LTD Beech Farm, Coopers Green Lane, St. Albans, AL4 9HP, United Kingdom	37 Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PW	Mr David Bonner	RR1 Twin-stemmed Conifer - Fell to ground level
23/01877/TCA	Paul McKenna Broadway, One Garden City, SG6 3BF, United Kingdom	Allotment Gardens At Lytton Avenue Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3HT	Paul McKenna	T1 Sycamore - Crown reduction up to 3m back to previous pruning points.
23/01880/TCA	Mrs Georgina Gentry ROBINSON TREE SERVICES LTD Beech Farm, Coopers Green Lane, St. Albans, AL4 9HP, United Kingdom	99 Campers Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3QX	Mr David Bonner	CR23 Plum - Fell to ground level

**LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023**

23/01889/TCA Mr Mark Gibson 4Seasons 45 Shott Lane
Specialist Tree Surgeons Ltd Letchworth Garden City
19 Tansy Avenue, Stotfold, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
SG5 4GJ SG6 1SD

MRS ELLIOTT

T1 Large Eucalyptus - Canopy reduction of 30% to suitable growth points.

23/01914/TCA Mr Mark Gibson 4Seasons 13 Shott Lane
Specialist Tree Surgeons Letchworth Garden City
17 Marigold Way, Stotfold, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
Hertfordshire, SG5 4HQ, United SG6 1SD
Kingdom

Miss Virginia Brown

T2 Cherry - Reduce by approx 25% to suitable growth points

23/01936/TCA Mr Mark Gibson 4Seasons 11 Shott Lane
Specialist Tree Surgeons Letchworth Garden City
17 Marigold Way, Stotfold, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
Hertfordshire, SG5 4HQ, United SG6 1SD
Kingdom

Miss Virginia Brown

T1 Ash - Prune back the lateral growth to the boundary to suitable lateral growth points.

Reed Parish Council

23/01905/TCA Mr James Cantle Shire tree limited Chestnut Cottage
1A Trigg Way, Melbourn, Royston, High Street
SG8 6HX Reed
Royston
Hertfordshire
SG8 8AH

Paul Loveridge

T1 Ash - Fell to ground level. T2 Hawthorn - Coppice at 1.5m from ground level. T3 Horse Chestnut - Crown reduce by 2m.
T4 Buddleia - Coppice at 1.5m from ground level

Royston Town Council

23/01730/LDCP Stewart Apau Architecture Mrs 37 Cherry Drive
Calista Stewart Royston
Unit 11 Ducketts Wharf, South Hertfordshire
Street, Bishop's Stortford, SG8 7DL
Hertfordshire, CM23 3AR, United
Kingdom Mrs Polly Smith

Single storey rear extension and insertion of side elevation door to existing garage to facilitate conversion into habitable accommodation.

Sandon Parish Council

**LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023**

23/01760/LBC Cannon Consulting Mrs Fiona Cannon
Hyde Hall Farm, Sandon,
Buntingford, SG9 0RU, United Kingdom

Hyde Hall Farm
Sandon Lane
Sandon
Buntingford
Hertfordshire
SG9 0RU

Mr Ben Cannon

Internal and external alterations including re-roofing in clay tiles, opening up and glazing existing ventilation slits and windows, installation of glazed doors and erection of access ramp and steps to facilitate partial change of use of grade II listed brick barn to create office space (B1a use) (as a variation to listed building consent ref: 22/03100/LBC granted on 2 March 2023).

Weston Parish Council

23/01805/FPH Hertfordshire Architects Ltd Mrs Pamela Stokes
13 Cubitts Close, Welwyn, AL6 0DZ

Woodvine Cottage
Damask Green Road
Weston
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 7DE

Mr & Mrs Steve & Harriet Brame

First floor rear extension, installation of windows to first floor side and rear elevation, installation of rooflight to existing rear roofslope and installation of Air Source Heat Pump to rear (as a variation of planning permission 21/03123/FPH granted on 24.02.2022).

