

## NORTH HERTS COUNCIL

WEEK ENDING FRIDAY 5 APRIL 2024

# 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](mailto:MIS@north-herts.gov.uk)

# NEWS AND INFORMATION

## AGENDA & REPORTS

### PUBLISHED WEEK COMMENCING 1 APRIL 2024

Full Council – 18 April 2024

### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS WEEK COMMENCING 8 APRIL 2024

Planning Control Committee – 11 April 2024

### UPCOMING CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS FROM FRIDAY 29 MARCH 2024

Date	Event	Location
	None	

### UPCOMING VICE-CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS FROM FRIDAY 29 MARCH 2024

Date	Event	Location
	None	

### UPCOMING OTHER EVENTS FROM FRIDAY 29 MARCH 2024

Date	Event	Location
	None	



**North  
Herts**  
Council

**RIPA QUARTERLY UPDATE  
1st QUARTER 2024  
(LEGAL & COMMUNITY)**

**MEMBERS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

**RIPA Quarterly Update**

Members may recall that it was considered that quarterly reports should be made to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, even though RIPA is not currently being used, as this provided a useful mechanism to ensure that the issue of RIPA remained in the consciousness of Members (and Officers).

Due to the continued non-use of RIPA, it was felt by some members that this method of reporting was not the best use of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's time, and following advice from the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, the Council shall now be reporting on the issue of RIPA via quarterly inclusion in MIS.

There have been no further RIPA authorisations since the last MIS note in December 2023. There are currently no ongoing RIPA authorisations.

There has however been one Communications Data application in this quarter. This related to a housing application fraud.

It is important that the Council continues to operate in accordance with RIPA to ensure that it can effectively manage its reputational risk whilst also exercising its legitimate evidence gathering powers in connection with enforcement activity.

For more information please contact:

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The vision of Services for Young People (SfYP) is to meet the needs of young people who are challenged in education, their community or home life, to ensure a successful transition to adulthood.

The primary purpose of SfYP is “enabling young people to succeed” through the delivery of targeted prevention and early intervention work to address emerging needs, improve life chances and reduce escalation to more expensive and intensive services.



### LGBT+ History Month

In celebration of this year's LGBT+ History Month attendees at our projects have explored key representation of LGBT+ community members in the field of science and medicine. Young people across our Youth Work Projects have created artworks to celebrate queer culture through history, including movements such as the black ballroom scene.

Project attendees also engaged in group activities and discussions covering the topics of sexuality, gender and identity. This has enhanced awareness and understanding of the successes and challenges experienced by LGBT+ people throughout history and the current day.



### Youth Provision and Life Outcomes Research

Research on the “youth sector” and its impact on local areas and young people's life outcomes has recently been published: [Youth provision and life outcomes research - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/publications/youth-provision-and-life-outcomes-research)

The research was commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to strengthen the evidence base around the impact of the youth sector and comprises 3 independent studies carried out by UK Youth, the universities of Warwick and Essex and research specialist SQW.

In [UK Youth's article](#) they write:

- Youth work has a positive impact on young people's health, wellbeing and employability, with the positive effects lasting well into adulthood.
- Young people who received youth work support as teenagers were happier, healthier, wealthier and more active in their communities as adults, compared with those who did not receive youth work.
- Youth workers are providing vital support to help young people navigate the challenges they face.
- Reductions in local youth provision are associated with a rise in certain types of crime and anti-social behaviour, including: increases in the number of children cautioned or sentenced, the proportion of young people who reoffend, bike thefts, weapon possession offences and shoplifting.

### North Herts Detached Project

In response to local intelligence around Anti-Social Behaviour in Hitchin Market Place and behind Tesco Baldock, our youth workers took to the streets and successfully engaged with multiple groups of up to 15 young people using the *Drugs and Alcohol curriculum*. Whilst still developing, our weekly presence is now recognised by young people, who are becoming increasingly responsive and engaging with our staff.

## Royston Tuesday Night Project

New for this term and exploring the *Confidence and Resilience curriculum*, the Royston Tuesday Night Project has provided a safe space for regular attendees to build on their personal strength and resilience. Staff have seen a notable boost in attendees' confidence and parents have also fed back that the project has helped their family and that it is well received and enjoyed.

### *Young People:*

*"The group has helped me do something positive with my time and help me not be bored" FMS, 11*

*"The paper crane activity was frustrating but helped boost my resilience" BB, 11*

## Royston Wednesday Project

Engaging an ever-increasing core group with the *Healthy Relationships curriculum*, this project has evolved from last term's detached outreach offer and is now delivered in The Old School House. This move to building-based delivery follows on from the young people indicating that they wanted a space in which to seek support and support each other. This term young people were introduced to key independent living skills such as planning and creating tasty, healthy meals on a budget.

### *Young person:*

*"I enjoy engaging with the staff" IW, 15*

*"It is very funny, I have a great time at the project" RB, 15*

*"I have enjoyed making food and learning new life skills and speaking with the very nice staff" TY, 16*

*"Great service, good food, nice people and good positive activities to take part in" JW, 16*

## North Herts Youth Council

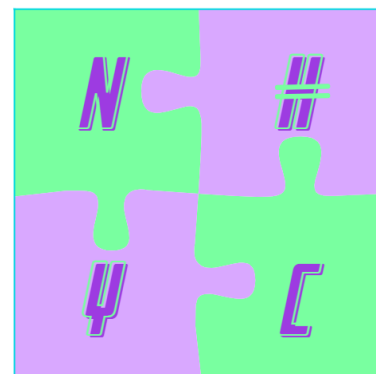
This term the Youth Council have been planning a campaign to raise awareness of Domestic Violence/Abuse amongst young people, what this looks like and how to report it and seek support.

Our Youth Councillors have also been looking at working with North Herts College and Youth Commissioners to capture, promote and utilise the voice of the young people in North Herts.

### *Youth Councillors:*

*"I enjoy the calm and relaxed environment to work on projects. I am not afraid to speak my mind and I know that I will not be judged for my views" TB 17*

*"I enjoyed working on the project with the team of other young people and working towards a common goal" AL, 17*



## Healthy Relationships Project

Using the *Healthy Relationships curriculum* and discussing topics like coercive control and gaslighting, 10 young people have regularly attended this project to explore the makings of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Our youth workers also delivered targeted work around sending nudes and selfies in response to a rising need within the group. Attendees engaged in a sexual health sessions where they could access STI testing and free condoms.

Attendees celebrated 'Feel Good Week' by sharing positive affirmations and compliments with each other and taking part in a movie and popcorn night.

### *Young Person:*

*"This is helpful I didn't know that about sending a selfie" MR, 15*

## North Herts Project for Young Adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Learning Disabilities

Supporting an older age group (18-25) of young people with mild-to-moderate learning disabilities and difficulties, this project has delivered the *Confidence and Resilience curriculum* to 10 attendees weekly. This term the group have been learning new ways to boost their confidence and self-esteem through looking at the 5 Ways to Wellbeing. They've also discussed their coping strategies for when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed and have developed a bank of healthy alternatives. The group enjoyed making their own pancakes for Pancake Day, which was a new life skill for many attendees, having never made food for themselves.

*Young person:*

*"I can't believe I made pancakes on my own, thanks" JW, 18.*

*"I like coming here, the computers are good" DH, 19*

## North Herts Wellbeing Project

Engaging an average of 12 young people and delivering the *Emotional Wellbeing curriculum* from Hitchin Young People's Centre, attendees have been exploring the importance of sleep and healthy eating on your mental wellbeing. This term, the group have completed gratitude sheets to help them focus on the positives around them, taken part in group check-ins and enjoyed sessions on support circles and 5 Ways to Wellbeing. The group have developed well in focusing on the importance of wellbeing and how to manage their own in a positive way.