23/01806/LBC Hertfordshire Architects Ltd Mrs Pamela Stokes
13 Cubitts Close, Welwyn, AL6 0DZ

Woodvine Cottage
Damask Green Road
Weston
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 7DE

Mr & Mrs Steve & Harriet Brame

First floor rear extension, installation of windows to first floor side and rear elevation, installation of rooflight to existing rear roofslope and installation of Air Source Heat Pump to rear. Internal alterations.

WEST TEAM

Application No.	Applicant/Agent Address	Location Address, Applicant Name & Proposal
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Graveley Parish Council

23/01809/LBC Mr Peter Kelly
The White House, 30 High Street,
Graveley, Hitchin, Hertfordshire,
SG4 7LA

The White House
30 High Street
Graveley
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 7LA

Mr Peter Kelly

Installation of boiler flue on front elevation

LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023

23/01915/TCA Mr Jeremy Atkinson
Oak House, Oak Lane, Graveley,
Hitchin, SG4 7LN, United Kingdom

Oak House
Oak Lane
Graveley
Hertfordshire
SG4 7LN

Mr Jeremy Atkinson

Ash - Reduce height to 3m.

Hexton Parish Council

23/01799/FPH CROE Architects Mr Joe Reader
Suite 10, 18 Walsworth Road,
Hitchin, SG4 9SP, United Kingdom

Woodside Cottage
Mortgrove Farm
Hexton Road
Lilley
Luton
Hertfordshire
LU2 8ND

Mrs Elizabeth Serocold

Two storey rear extension, and addition of front and rear dormer windows following raising of roof of existing two storey side extension and removal of chimneys. Side canopy and alterations to fenestration.

Hitchin

23/01411/LDCE Mr Rashed Khan
20 Daltry Road, Stevenage,
Hertfordshire, SG1 4AW

24 St Michaels Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 0PZ

Mr Rashed Khan

Alterations to garage to facilitate conversion to home base beauty salon.

23/01642/FPH JJ Design Studio Ltd Mrs Jana
Ralbovska
18C Elgin road, Wallington, sm68re,
United Kingdom

45 Grove Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 1SG

Mr. Alexander Elster

Single storey rear extension. Second floor rear extension and insertion of box dormer with Juliet balcony to existing rear roof slope and two front rooflights to facilitate loft conversion into habitable accommodation, alterations to fenestration and raise party wall on both sides to match existing ridge height following removal of rear chimney.

23/01804/FPH Murtagh Studio James Murtagh
9 Chicory Orchard, Upper
Caldecote, Biggleswade, SG18
9GA, United Kingdom

81 Willian Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 0LS

Eilidh Sinclair

Single storey rear and side extension. Alterations to existing garage including raised roof height and insertion of front window following removal of garage door to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation.

**LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023**

23/01817/FPH	JBE Mr James Burton 65 Shefford Road, Clifton, SG1 75RQ, United Kingdom	5 Hine Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2SH	Mr Peter Bircumshaw Installation of front and rear brick cavity walls
23/01819/FPH	Home Extension Team Miss Georgia Hayes 4 Brand Street, Hitchin, SG5 1HX, United Kingdom	79 West Hill Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2HX	Penny Two storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory. Pitched roof above existing two storey side extension and raise flat roof height above existing utility room. Insertion of light tunnels to existing rear and side roofslopes. Alterations to fenestration.
23/01827/FPH	Themack Architects Mr Benson Themuka 2 The Cloches, Beeston, SG19 1PY, United Kingdom	81 Common Rise Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0HP	Mr Davinder Shergill Insertion of front and side window following removal of garage door to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation. External rendering
23/01887/TCA	Mr Dominic Walker The Blue Tree Company 50 Bunyan Road, Hitchin, SG5 1NN	46 Wymondley Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9PT	Ms Claire Horobin T1 Beech - Reduce lower limb growing over the property by 3.5m and reduce the height by 2m and shape. Lift lower branches 3m. T3 Purple Plum - Reduce by 1m
23/01893/TCA	Mr Dominic Walker The Blue Tree Company 50 Bunyan Road, Hitchin, SG5 1NN	Land In Front Of 46 Wymondley Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9PT	Ms Claire Horobin T2 Horse Chestnut - Reduce limb by 4-5m to viable growth. Reduce branch at the top of the crown to the west by 2m to match the remainder.
23/01902/TCA	Miss Hannah Marsh 3 Kent Place , Oughton Head Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2LE	3 Kent Place Oughton Head Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2LE	Miss Hannah Marsh 2x Sycamore - Fell and grind the stumps down.

LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 18/08/2023
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 07/09/2023

23/01934/TCA	Mr Luke Gifkins Evergreen Tree Services Ltd 61 Molewood Road, Hertford, Hertford, Hertford, SG14 3AQ, United Kingdom	Coopers Arms 81 Tilehouse Street Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2DY
		Mr Dave King
		T1 Sycamore- Fell to ground level.

Offley Parish Council

23/01796/FPH	Wastell & Porter Architects Ltd Mr Mark Scott Bancroft House, 34 Bancroft, Hitchin, SG5 1LA	4 Westbury Farm Close Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3FL
		Mr Richard Warner-Smith
		Single storey rear extension

23/01797/LBC	Wastell & Porter Architects Ltd Mr Mark Scott Bancroft House, 34 Bancroft, Hitchin, SG5 1LA	4 Westbury Farm Close Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3FL
		Mr Richard Warner-Smith
		Single storey rear extension and internal alterations

Pirton Parish Council

23/01868/TCA	Mr Roy Blyth 1 Burge End Lane, Pirton, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 3QN, United Kingdom	1 Burge End Lane Pirton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3QN
		Mr Roy Blyth
		T1 Apple - Crown reduction by approx 25-30% to previous pruning points. T2 Holly - Trim and reshape by approx 10-15%. T3 Cherry - Crown reduction and reshape by approx 20%. T4 Rowan - Crown reduction and reshape by approx 20-25%.

St Pauls Walden Parish Council

23/01882/LDCP	Northwood Project Management Mr Jonathan Digweed Upton House, 64 High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire, MK44 3JJ	14 Chime Dell Whitwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8BS
		Mr and Mrs David and Michelle Withnell
		Alterations to existing rear conservatory

(Including Withdrawn decisions)

EAST TEAM

Application No: 23/01120/DOC	Location: Broadmere Pond Royston Road Barley Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8BN Applicant Name: Mr Matthew Doggett Description: Details reserved by condition 7 (Landscape Management Plan) of planning permission reference 22/02213/FP granted on 23.03.2023	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01139/FP	Location: 52 Green Street Royston Hertfordshire SG8 7BA Applicant Name: Mr and Mrs P Ambler Description: Erection of one 2-bed bungalow with associated parking, landscaping and remodelling of existing landscape. Provision of vehicular access onto the highway.	Decision: Refused Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01317/S73	Location: Land Adjacent To 15 Payne End Sandon Hertfordshire SG9 0QU Applicant Name: Mr Mark King Davenport Constrction Project Managr Description: Removal of Condition Number 4 (hedge removal) of planning permission 20/00227/FP granted on 20/03/2020 for erection of two 3-bed semi-detached dwellings including creation of vehicular crossovers and associated parking. (Amended plan received 03/08/23).	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01485/S73	Location: 15 Station Way Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3SF Applicant Name: Mr Liam Palmer Description: Variation of Condition 2 (In order for the approved plans to reflect what has been approved by the Letchworth Heritage Foundation) of planning permission 22/02286/FPH granted on 13.10.2022 for two storey rear extension and insertion of rooflights to existing side elevation roof slopes following demolition of existing rear conservatory.	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01531/FPH	Location: 58 Gaunts Way Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4PJ Applicant Name: Mr Martin Smith Description: Single storey front and side extensions (as a resubmission of planning application 23/00487/FPH granted on 13.04.2023).	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01664/TCA	Location: 10 Swan Street Ashwell Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5NX Applicant Name: Mr Ewan Habben Hbn Trees Description: T1 Black Locust - Reduce limb growing over road by 2.5m. Prune to suitable growth point. Lift crown to 3.5m. Selectively prune the rest of the canopy by 1m to match in limb reduction. Remove deadwood & sever ivy.	Decision: No Objection Decision Date: 14/08/2023

WEST TEAM

Application No: 22/01539/FP	Location: The Fulling Mill Fulling Mill Lane Codicote Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9NP Applicant Name: Mr Roger Gray c/o Raine and Co Description: Change of use from commercial offices to residential to provide 2 x 2-bed and 2 x 1-bed flats including insertion of rear rooflights.	Decision: Refused Decision Date: 10/08/2023
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WEST TEAM

Application No: 22/01540/LBC	Location: The Fulling Mill Fulling Mill Lane Codicote Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9NP Applicant Name: Mr Roger Gray c/o Raine and Co Description: Insertion of five rear rooflights and internal alterations to facilitate change of use from commercial offices to residential to provide 2 x 2-bed and 2 x 1-bed flats	Decision: Refused Decision Date: 10/08/2023
Application No: 22/02718/DOC	Location: Westons Motors Ltd Cambridge Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0JJ Applicant Name: Mr Graham Pepperdine Taylor Wimpey Description: Details reserved by Condition 14 -Fire hydrant (relating to planning permission 21/01834/FP 21.07.2022)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 22/03073/DOC	Location: Westons Motors Ltd Cambridge Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0JJ Applicant Name: Hanna Description: Details reserved by Condition 23- Full details of mobility scooter storage (relating planning permission 21/01834/FP granted 21.07.2022)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/00111/DOC	Location: Westons Motors Ltd Cambridge Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0JJ Applicant Name: Mr Andrey Mubiana Taylor Wimpey Description: Details reserved by Condition 3- Details and/or samples of materials (relating to planning permission 21/01834/FP granted 21.07.2022)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 10/08/2023
Application No: 23/00353/DOC	Location: Westons Motors Ltd Cambridge Road Hitchin Hertfordshire Applicant Name: Susannah Hanna Taylor Wimpey Description: Details reserved by Condition 7-Landscaping (relating to planning permission 21/01834/FP granted 21.07.2022)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/00590/FP	Location: 93 Ninesprings Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9NU Applicant Name: Pavandeep Haer Description: Change of use of existing residential dwelling to registered Children's Home (C2)	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/00738/DOC	Location: Land At Turnpike Lane And Adjacent To 4 Manor Close Turnpike Lane Ickleford Hertfordshire Applicant Name: Mr Saunders Foxberry Developments Ltd Description: Details reserved by Condition 14- Ecology report (relating to planning permission 22/03105/S73 granted 30.01.2023)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 14/08/2023
Application No: 23/00790/LDCLB	Location: 10 Ladygrove Mews Hitchwood Lane Preston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7SA Applicant Name: Mrs Lucy Alexander Description: Crack in stairwell wall to be repaired.	Decision: Granted Permission Decision Date: 10/08/2023
Application No: 23/00801/FPH	Location: 111 Common Rise Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0HP Applicant Name: Mr Kirk Maxwell Description: Part two storey and part single storey rear extension, front porch, addition of render on all external walls following demolition of existing porch, and new parking at front of site (amended by plan received 05/08/23)	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01050/FPH	Location: 55 Benslow Rise Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9QY Applicant Name: Welch Description: Rear roof extension to facilitate additional habitable accommodation at first floor level	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 11/08/2023