*Young people:*

*"I like having other young people to talk about feelings" AC, 15*

*"It's a safe environment to make positive friendships" DS, 14*

*"I liked the curriculum around sleep" TT, 12*

## Letchworth Wednesday Night Project

Wednesday nights in North Herts saw our youth workers delivering the *Confidence and Resilience curriculum* to a core group of young people. Activities this term included cooking and group games, as well as topical discussions around transition and change and exploration of 5 Ways to Wellbeing. Attendees have built positive friendships and developed their skills in maintaining these friendships.

*Young People:*

*"I enjoy doing the baking and learning new skills" MH, 13*

*"I find it useful in socialising" MH, 12*

*"I feel I can open up to the staff" OC, 12*

*"The staff listen to me" LB, 11*



## Letchworth Friday Night Project

Letchworth Friday Night Project engages around 15 young people a week, providing diversionary activities as well as supporting personal and social development through the delivery of the *Personal Safety curriculum*. Attendees engaged well with the curriculum, particularly in understanding risks and consequences and how to keep themselves safe, including online safety, bullying and the risks of sending explicit images. Other activities included cooking, games and quizzes.

*Young person:*

*"This project has helped build my confidence and helped improve my wellbeing" KM, 15*

*"I find the staff to be kind and they listen" PB, 14*

*"The project helps me socialise" TM, 15*

*"I have liked online safety and the importance of passwords" OK, 15*

## Westmill Friday Night Project

The Westmill Friday Night Project is a popular place for young people in the area to come together and play sports, make friends, and support each other. With regular attendance of 27, project attendees have engaged with the *Personal Safety curriculum* and made constructive use of their Friday nights whilst having fun. This term attendees were visited by Herts Young Homeless and engaged in topical discussion around homelessness and budgeting. The police also visited the group to explain the role of the PCSO and how they can support young people and the community.

### *Young People:*

*"I enjoy being with my friends on a Friday night in a safe place" OM, 11*

*"I like speaking with the staff about life" DN, 12*

## Information, Advice and Guidance/Work Related Learning

The Information, Advice and Guidance & Work-Related Learning Team are now nearing the end of the Spring Term of their 2023-2024 delivery in our secondary schools in North Herts. The team will be delivering creative packages of information advice and guidance and work-related learning activities to support our schools with their emerging needs.

## NEET and Lost Contact 16–18-year-olds in the North Herts Area

Advisers have continued to track this cohort to ensure that the outcomes for all are known and that any Year 11 or Year 12 leavers in 2023, who are identified as not in education or training, have been offered impartial information, advice and guidance support.

### Activity Survey Data from 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024:

- From the cohort of 1568 Year 12s, only 6 young people are lost contacts (0.38%), and work will continue to reach those remaining.
- 36 young people (2.3 %) are NEET 24 available and 12 unavailable. We are actively working with these to help them into work, training, or education.
- From a cohort of 1385 Year 13s, 9 young people are lost contacts (0.65%). Again, we will continue to actively follow up these young people.
- 46 young people (3.32%) are NEET (36 available and 10 unavailable). We are actively working with these to help them into work, training, or education.

## SfYP Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) Project

SfYP is currently participating in a national Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) project in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company.

This Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) Tool is being specifically designed to assist secondary schools in identifying students who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) once they leave compulsory education. By proactively identifying these students, schools can take targeted actions to prevent them from falling into the NEET category.

- The RONI Tool will allow schools to identify students at risk of becoming NEET early in their educational journey in any school year.
- By spotting potential issues before they escalate, schools can intervene promptly and provide necessary support.

In the first instance the new template will be piloted and tested in selected Hertfordshire schools during summer 2024.

## Pathways to Success 2024

Following the success of the Pathways to Success programme model which ended in December 2023, Pathways to Success 2024 is the new programme being delivered to vulnerable groups including Care Leavers and young people with SEND.

This programme aims to reduce barriers to sustained employment, providing a holistic approach for those that are furthest from the labour market. The delivery includes: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance from a Nationally Qualified Adviser, the development of Employability Skills including CV development, job search skills and interview preparation, access to 11-5pm offer at Young People's Centres across the County, enhanced profiling (effective use of Linked In and social media platforms), experiences of work, and groupwork as required.



## SfYP Experiences of the Workplace Project

SfYP is currently undertaking an Experiences of the Workplace project in partnership with the Careers Hub to find and offer up to 2000 placements for Hertfordshire students. There are often many barriers that prevent every student from gaining a meaningful and impactful work experience. Equally employers often find it difficult to accommodate young people – most prominently in a hybrid world where workplaces are not as busy as in previous times.

The aim of this project is to broaden the definition and understanding of a meaningful 'experience of the workplace', by working with employers to deliver activities such as group workplace visits that include interactions with multiple employees and a tour of the premises, speed networking events, a work-based project or 1 day work shadowing.

So far, employers that have signed up and offered opportunities include Wilmott Dixon, Computacenter, Tesco, Morgan Sindall, PayPoint, Detector Testers, BAM, Fortem, DLRC, Hanbury Manor, CDA Herts, Sky Studios, Simmons Bakers, Communities 1st & Warner Bros.

## Explore More Plus

Following a successful programme pilot in the 2022-2023 academic year, SfYP are pleased to be working closely with the Virtual School to offer the Explore More Plus programme to Hertfordshire young people who are looked after (CLA), who have a child in need plan (CIN) or who have a child protection (CP) plan, in Hertfordshire Secondary Schools.

The programme has been designed to focus on raising aspirations, building confidence and encouraging the young person to think and plan for their future career paths, in order to reduce the risk of them becoming NEET at Post-16. This programme is supportive of schools working towards and meeting their Gatsby Benchmarks for personalised careers support.

Explore More Plus is offered to schools at no cost and will provide young people with a series of meetings with a dedicated Services for Young People Personal Adviser throughout the key stages of their transition from school to work. Each year, each young person will receive a personalised action plan to help them on their pathway to achieve their career goals. With the young person's permission, this will be shared with the Designated Teacher at regular intervals and can be saved to Welfare Call as part of the young person's wider support and communication with their Virtual School Education Adviser.

The programme delivery commenced after October half term, and teams are currently in the process of working with Designated Teachers to identify eligible young people, with the first sessions being delivered with young people this half term.



## Children Missing Education (CME) Project

SfYP continue to deliver the CME Project in the 2023-2024 academic year. Working closely with the Access and Inclusion Team, SfYP have been providing bespoke, targeted support to CME young people in Year 9, 10 and 11, to ensure that alongside the support in place through the Access and Inclusion Team to access a statutory school place, they have support to overcome barriers to successfully sustaining that education place.

To support this aim, SfYP are providing one-to-one support through Short Term Work and Outcome Stars, alongside engagement with Youth Work groupwork and programmes such as Pathways to Success. This makes use of the wide range of skills and experiences of SfYP's multidisciplinary teams, working across districts and areas and our dedicated SEND Team to utilise the full Service offer.

This bespoke work includes:

- For Year 11 young people, access to the Pathways to Success programme, including the related work experience offer and resources.
- Work experience placements.
- Engagement in elements of our Standardised Curriculum Programmes, based on identified needs: Supporting You, Healthy Relationships, Emotional Wellbeing.
- Support to access appropriate referral and signposting pathways: Sandbox, Young Minds, National Careers Service, HCC resources around schools and the SEND Local Offer.
- CEIAG from Level 6 Qualified Personal Advisers, to support raising aspirations, sustainment in education and planning for post-16 education or training.