WEST TEAM

Application No: 23/01078/DOC	Location: Barn To The West Of Lordship Farmhouse Pirton Road Holwell Hertfordshire Applicant Name: Mrs Flint Description: Details reserved by Condition 21-Temporary barn owl boxes (relating to planning permission 22/01842/FP granted 10.01.2023)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01079/DOC	Location: Barn To The West Of Lordship Farmhouse Pirton Road Holwell Hertfordshire Applicant Name: Mrs Flint Description: Details reserved by Condition 22- Permanent barn owl boxes (relating to planning permission 22/01842/FP granted 10.01.2023)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01095/FPH	Location: 1 Renny Close Strathmore Avenue Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1ST Applicant Name: Mr Bob Wilson Description: Insertion of window to first floor northeast side elevation	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01292/FPH	Location: Beechcroft Gipsy Lane Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6DJ Applicant Name: Norman Kock Description: Enclosure of existing front porch	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01316/DOC	Location: Rush Green Motors London Road Langley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7PQ Applicant Name: Mr Gary Bird RNA Energy Ltd Description: Details reserved by condition 6 (Surface water disposal scheme) of planning permission reference no. 21/01860/FP granted 06.10.2021)	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 10/08/2023
Application No: 23/01340/FP	Location: 137 Stevenage Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9DT Applicant Name: Mr Rama Coceal Description: Erection of one detached 3-bed dwelling including parking, landscaping and creation of vehicular access off Folly Close	Decision: Refused Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01406/DOC	Location: Land At Turnpike Lane And Adjacent To 4 Manor Close Turnpike Lane Ickleford Hertfordshire Applicant Name: Mr Saunders Foxberry Developments Ltd Description: Details reserved by condition 3 (Material Samples) of planning permission reference no. 22/03105/S73 granted 30.01.2023	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01423/FPH	Location: 21A Deards End Lane Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6NL Applicant Name: Mr Alexander Wright Boyes Turner LLP Description: Single storey front and rear extensions. Detached hydro pool outbuilding. Alterations to external materials and openings	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01439/FPH	Location: 25 High Street Whitwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8AJ Applicant Name: Mr & Mrs London Description: External alterations to dwelling and car port/studio including removal of chimney stack, replacement dormer window and entrance door canopy, replacement cladding and rendering	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01442/AD	Location: 120 Bancroft Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1LS Applicant Name: Mr Brendan Kelly Oliver Bonas Ltd Description: Installation of two internally illuminated fascia signs and one Internally illuminated projecting sign	Decision: Conditional Consent Decision Date: 16/08/2023

WEST TEAM

Application No: 23/01443/FPH	Location: 14 Bearton Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1UB Applicant Name: Ms Alice Bailey Description: Single storey rear extension	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 11/08/2023
Application No: 23/01453/FPH	Location: 18 Wilbury Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0AP Applicant Name: Ms Flora Onwukwe Description: Single storey front extension following demolition of existing porch. Erection of detached rear outbuilding	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01482/FPH	Location: 10 Turfmead Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9FB Applicant Name: Mr & Mrs Newton Description: Single storey side extension and insertion of no.2 rooflights to existing rear roofslope of detached garage.	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 15/08/2023
Application No: 23/01501/LBC	Location: 24 East Street Lilley Luton Hertfordshire LU2 8LW Applicant Name: Mr Maris Silis Description: Removal of cement render from front and side elevations and re-render using a "Warmcote" scratch coat followed by a smooth "Limecote" finish and cream colour breathable paint.	Decision: Conditional Consent Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01506/S73	Location: 2 Green Lane Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0BU Applicant Name: Mr Amir Hossein Akbari Description: Variation of Condition 2 - Drawing Numbers (Drawing L1213/11B to be replaced with Drawing L1213/11C and Drawing L1213/12B to be replaced with Drawing L1213/12C) of planning permission 23/00275/FPH granted on 13.03.2023 for Addition of a first floor to the existing bungalow and part two storey and part single storey rear extension and provision of an additional car parking space.	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 11/08/2023
Application No: 23/01518/FP	Location: Flat 1 Newton House 45 Walsworth Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9SU Applicant Name: Mr M Branham MDR Investments Hitchin Ltd Description: Single storey rear extension. Reinstatement of front door to basement flat to provide private entrance and construction of new external steps from pavement to basement level.	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01520/FPH	Location: 28 The Paddock Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9EF Applicant Name: Nick and Anna Pryor Description: Erection of detached garden room following demolition of existing garage and lean to storage	Decision: Conditional Permission Decision Date: 16/08/2023
Application No: 23/01543/DOC	Location: Hollards Farm Codicote Road Codicote Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9UH Applicant Name: Ms Taluana Patricio Assuane Consulting Description: Details reserved by condition 7 (Construction Management Plan) of planning permission reference no 20/02757/FPH granted 19.01.2021	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 14/08/2023
Application No: 23/01710/DOC	Location: 90 High Street Codicote Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8XE Applicant Name: Mr Justin Burgess Description: Details reserved by condition 3 (Windows and Doors details) of listed building consent reference no 23/00765/LBC granted 05.06.2023	Decision: Approval of Details Decision Date: 14/08/2023
Application No: 23/01740/TCA	Location: Land Between Church Of St Mary The Virgin And Motte And Bailey Church Green Great Wymondley Hertfordshire SG4 7ES Applicant Name: Mr Thomas Oakley Oakley Arboriculture Ltd Description: T1 Ash - Pollard at 8m	Decision: No Objection Decision Date: 15/08/2023

PRESS RELEASE

PR 3796

11 August 2023

Christchurch Baldock gets funding boost

Christchurch Baldock has been awarded a total of £1,325* following the Baldock Area Forum recommendations on 17 July.

They have been awarded three separate grants for three different projects:

- £700 for craft resources, catering and hiring of premises for their holiday club for any young families to attend.
- £250 towards hall hire and refreshments for their regular toddler and baby groups, so they can reduce or waive the attendance fee where appropriate.
- £375 to replace equipment and subsidise food for their Body & Soul weekly classes which provide total fitness for older people, including chair exercises for the body, singing for the lungs, exercise games for the brain and a time to chat and have a coffee.

Neil Poole, Treasurer at Christchurch Baldock, said: "We are very grateful for the grant and for the support which it signifies. The regular groups Body & Soul, Tea & Tots and Tea & Tinies, are preparing for a busy start to the new academic year and are very glad to be able to invest in improving our offer to these valued sections of the community."

Cllr Alistair Willoughby, Executive Member for Community & Partnerships, who approved the funding under delegated decision, said: "The excellent free and low-cost services that Christchurch is providing through these projects are so important to the Baldock community. It is great that we can support them to continue their work."

Cllr Tom Tyson, Baldock Area Forum Chair, added: "These are fantastic projects, providing what could be the only opportunity for new parents and carers to meet and a regular chance for older people to improve their physical and mental health."

Local Area Forums have taken over from our Area Committees. They cover five areas of North Herts – Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin, Southern Rural and Royston – and take place four times a year. The new Forums are designed to be less formal and more welcoming to encourage more community participation. They generally start at 7.30pm with community grant applications and then themed discussions will take place from around 8pm. Each Forum makes recommendations for funding, and then the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships makes a decision under delegated powers.

The next Baldock Area Forum will take place online on 11 September at 7.30pm.

*subject to completion of the necessary formalities

ENDS

For more information please contact Anna.Cotton@north-herts.gov.uk / 01462 474210.

PRESS RELEASE

PR 3797

16 August 2023

Grants for Letchworth groups

Two community groups have been awarded a total of £1,884* following the Letchworth Area Forum recommendations on 5 July.

North Herts 50 Plus has been awarded £884 to help advertise for new members and pay for minibus hire for outings. Their membership decreased by 50% after the pandemic so they want to encourage local residents to join, socialise and boost their confidence, to help reduce the risk of loneliness and depression.