Progress to Date (Data correct on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024):

SfYP have allocated approximately 1 FTE per team to support this project and the wider access and inclusion agenda, in recognition of the time required to engage this cohort and provide intensive targeted delivery. This delivery is split between Personal Advisers and youth workers, to ensure a holistic approach to each young person's support.

Of the 462 Year 9 to Year 11 cases known to the programme on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 46 have successfully re-engaged in statutory education following CME project support and 175 continue to be supported through the CME project. The remaining young people known to the programme have either declined support at this time, or advised they are in education or electively home educated at the point of initial project contact.

## The Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge (ASK) for schools and colleges programme.

The academic year ASK programme is fully funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and aims to help schools and colleges across the country to deliver high-quality Information, Advice and Guidance on apprenticeships and T Levels to their students, teachers, and parents. A wide range of activities are available for students in Years 10-13 to inform them about available opportunities. SfYP deliver these activities.

SfYP are now in the second year of delivering ASK in Hertfordshire on behalf of CXK and the DfE. SfYP have been contracted to deliver 189 apprenticeship activities to 8500 students across KS4 in 44 Establishments (42 schools and 2 colleges) and to 500 parents over the academic year, this includes assisting with creating apprenticeships accounts for 1000 students. ASK is a highly popular programme in Hertfordshire with all 44 establishments signed up before the end of the first quarter of the project. Quarter one has seen SfYP people exceed all the required targets, and SfYP are on track to deliver to all the required KPI's for the year. At the beginning of the Autumn term planning agreements were made with 10 schools /colleges across North Herts and Stevenage to deliver sessions in 2023-24 and this has commenced in all 10 of those schools.

There has been hugely positive feedback from schools and students regarding activities and the programme goes from strength to strength.

## Stevenage

Schools – Barclay , Marriotts, Nobel and Stevenage Education Support Centre)  
Colleges – North Herts College Stevenage Campus & the Construction Campus)

## North Herts

Schools – Hitchin Girls, Hitchin Boys , Knights Templar, Highfield and Priory  
Colleges – North Herts College Hitchin Campus

### Support at Letchworth Young People’s Centre & Bowes Lyon Young People’s Centre

From 1st April 2024, Letchworth Young People’s Centre will be open and available for young people to access support between 11am and 5pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Advisers and Youth Workers will be on hand to provide a warm welcome to young people who drop in or call the young people’s centre. This offer will also be available Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Bowes Lyon Young People’s Centre – giving 5 day access to this offer across the double district of North Herts and Stevenage.

### Partnership Work

- SfYP continue to chair the Youth Strategy Partnership Group, which shares information amongst organisations and agencies that work with young people, ensuring a wide offer of provision is available and appropriate.
- Close partnership working continues with other agencies at the Families First meetings as well as Triage Panels and Professionals Meetings.
- SfYP chair the Employment Skills Network for the North and East of the County.
- SfYP ensures we engage with the Fair Access Panel in North Herts which meet with young people and their families who are at risk of exclusion from school.
- Attend the Youth Out-of-Court Disposal Panel.
- Attend JAG meetings and liaise with members to ensure community safety issues are addressed, where appropriate, by SfYP.
- Working in partnership with Children Looked After teams and social workers across the district, ensuring referrals are allocated swiftly and tailored support is put in place to ensure the SfYP offer is accessible to vulnerable young people.
- Attend locality network meetings chaired by North Herts Council.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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01442 454877  
lucy.davis@hertfordshire.gov.uk

 @NorthHertsTeam

   @HCCSfYP

For details of most youth work projects delivered by SfYP in North Herts, please visit:  
[Projects for Young People in North Herts.](#)

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted <i>[if applicable]</i>	
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**SERVICE DIRECTORATE:** *PLACE*

**1. DECISION TAKEN**

- 1.1 To approve John O’Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd to hold a Bee Part of it project event using Howard Park & Gardens, Letchworth Garden City on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2024 between 10.00 – 14.00 hrs.

**2. DECISION TAKER**

- 2.1. Andrew Mills, Service Manager Greenspace

**3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

- 3.1 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 To support the organisers to provide an annual event for the whole community.

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The organisers have approached North Herts Council to host these events, no alternative options or locations have been considered.

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

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with colleagues in the Safety Advisory Group and the Greenspace Team.

**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 organisers have approached NHC for approval to use this location for their event.

**9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The authority has an obligation to ensure that the public open spaces it maintains are at a standard that are safe for everyone to use. Additionally, the authority has an obligation to ensure that any environmentally sensitive environment is not damaged due to actions or intentions of others.

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no financial risks as this opportunity is generating income.

**11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no risk implications. However, risk assessments have been considered to endeavour that this is a safe event.

**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 Central Government and national groups have expressed the continued importance of public Green Space in the health and well-being of communities. From April 2013 local authorities at county level are required to take on the statutory duty to improve the health of their communities as required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and with it, to acquire many of the public health services currently the responsibility of the NHS. The use of open spaces, parks, playgrounds, and relevant leisure facilities are promoted in terms of reducing the impact of obesity on long term health, the importance in the management of wellbeing and in aiding relaxation, as well as sensory' enjoyment.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The event is open to everyone.

**14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 This item of work is contained within the Place Directorate existing work programs.

**16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None

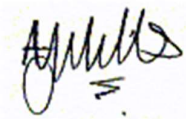
**17. APPENDICES**

17.1 None

**NOTIFICATION DATE - 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....Not Applicable.....**

**Date .....4<sup>th</sup> April 2024**



**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.**

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted <i>[if applicable]</i>	
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**SERVICE DIRECTORATE:** *PLACE*

**1. DECISION TAKEN**

- 1.1 To approve to hold a St.George's Day Scouts Celebration event on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024 between 10.45 hrs to 12.30 hrs using Broadway Gardens, Letchworth.

**2. DECISION TAKER**

- 2.1. Andrew Mills, Service Manager Greenspace

**3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

- 3.1 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

**4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 To support the organisers to provide an annual event for the whole community.

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The organisers have approached North Herts Council to host this event. No other locations have currently been considered for this event.

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

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with colleagues in the Safety Advisory Group.

**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 organisers have approached NHC for approval to use this location for their event.

**9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The authority has an obligation to ensure that the public open spaces it maintains are at a standard that are safe for everyone to use. Additionally, the authority has an obligation to ensure that any environmentally sensitive environment is not damaged due to actions or intentions of others.

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no financial risks as this opportunity is generating income.

**11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no risk implications. However, risk assessments have been considered to endeavour that this is a safe event.

**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 Central Government and national groups have expressed the continued importance of public Green Space in the health and well-being of communities. From April 2013 local authorities at county level are required to take on the statutory duty to improve the health of their communities as required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and with it, to acquire many of the public health services currently the responsibility of the NHS. The use of open spaces, parks, playgrounds and relevant leisure facilities are promoted in terms of reducing the impact of obesity on long term health, the importance in the management of wellbeing and in aiding relaxation, as well as sensory' enjoyment.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The event is open to everyone.

**14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 This item of work is contained within the Place Directorate existing work programs.

**16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None

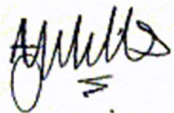
**17. APPENDICES**

17.1 None

**NOTIFICATION DATE - 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....Not Applicable.....**

**Date .....2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024**



**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

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted <i>[if applicable]</i>	
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**SERVICE DIRECTORATE:** PLACE

### **1. DECISION TAKEN**

- 1.1 To approve a Beer and Cider Festival to be held on the King George V Playing Fields, Hitchin from 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024, (event taking place 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024), between 16:00hrs to 23:00 hrs on each day.

### **2. DECISION TAKER**

- 2.1. Andrew Mills, Service Manager Greenspace

### **3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

- 3.1 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### **4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 To support the organisers to provide an event for the whole community.

### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The organisers have approached North Herts Council to host this event. Other locations have been considered by the organisers that are outside North Herts.

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

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with colleagues in Property Services and the Safety Advisory Group.

### **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 organisers have approached NHC for approval to use this location for their event.

### **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The authority has an obligation to ensure that the public open spaces it maintains are at a standard that are safe for everyone to use. Additionally, the authority has an obligation to ensure that any environmentally sensitive environment is not damaged due to actions or intentions of others.

### **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no financial risks as this opportunity is generating income.

**11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no risk implications. However, risk assessments have been considered to endeavour that this is a safe event.

**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 Central Government and national groups have expressed the continued importance of public Green Space in the health and well-being of communities. From April 2013 local authorities at county level are required to take on the statutory duty to improve the health of their communities as required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and with it, to acquire many of the public health services currently the responsibility of the NHS. The use of open spaces, parks, playgrounds and relevant leisure facilities are promoted in terms of reducing the impact of obesity on long term health, the importance in the management of wellbeing and in aiding relaxation, as well as sensory' enjoyment.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The event is open to everyone.

**14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 This item of work is contained within the Place Directorate existing work programs.

**16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None

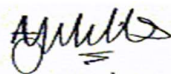
**17. APPENDICES**

17.1 None

**NOTIFICATION DATE - 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....Not Applicable.....**

**Date .....5<sup>th</sup> April 2024.....**

**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.**



## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

### PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

#### SERVICE DIRECTORATE: CUSTOMERS

##### 1. **DECISION TAKEN**

To award a five-year contract to NEC Software Solutions UK Ltd at a total cost of £1,038,075, for the provision of Business Application Solutions being Services and software Support and Maintenance under Framework Agreement RM6259 Lot1.

##### 2. **DECISION TAKER**

Jo Dufficy, Service Director - Customers

##### 3. **DATE DECISION TAKEN**

25<sup>th</sup> March 2024

##### 4. **REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 To consolidate Revenues and Benefits Support and Maintenance costs provided by NEC Software Solutions UK Ltd at a fixed value for a 5-year period.

##### 5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 There are only 3 key providers of a comprehensive Revenues and Benefits operating system that deliver the services required for the collection of statutory taxes and distribution of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
- 5.1.2 In 2023 we carried out soft market testing and concluded that it was in the Councils best interest to continue with the existing software and procure a new contract with NEC via a framework.

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

- 6.1 The Executive Member and Deputy Executive Member for Finance and IT have been consulted.

##### 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 NEC provides Revenues and Benefits with a well-established and stable operating system that is a market leader within the Revenues and Benefits environment. The operating infrastructure and software have been developed and enhanced to cater for changes to legislation and technology advances.

- 8.2 The current Revenues and Benefits processing software has been operational since the move away from an ICL Mainframe in February 1996. Since the initial software installation and data conversation; subsequent changes to the processing system as well as legislative changes have seen the software mutate and grow exponentially into a multifunctional complex product. The introduction of automation from Government Departments have added to the complexity. The operating platform and database infrastructure that facilitates the functionality of the software is also constantly changing to accommodate enhancements, security fixes or version changes.
- 8.3 NEC have approximately 160 Revenues and Benefits customers. This is over 50% of existing user base. 26 of the top 30 top performing councils are NEC customers. NEC are multiple award winners and are at the forefront of technology developments.
- 8.4 The Council has been satisfied with the performance of the Revenues and Benefits software. The timely release of software upgrades that cater for Legislation changes as well as system enhancements have established a good working relationship with the NEC Support Desk and Consultancy teams.
- 8.5 The Support and Maintenance costs relating to the core processing systems and the additional processing modules are paid annually. The start and end dates of the Support and Maintenance contracts are dependent on when the software was purchased. Therefore, currently there is no single date on which all the support and maintenance contracts start and end.
- 8.6 In 2023 a soft market test was carried out and this included consideration of the financial cost and risk of converting to another provider. It was concluded that the overall financial cost and risk to move away from NEC would be too great.
- 8.7 It is in the Council's interest to ensure the processing of Council Tax, Business Rates, Council Tax Reduction remains continuous without any delay due to errors or software problems. It is also in our interest to allow customers greater flexibility in how they communicate with us. Providing intuitive online solutions will encourage our customers to move away from traditional methods of communication.
- 8.8 Since 1996 the Council has invested heavily in adapting and developing the current Revenues and Benefit software to ensure it complies with current Revenues and Benefits legislation that provides an efficient and effective service. We have remained progressive in ensuring we utilise our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. Section 14.6.4 of the Council Constitution provides delegation to service directors and states at section 14.6.4 (a) (ii) and is therefore non-executive:

*“Entering into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services within approved budgets (subject also to approval of the Service Director for: Customers in respect of software or hardware contracts). All may attest the fixing of the Common Seal to a contract or Deed;”*

- 9.2. This procurement is via a direct award through a Framework.
- 9.3 Legal will assist officers with the Contract and will ensure that the Contract is properly executed and completed.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The current annual cost for all NEC Revenues and Benefit products is £201,096.16, plus a support and maintenance uplift each year.
- 10.2 Entering into a 5-year overarching Support and Maintenance contract will cost £1,038,075. This overall cost is fixed and will avoid annual uplifts. This will be paid annually over the 5-year term.
- 10.4 The cost avoidance of annual uplifts over 5 years will be in the region of £98,000.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 There is no known risk associated with awarding a new contract to the existing supplier as the NEC Revenues and Benefits processing system is known to deliver the services required.
- 11.3 There would be a substantial risk in moving away from NEC to a system that may not be as efficient and effective unproven in delivering statutory services in accordance with prescribed procedures and requirements.

## **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 known equalities impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 Th Go Local policy does not apply to this report.

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There would be no human resource implications in remaining with the current supplier as the system is performing all relevant tasks.
- 15.2 There would be a significant human resource implication in changing suppliers, including but not limited to, undertaking a scoping exercise, data migration, configuration, user testing, user training, and ongoing maintenance.

## **16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 16.1 None

**NOTIFICATION DATE**

Thursday 05 April 2024

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted**



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned above a dotted line.

**Date 28 March 2024**



A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a series of connected loops and a final horizontal stroke.

**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.

**This is a Non-Executive Decision and these requirements therefore do not apply, the decision being immediate upon signature.**

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

### \*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted

#### SERVICE DIRECTORATE: CUSTOMERS DIRECTORATE

#### 1. DECISION TAKEN

- 1.1 To enter into a five-year agreement with Frequency Precision to supply the equipment and services as outlined in the five lots specified in the tender NH527540550: SUPPLY OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR RESIDENTS WITH EPILEPSY.