A comment from one of their members following an organised visit to St Albans: "I really enjoyed the trip, we had a guided tour around the Abbey, listened to a short organ recital and then headed to the large street market where we browsed the many stalls including world street food where some of us bought our lunch. A really lovely day."

Headway Hertfordshire has been awarded £1,000 towards running peer support group sessions, helping to cover the cost of hall hire, staff and activities. Headway Hertfordshire offers care, support and education/information to those over 18 affected by an acquired brain injury. They support more than 260 residents in North Herts of which approximately 40% are in the Letchworth area.

John Archer, CEO of Headway Hertfordshire, said: "We will make really good use of this grant to run our local groups and make sure all our clients see progress towards their aims and aspirations as they start to recover after their brain injury."

Cllr Alistair Willoughby, Executive Member for Community & Partnerships, who approved the funding under delegated decision, said: "We are very happy to assist these remarkable organisations that are making such a positive impact in the Letchworth community. One group is dedicated to brightening the lives of older people, while the other provides much-

needed support to adults who have suffered brain injuries. It is fantastic to play a part in supporting their important work.”

Cllr Tom Plater, Letchworth Area Forum Chair, added: “Both these groups are providing important services to specific members of the community, this is what our area grants are all about.”

Local Area Forums have taken over from our Area Committees. They cover five areas of North Herts – Letchworth, Southern Rural, Hitchin, Baldock and Royston – and take place four times a year. The new Forums are designed to be less formal and more welcoming to encourage more community participation. They generally start at 7.30pm with community grant applications and then themed discussions will take place from around 8pm. Each Forum makes recommendations for funding, and then the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships makes a decision under delegated powers.

The next Letchworth Area Forum will take place on 20 September at 7.30pm at Howard Garden Social Centre, Norton Way South, Letchworth.

*subject to completion of the necessary formalities

ENDS

For more information please contact Anna.Cotton@north-herts.gov.uk / 01462 474210.

PRESS RELEASE

PR 3798

17 August 2023

Revamped play area at Smithson Rec in Hitchin

Climbing, running, spinning, swinging, sliding – it's all going on at Smithson Recreation Ground in Upper Tilehouse Street, Hitchin, following a makeover.

Working with our partners Groundwork East, a few items of play equipment have been repainted and/or relocated, but a number of new items have been added, including:

- a witch's hat climbing frame
- birds nest / basket swing
- slide
- musical stepping stones
- 18m running track – leading to the field path for a longer race!
- an inclusive wheelchair-friendly roundabout
- and an accessible wavy path you can run, wheel or cycle around.

Councillor Steve Jarvis, Executive Member for Environment and Leisure, said: "The revamped area looks great, and with wildflower planting dotted around it's a great environment to be in. With equipment for a wide range of children of all abilities, we hope the local community enjoy their refreshed play area for years to come."

The original double swing has been repainted, and an elephant rocker relocated.

Catherine Browne, Landscape Architect from Groundwork, said: "Our aim was to create a climate resilient and accessible playground – by removing the tarmac we created more space for nature, a cooler surface for children to play on and an absorbent surface for times of high rainfall. The equipment was chosen to widen the play age range of children (and adults!). There was a beautiful 1980s four-seat swing which we tried to keep, however it had passed beyond its useable lifespan and couldn't be relocated on site, so the birds nest swing was put in its place. Another aim was to diversify the play provisions within the play area,

sensory planting was included to teach children about nature as well as try to cater for more neurodiverse needs.”

Smithson Recreation Ground was given to the council by local suffragette Sarah Smithson (1844-1928) when it formed part of her property, originally donated to the community for the enjoyment of women and girls.

ENDS

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PRESS RELEASE

PR 3799

18 August 2023

Time to get fit in the fresh air in Royston!

New outdoor fitness equipment has been installed at Royston Leisure Centre – join an organised class to work out in the great outdoors with like-minded people or rock up whenever you fancy!

The outdoor gym – which has over 50 exercises and can be used by 30 people at any one time – was officially opened on Thursday (17 August) with a live demo of the equipment with some members of the leisure centre and local councillors.