#### 2. DECISION TAKER

- 2.1 Jo Dufficy, Service Director – Customers

#### 3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

- 3.1 13 March 2024

#### 4. REASON FOR DECISION

- 4.1 The procurement outlined in the NH527540550 ITT document is focused on acquiring equipment to detect various types of seizures and other indicators of epilepsy, such as pulse and acoustic monitoring. The procurement was organised into five distinct lots.
- 4.2 This procurement initiative responded to the Council's need to address the requirements of approximately 20 referrals each month for users living with epilepsy under its obligations under the Assistive Technology Partnership with Hertfordshire County Council. The Council is establishing a contract, lasting up to a maximum of five years, with the successful tenderer; Frequency Precision.

#### 5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The alternative options considered in the NH527540550 ITT document included several potential courses of action:
- Not awarding a contract to the tenderer submitting the most economically advantageous tender if it was established that the tender did not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social, and labour law as established by national law, collective agreements, or international provisions as listed in Annex X to Directive 2014/24.
  - Withdrawing the ITT (Invitation to Tender) at any point or re-inviting tenders on the same or an alternative basis.
  - Choosing not to award any contract or specific lots as a result of the current procurement process or abandoning the process entirely.

- Making changes to the timetable, structure, or content of the procurement process depending on approval processes or for other reasons.

5.2 These alternatives represent the Council's readiness to adapt the procurement process based on legal compliance, strategic considerations, and the evolving needs of the procurement objectives.

5.3 The procurement objectives for the North Hertfordshire District Council's supply of assistive technology for residents with epilepsy, as outlined in the ITT document, include:

- Supplying, maintaining, and monitoring assistive technology to 580 users living with epilepsy in Hertfordshire, aiming to enhance their quality of life and safety.
- Procuring epilepsy monitoring equipment that is easily adjustable, durable, suitable for van storage, and capable of detecting various seizure types along with other epilepsy indicators like pulse and acoustic monitoring.
- Dividing the procurement into five lots, each focusing on specific types of seizure detection and monitoring, including away-from-home activity, to cater to the diverse needs of the population.
- Establishing a contract for a maximum period of 5 years with the successful tenderer(s), ensuring the equipment meets the council's requirements for functionality, durability, and cost-effectiveness.

5.4 This procurement aims to address the current and evolving needs for epilepsy monitoring within the community, prioritizing reliability, adaptability, and comprehensive coverage across different seizure types and situations.

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

6.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Executive Member for Community and Partnerships, Cllr Alistair Willoughby.

## **7. FORWARD PLAN**

7.1 This decision is not a Key Executive Decision and therefore has not been referred to on the forward plan.

## **8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 After the conclusion of an agreement with a former supplier, there was an urgent need to ensure an uninterrupted provision of epilepsy equipment to meet the demands of service users affected by epilepsy in Hertfordshire. This procurement exercise is a critical component of the services delivered under the Assistive Technologies Partnership Agreement between NHC and HCC. Its primary goal is to sustain the essential support for individuals with epilepsy, ensuring they continue to receive the necessary assistance and equipment.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Section 14.6.4 of the Council Constitution provides delegation to service directors and states at section 14.6.4 (a) (ii) and is therefore non-executive:

*“Entering into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services within approved budgets (subject also to approval of the Service Director for Customers in respect of software or hardware contracts). All may attest the fixing of the Common Seal to a contract or Deed;”*

- 9.2 Legal will assist officers with the Contract and will ensure that the Contract is properly executed and completed.
- 9.3 The Contract Procurement Rules at 7.13 require the publication of a Decision Notice for any contract with a value of above £ £50,000.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The anticipated cost for the five-year contract is set at £110,000. This expenditure will be made on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), who have authorised North Hertfordshire Council (NHC) to procure assistive technology equipment for residents of Hertfordshire. The funding required for this procurement will be accessed by NHDC through the existing Section 9EA agreement.
- 10.2 In terms of the contract's overall value, the £110,000 figure has been determined considering the anticipated expansion in the number of clients due to the broadened scope of services provided. HCC will cover these costs under the Section 9EA. Any remaining costs will be financed through the maintenance component of the service charges paid by self-funded clients.
- 10.3 Three tenders were received as part of the open tender process. Following the assessment of the received tenders, Frequency Provision was awarded the contract as it fulfilled the criteria of value for money and most appropriate technology.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 The provision of epilepsy equipment through this contract helps to reduce risks to users through the detection of seizures and alerting of this to caregivers, enabling prompt intervention and a reduced risk of harm.
- 11.3 The Procurement process was carried out in line with the Council's Contract Procurement rules, reducing the risk of any supplier challenge and Legal will work with officers on finalising the contract to ensure any contract management risks are minimised.

## **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 Analysis has been completed, positive impacts were highlighted and are detailed at Appendix A.
- 12.3 Overall, the procurement initiative by the Council, in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, addresses a significant need for improved seizure monitoring and response. By implementing these technologies, the Council is taking a proactive step in safeguarding the health and wellbeing of individuals living with epilepsy. The initiative not only enhances the safety of these individuals but also contributes to their independence and quality of life. Additionally, it supports caregivers and families by providing them with the necessary tools to effectively monitor and respond to seizure activities. This procurement is a key step in fulfilling the Council's obligations under

the Assistive Technology Partnership and demonstrates a commitment to improving healthcare outcomes for vulnerable groups in the community.

### **13 SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 *As the recommendations in the report relate to a contract above the EU threshold, Social Value has been included by the tender documents considering social value by allocating a specific portion of the overall evaluation score to it. Social value is assessed through targeted questions, focusing on areas such as environmental sustainability, community engagement, and social impact. The responses to these questions are scored based on how well they meet the Council's requirements for social value, with detailed scoring matrices provided to ensure a thorough and fair evaluation. This approach ensures that the social value contributions of tenderers are rigorously evaluated and form an integral part of the decision-making process.*

13.2 Question 1 - What measures have you put in place to reduce the use of plastics and reduce waste through reusing materials?

Frequency Precision recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements. We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and continually improving our environmental performance as an integral part of our business strategy and operating methods. We encourage customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders to do the same.

The Company endeavours as a minimum to:

- Comply with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Continually improve and monitor environmental performance.
- Continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
- Incorporate environmental factors into business decisions.
- Increase employee awareness and training.

As a company Frequency Precision has committed to and carried out:

- Minimisation of the use of paper in the office.
- Reduced packaging as much as possible.
- Seeks, where possible, to buy recycled and recyclable products.
- Reuses and recycles all paper and packaging, wherever possible.
- Replaced plastic packaging with paper packaging, where possible.

Frequency Precision is accredited to ISO14001 – Environmental Management and as part of this process has installed a dual stream waste system throughout the Company offices and production areas. All discarded waste is placed in the recycling stream if possible.

During 2022-23 99.4% of waste produced by the Company was diverted from landfill with over 75% being recycled with the rest going to thermal recovery. Waste is only declared to be waste if it cannot be reused within our operations.

All returned packaging and customers packaging is reused, wherever possible, especially plastic packaging.

The Company accepts the return of non-functional equipment which is then used for parts supply to refurbish equipment that is still operational. Frequency Precision has equipment still working in the field which is almost 20 years old and is almost unique in its field in offering a repair/refurbishment service.

### **14 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**



14.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment has been completed and positive measures have been highlighted which are outlined in Appendix B.

**15 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 No impact

**16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 Not Applicable

**17. APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A – Equalities Impact Assessment

APPENDIX B – Environmental Impact Assessment

**NOTIFICATION DATE 05 April 2024**

*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 13 March 2024**



**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.**

**This is a Non-Executive Decision and these requirements therefore do not apply, the decision being immediate upon signature.**

## **RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

### **\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

#### **SERVICE DIRECTORATE: *RESOURCES***

##### **1. DECISION TAKEN**

*To enter into a contract with ADSM for the supply of Water and Waste Water Utilities for a range of property assets for a period of two years..*

##### **2. DECISION TAKER**

*Ian Couper, Service Director- Resources*

##### **3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

*13<sup>th</sup> March 2023*

##### **4. REASON FOR DECISION**

*The existing contract for Water & Waste utilities expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.*

##### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

An alternative framework could have been chosen, but after carrying out a comparison ADSM offered the most competitive rate.

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

Not applicable.

##### **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 An exercise to compare two frameworks was undertaken.

8.2 The whole sale price of water and waste water represents 94% of the overall cost and is set and regulated by the water undertakers and Ofwat, and therefore not within the supplier's control. Instead, the supplier applies a percentage margin to the wholesale price. Crown Commercial Services have advised that the successful framework supplier (ADSM) has the lowest percentage margin in Europe.

##### **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1

Under 14.6.12 (a) (i) the Service Director- Resources will “manage, direct and control all resources allocated to the Directorate in accordance with the Council’s policies”. Under 14.6.4 (a) (ii) of the Council Constitution, Service Directors have a

general authorisation for “entering into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services within approved budgets”.

9.2 This contract was let in accordance with the Council's Contract and Procurement regulations.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. *The contract costs for water and waste water utilities are budgeted for within existing revenue budgets.*

10.2. *There are no capital budget implications.*

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are risks that the wholesale water prices increase. However, Ofwat perform a role to ensure wholesale prices are regulated.

## **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 in relation to this procurement.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 N/A water utility supply

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 *There are no direct HR implications arising from the award of this contract.*

## **16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 *None*

## **17. APPENDICES**

17.1 *None*

**NOTIFICATION DATE: 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....Cllr Ian Albert.....**

**Date .....March 2024.....**

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**

# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices,  
Letchworth Garden City  
on Wednesday, 27th March, 2024 at 7.30 pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Raj Bhakar, Councillor Gerald Morris and Reserve Independent Person John Richardson.

### 2 MINUTES - 1 NOVEMBER 2023

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 1 November 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

### 3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

### 4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be recorded.
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (3) The Chair advised for the purpose of clarification Clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.

### 5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair confirmed that the registered speaker was in attendance.

### 6 STANDARD MATTERS REPORT

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee

- (1) Noted the content of the report and made suggestions on future actions.
- (2) Delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair any appropriate amendments to the Complaints Handling Procedure – following the publication of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Code (as detailed in 8.3-8.5).
- (3) Recommended that any Parish, Town and Community Councillors who have been newly elected/ or not undertaken training on the Code of Conduct during the last 12 months, undertakes Code of Conduct training, as supplied by the Council / or LGA within 2 months of their election or co-options, whichever is the later date.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That all District Councillors should undertake post, all-out election training on the Code of Conduct within 2 months of their election (or availability of the training) whichever is the later date.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:** To ensure good governance within the Council.

**7 MEMBERS PLANNING CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT**

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee reviewed the new model Members Planning Code of Good Practice

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** The adoption of new Code (Appendix A to this report) as the Appendix 1 to Section 8 of the Constitution replacement, with proposed appropriate amendments.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:** To ensure good governance within the Council.

**EAST TEAM**

Application No.	Applicant/Agent Address	Location Address, Applicant Name & Proposal
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**Baldock**

24/00700/FPH	A.T. Design (Welwyn) Ltd Mr Adam Trigg 30C High Street, Welwyn, AL6 9EQ	60 Hillside Park Limekiln Lane Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6PH  Mr David Pestell  Single storey side extension and installation of timber decking area to existing mobile home.
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**Barley Parish Council**

24/00716/AG	Mr Matthew Doggett Slaters, Bakers Lane, Barley, Royston, SG8 8HJ, United Kingdom	Broadmere Pond Royston Road Barley Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8BN  Mr Matthew Doggett  Erection of roof linking two existing barns to provide covered work area and erection of detached machinery storage building.
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**Hinxworth Parish Council**

24/00669/FPH	APK Architecture & Design Ltd. Mr Andrew Kent The White House, 49 High Street, Wrestlingworth, SG19 2EP, United Kingdom	22 Francis Road Hinxworth Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5HL  Mr & Mrs Flint  Single storey rear extension, and erection of front porch following demolition of existing detached side outbuilding.
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**Letchworth Garden City**

24/00660/TPO	Mrs Kate Ryan Evoke Tree Services Ltd 15 Great Ganett, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3DA	Land At Horace Gay Gardens Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4XP  Mr Alex Oliver  Line of Leyland Cypress - Reduce by approx 4m in height.
24/00722/TCA	Mr Jason Hough CTC 6 Strawplait way, Arlesey, SG156SJ	21 Field Lane Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3LF  Mrs Sally Hughes  T1 Yew, T2 Holly - Thin and reduce by up to 30%. T3 Pear - Prune back to previous points

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLANNING CONTROL  
COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, HERTS SG6 3JF**

LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 05/04/2024  
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 25/04/2024

24/00742/TCA	Mr Moe Babai 4 Lowe Drive, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 1FW, United Kingdom	121 Jackmans Place Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1RG
		Mr Moe Babai  12x Conifer - Reduce by 5m and pruning overgrown branches.

**Royston Town Council**

24/00672/LDCP	Ionic Plan & Design Ltd Mr John David Suite D2 Northside House, Mount Pleasant, Cockfosters, EN4 9EB, United Kingdom	31 Heron Way Royston Hertfordshire SG8 7XH
		Mr Algis Ceicys  Insertion of rooflights to existing front roofslope and dormer and rooflight to existing rear roofslope to facilitate conversion of loftspace into habitable accommodation.

**Therfield Parish Council**

24/00683/LDCE	Mr Paul Rabbetts High Beeches, Mill Lane, Therfield, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9PR, United Kingdom	High Beeches Mill Lane Therfield Royston Hertfordshire SG8 9PR
		Mr Paul Rabbetts  Confirmation of a material start on site of planning permission ref: 21/03458/FP, Excavation and level reduction to create new access. Installation of base course to new access. Installation of new drainage beneath proposed crossover. New manhole and diversion of drainage to serve new dwelling.

**WEST TEAM**

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

24/00645/ADJ		Land At Oakleigh Farm Codicote Road Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9TY
		Cerys Brady  Erection of seven detached dwellings with associated detached garages, parking and amenity areas and upgrading to the existing access road following demolition of existing buildings NORTH HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL: ADJACENT AUTHORITY : CONSULTEE ONLY

**Hitchin**



24/00624/FPH	Mr James Batchelor Batchelor Via Email	Mr James 9 Highbury Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9RW  Mr Toby Furnivall  Single storey rear infill extension following partial demolition of existing rear extension. Enlargement of existing rear dormer window and Insertion of rooflight to existing front roofslope. External render.
24/00642/FPH	Mr Daniel Chandler Architectural Design Ltd. 61 Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 3HS, United Kingdom	D.Chandler 16 Lister Avenue Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9ES  Mr & Mrs Bell  Single storey rear extension/partial infill of loggia and alterations to fenestration to existing rear element.
24/00657/FPH	Extend Mr Dave Pucknell 68 Queen St, Hitchin, SG4 9TS, United Kingdom	Mr Dave Pucknell 23 Broadmead Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9LU  Mrs Hana Hue M T Nguyen  Part two storey and part single storey rear extension. Rear roof extension. Alterations to existing garage roof and fenestration following removal of garage doors to facilitate garage conversion into habitable accommodation. Front canopy.
<b>Kimpton Parish Council</b>		
24/00686/FP	DP Architects Ms Alana Bibby 3 Shirburn Street, 3 Shirburn St, Watlington , OX49 5BU, United Kingdom	Bibbsworth Hall Farm Bibbs Hall Lane Kimpton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8EN  -  Erection of detached double carport
<b>Kings Walden Parish Council</b>		
24/00628/FPH	Plans To Expand Mr Geoffrey Phillips Plans To Expand, 97 Mildmay Road, Stevenage, SG1 5RS	Mr Geoffrey Phillips 5 Lye Hill Breachwood Green Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8PP  Mr Mark Tyler  Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear element. Insertion front and side ground floor windows following removal of existing garage doors to facilitate garage conversion.