It's for use by anyone aged 13 or above from the local community much like other outdoor gyms in North Herts (listed below) and there are QR codes on the equipment which people can scan on their mobile phone for instructions including videos.

Royston Leisure Centre is also running 'Outdoor Blast' classes twice a week – every Monday 5.30pm-6pm and Friday 9.30am-10am – which are free to both leisure centre members and non-members for the first six weeks – until 2 October. After this, classes will still be free for members and there will be a £2 charge for non-members. To book please visit the [SLL app](#) or call 01763 255190. More classes are expected to be added to the timetable so keep an eye on the app, Royston Leisure Centre's [Facebook page](#) or [SLL website](#).

The project cost £50,000 and was funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, part of the government's Levelling Up agenda to enhance outcomes. The equipment was installed by Kompan.

Councillor Steve Jarvis, Executive Member for Environment and Leisure, said: "It's great to see the outdoor fitness area finished at Royston Leisure Centre, which we were able to secure external funding for. The easy-to-use and adjustable equipment looks great, and it was fun to have a go. It really is for any ability, you just scan the QR code to see how to use

each item, there's even videos to show you exactly what to do. It makes a change from the usual gym to be able to work out in the fresh air. I hope both members of the centre and local people in Royston make use of the equipment to get in or stay in shape, which will boost your mental health too.”

Paul Francis, General Manager at Royston Leisure Centre, added: “We are delighted that the outdoor fitness area, with easy-to-use equipment is open for members and the local community. The Outdoor Blast classes running twice a week are fun and energetic, helping to improve cardio and muscular endurance with a full body workout.”

Royston Leisure Centre is located on Woodcock Road, Royston, and offers a wide range of activities for all ages and abilities. Facilities include a Technogym fitness suite, 25-metre swimming pool, four-court indoor sports hall and a variety of workout classes. There is a range of memberships available to suit all needs.

Details of the outdoor fitness equipment:

Step up – one of the simplest yet highly versatile training tools as so many exercises can be done with it, from simple step ups to plyometric jumps (e.g. burpees). Incorporating upper and lower body movements will improve balance and agility, and the constant push up onto the step will increase leg strength. Regular sessions will provide both cardiovascular and muscular endurance.

Combi gym – seven workout stations in one! This station features an incline bench, parallel bars, push-up bar, decline press, Swedish ladder, human flagpole and pull up station. This allows training for multiple muscle groups including upper body and to create core stability.

Cross training combi – combining a suspension trainer and magnetic bells. Suspension training is very effective because it simultaneously increases strength, balance, flexibility and core stability, exercising all muscle groups no matter what the fitness level of the user. 49 exercises, the intensity of each can be determined by adjusting the body position to add more or less resistance. Magnetic bells are an innovative magnetic breaking system which allows the user to increase the resistance by increasing the speed of movement, and choose between a 9kg or 12kg weight. An accessible piece of equipment for both the trained and the untrained, the bells move freely up and down and can spin 360°, allowing the user to do exercises which are very similar to using a medicine ball or kettle bell.

Balance station – trains ankle strength and stability. Four different stations give variety and invites moderate social interaction. Two difficulty levels - one that is stable and limited in its range of motion and one that is livelier and more dynamic. More suitable for older adults or those recovering from an injury.

Vertical wall/net – the right-hand side of the wall has three steps to assist the feet and eight handles to help you get over the wall and the left-hand side is a flat wall of almost 2.40m height which is more advanced. The net can be used to scramble up or down. Play or train together to develop muscle strength and bone density.

Other outdoor gyms in North Herts:

- Priory Memorial Gardens, Royston
- Baldock Road Rec, Letchworth
- The Grange Rec, Letchworth
- Jackman's Central, Letchworth
- King George V Rec, Hitchin
- St Johns Rec, Hitchin
- Great Ashby District Park

ENDS

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