**Knebworth Parish Council**

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLANNING CONTROL  
COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, HERTS SG6 3JF**

**LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN WEEK ENDING: 05/04/2024  
DEADLINE FOR COUNCILLORS' CALL IN: 25/04/2024**

24/00546/AD	Kitchen Bathroom & Tile Co Limited Garry Bellott 137 London Road, Knebworth, Hertfordshire, SG3 6EX, United Kingdom	Land At 137 London Road Knebworth Hertfordshire	Kitchen Bathroom & Tile Co Limited Garry Bellott  Installation of externally illuminated fascia sign
24/00640/FPH	Heather Moye Mrs Heather Moye Corner House, 1 Balmoral Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1XG, United Kingdom	66 Stevenage Road Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6NN	Mr & Mrs Hindle  Two storey rear extension and single storey front porch extension. Insertion of rooflight to existing rear roofslope and lantern light to existing single storey side element flat roof. Alterations to fenestration
24/00664/FP	Boyd Seddon Architect Mr Boyd Seddon Old Kitchin's Farm, 31 Horslow Street, Pottton, Beds, SG19 2NS, United Kingdom	11 Swangleys Lane Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6AA	Mr & Mrs Clifford  Erection of one detached 3-bed dwelling including parking, landscaping, and associated works. Alterations to existing dwelling to include alterations to fenestration and demolition of existing garage, hall/wc and creation of new vehicular access off Swangleys Lane.
<b>St Ippolytts Parish Council</b>			
24/00492/FPH	Mr And Mrs Edmund Wright The Barn, Preston Road, Gosmore, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7QS	The Barn Preston Road Gosmore Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7QS	Mr And Mrs Edmund Wright  Installation of ground mounted solar panels in front garden.
<b>Wymondley Parish Council</b>			
24/00735/TCA	Ms Katy Schafer 1 Church Green, Great Wymondley, Hitchin, SG4 7HA, United Kingdom	Honeysuckle Cottage 1 Church Green Great Wymondley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7HA	Ms Katy Schafer  Magnolia - Remove

(Including Withdrawn decisions)

**EAST TEAM**

<b>Application No:</b> 23/00922/DOC	<b>Location:</b> Land At Windmill Close Barkway Hertfordshire  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr. Dominic Jones Beverley Homes Limited <b>Description:</b> Details reserved by Condition 18 (SuDS Drainage) as attached to Planning Application 20/02779/FP granted on 11.02.2022	<b>Decision:</b>  Approval of Details <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 23/02578/FPH	<b>Location:</b> 119 Layston Park Royston Hertfordshire SG8 9DY  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Owen Robinson <b>Description:</b> Installation of external heat pump unit to rear.	<b>Decision:</b>  Withdrawn <b>Decision Date:</b> 02/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00126/LBC	<b>Location:</b> Wheelwrights High Street Barley Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8HX  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Simon Lester <b>Description:</b> Internal alterations (works previously approved under ref: 20/01751/LBC granted 15.04.2021	<b>Decision:</b>  Conditional Consent <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00463/TCA	<b>Location:</b> St Marys Church Mill Street Ashwell Hertfordshire SG7 5LY  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Deputy Parish Clerk Ashwell Parish Council <b>Description:</b> T376 Lime - Remove the branches back to the trunk from floor level, up until the height of the neighbouring cottage.	<b>Decision:</b>  No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00470/TCA	<b>Location:</b> Oakengates Broadway Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3PT  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Thomas Oakley Oakley Arboriculture Ltd <b>Description:</b> T1 Beech - Reduce canopy by 2m. T2 Horse Chestnut - Re-pollard to previous points. T3 Beech - Reduce Canopy by 2m. T4 Horse Chestnut - Re-pollard to previous points. T5 Cypress - Reduce	<b>Decision:</b>  No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00511/TPO	<b>Location:</b> 3 Woodforde Close Ashwell Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5QE  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Stewart Reddaway <b>Description:</b> Sycamore - Re-pollard to clear the solar panels.	<b>Decision:</b>  Conditional Consent <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00527/NMA	<b>Location:</b> 23 Masefield Way Royston Hertfordshire SG8 5UU  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mrs E Tate <b>Description:</b> Minor alterations to ground floor window and door fenestration to new rear extensions and minor adjustment to supporting pillar at ground floor (as non-material amendment to planning application reference 22/00580/FPH granted on 18.05.2022).	<b>Decision:</b>  Agreed <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00532/TPO	<b>Location:</b> 22 St Marys Park Royston Hertfordshire SG8 7XB  <b>Applicant Name:</b> Donald Harley <b>Description:</b> T1 Yew reduce height by 6m and sides by 2m and T2 and T3 Horse Chestnuts and T4 Lime Crown lift trunk epicormic to provide 6m clearance from ground level (as amended by plan received on 28/03/2024).	<b>Decision:</b>  Conditional Consent <b>Decision Date:</b> 28/03/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00556/TPO	<b>Location:</b> 28 Hollies Close Royston Hertfordshire SG8 7DZ  <b>Applicant Name:</b> David Atkins <b>Description:</b> T6, T8 Beech - Crown reduce by 5m.	<b>Decision:</b>  Conditional Consent <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024

## EAST TEAM

<b>Application No:</b> 24/00652/TCA	<b>Location:</b> Bushel And Strike 15 Mill Street Ashwell Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5LY <b>Applicant Name:</b> HBN. TREES HERTFORDSHIRE <b>Description:</b> T1 Sycamore - Crown reduce by up to 30%. T2 Sycamore - Removal of lower limb	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00676/TPO	<b>Location:</b> 27 St Marys Park Royston Hertfordshire SG8 7XB <b>Applicant Name:</b> Steve Foley <b>Description:</b> G.1 Group of Elm and 1 Yew - Crown lift to provide 6m from floor level to give clearance to footpath and highway.	<b>Decision:</b> Conditional Consent <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024

## WEST TEAM

<b>Application No:</b> 23/00219/DOC	<b>Location:</b> Site Of Former Wyevale Codicote Garden Centre High Street Codicote Hertfordshire SG4 8XA <b>Applicant Name:</b> Gurner Taylor Wimpey North Thames <b>Description:</b> Details reserved by Condition 21- Landscape details (relating to planning permission 19/01448/FP granted 30.01.2023)	<b>Decision:</b> Approval of Details <b>Decision Date:</b> 28/03/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 23/00227/DOC	<b>Location:</b> Site Of Former Wyevale Codicote Garden Centre High Street Codicote Hertfordshire SG4 8XA <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Gurner Taylor Wimpey North Thames <b>Description:</b> Details reserved by Condition 19 - Landscape Ecological Management Plan (relating to planning permission 19/01448/FP granted 30.01.2023)	<b>Decision:</b> Approval of Details <b>Decision Date:</b> 28/03/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00308/FPH	<b>Location:</b> 18 London Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9EW <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Dominic Myers <b>Description:</b> Installation of front hardstanding and creation of vehicular access off London Road	<b>Decision:</b> Conditional Permission <b>Decision Date:</b> 02/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00312/DOC	<b>Location:</b> Site Of Former Wyevale Codicote Garden Centre High Street Codicote Hertfordshire SG4 8XA <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Athreya Chengad Taylor Wimpey North Thames <b>Description:</b> Details reserved by condition 17 (Noise) of planning permission reference no.19/01448/FP granted 30.01.2023	<b>Decision:</b> Approval of Details <b>Decision Date:</b> 28/03/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00330/FPH	<b>Location:</b> 18 Wellingham Avenue Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2UL <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr & Mrs Robert Robinson <b>Description:</b> Single storey side extension incorporating double garage	<b>Decision:</b> Conditional Permission <b>Decision Date:</b> 02/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00366/TCA	<b>Location:</b> The Old Chapel West Street Lilley Luton Hertfordshire LU2 8LN <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr James Rose J R Countryside Services <b>Description:</b> Silver Birch - Remove. Leylandii - To be topped and reshaped by 30%. Holly - Reduce and reshape by 30%.	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00445/TCA	<b>Location:</b> Dinsley Field School Lane Preston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7UE <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mrs Wendy Woods <b>Description:</b> T1, T2 Poplar - Reduce by 50%. T3, T4 Lombardii Poplar - Reduce by 50%. T5 False Acacia - Reduce by 30%.	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00565/TCA	<b>Location:</b> 49B High Street Whitwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8AJ <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr N Hunt <b>Description:</b> Apple - Heavy limb reduction	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00613/TCA	<b>Location:</b> The Old Bakery Law Hall Lane Bendish Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8JH <b>Applicant Name:</b> Donna Hillyer <b>Description:</b> Apple - Fell	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024

**WEST TEAM**

<b>Application No:</b> 24/00627/TCA	<b>Location:</b> 12 Holwell Road Pirton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3QU <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Gavin Worsey <b>Description:</b> Ash - Trim overhanging branches back to boundary	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024
<b>Application No:</b> 24/00705/TCA	<b>Location:</b> Preston House Church Lane Preston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7UA <b>Applicant Name:</b> Mr Malcolm Blaza <b>Description:</b> T1: Conifer - Remove. T2: Golden Conifer - Reduce height by approx. 25%	<b>Decision:</b> No Objection <b>Decision Date:</b> 03/04/2024

# PRESS RELEASE

**PR 3844**

**21 March 2024**

## **£3 million investment announced as Everyone Active takes over North Herts leisure facilities**

More than £3 million of investment has been announced for the district's leisure and sporting facilities, as part of a new ten-year partnership with leisure operator Everyone Active and North Herts Council.

The new contract, which began today, Monday 1 April, sees Everyone Active taking over the management of North Herts Leisure Centre, Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre (formerly Hitchin Swim Centre and Archer Fitness), Royston Leisure Centre, Letchworth Lido (formerly Letchworth Outdoor Pool) and Fearnhill Sports Centre.

The investment will be allocated towards extensive refurbishments and expansion efforts across these facilities over the course of the contract.

Everyone Active will be refurbishing the fitness suites with the latest equipment suitable for all levels including free weights, strength and conditioning and functional training kit.

Changes and additions will be made to the group exercise studios to offer more variety and new classes, while enhancements to food and beverage amenities hope to enhance the overall customer experience.

In line with North Herts Council's commitment to environmental sustainability, decarbonisation measures will be integrated into the refurbishment efforts, aimed at optimising energy conservation.

This is in addition to the council's successful application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme will see North Herts Leisure Centre, Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre, and Royston Leisure Centre benefitting from modern air source heat pumps, solar PV panels, and cavity and external wall insulation.

The new leisure contract also has a strong focus on community outreach, providing a variety of creative and physical activities in local venues such as community halls, churches, centres and outdoor locations to increase accessibility.

Mark Leahy, Regional Contract Manager at Everyone Active, said: "We are delighted to officially begin our partnership with North Herts Council and are looking forward to many successful years ahead."

“The fantastic centres within this contract are so important for health and wellbeing in local communities and, with plenty of exciting developments in the pipeline, we are incredibly privileged to be chosen to manage them.

“The new contract includes a significant investment, amplifying our drive and ambition to prioritise the health and wellbeing of the local community. We look forward to supporting the council’s vision for leisure across North Herts, helping as many people as possible to get active.”

Sarah Kingsley, Service Director – Place, at North Herts Council, said: “Our collaboration with Everyone Active makes a significant step towards enhancing leisure services in North Herts. Through strategic investment and shared commitment, we’re revitalising facilities to better serve our communities, ensuring they have access to top-notch amenities that promote health and wellbeing.”

The improvements planned across the leisure facilities include:

- Full gym refurbishment at North Herts Leisure Centre beginning in July 2024, with new equipment and a state-of-the-art look and feel of the space
- Full gym refurbishment at Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre in Spring 2025, also complete with new equipment and state-of-the-art look and feel
- New group cycling studio at Royston Leisure Centre this summer
- New gym and dance studio at Royston Leisure Centre in Autumn 2025 (£1million funding by North Herts Council).

[Everyone Active](#) already operates leisure facilities in the surrounding areas of Stevenage, East Hertfordshire, and Central Bedfordshire.

**ENDS**

For more information please contact [Sarah.Jenkinson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Jenkinson@north-herts.gov.uk) / 01462 474210.

# PRESS RELEASE

**PR 3845**

**02 April 2024**

## **North Herts Council supports groups with community grants**

North Herts Council's Hitchin and Southern Rural Forum recently recommended grants to two deserving organisations\*, reaffirming the council's commitment to community welfare.

North Herts College was awarded £1,050 by the Hitchin Area Forum to organise 'The Big Draw,' a community event scheduled for 29 October. Designed to foster creativity and community engagement, the event will offer a range of artistic activities for local families and members of the public. Building on the success of their previous event in 2023, which attracted over 200 participants, North Herts College aims to create another enriching experience for the community.

**Melissa Caneppele, Community and Engagement Executive at North Herts College** said: "We are thrilled to be awarded this community grant in order to make our Big Draw Festival event even better this year. We look forward to opening the doors of our Hitchin Campus to the public again for lots of free creative activities at this year's event."

The council's Southern Rural Area Forum endorsed a funding recommendation for £2,538 to St Paul's Walden Nursery towards the cost of replacing the classroom flooring. The nursery is a vital community asset in the parish of St Paul's Walden, providing a nurturing environment to support the learning, development and wellbeing of 2-5 year olds in Whitwell and the surrounding area.

**Jade Watkins, Nursery Manager at St Paul's Walden Nursery**, said: "We are very pleased to have the support of the forum to allow us to continue to provide a safe and nurturing space by giving the flooring a much-needed revamp. This will ensure the children can continue to thrive and achieve the best outcomes."

**Jeanette Thompson, Service Director Legal and Community at North Herts Council**,



said: “We’re pleased to support these organisations that are making a positive impact in Hitchin and our rural communities. These grants reflect our commitment to fostering vibrant and supportive communities.”

More information on [community grants](#)

\*subject to completion of the necessary formalities

**ENDS**

For more information please contact [Sarah.Jenkinson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Jenkinson@north-herts.gov.uk) / 01462 474210.