

# Minutes

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## Ordinary Council Wednesday, 27th September, 2023

### Attendance

Cllr Barrett (Mayor)	Cllr Marsh
Cllr Haigh (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr Mayo
Cllr Aspinell	Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Barber	Cllr Munden
Cllr Dr Barrett	Cllr Mrs Murphy
Cllr Bridge	Cllr Naylor
Cllr M Cuthbert	Cllr Parker
Cllr Mrs N Cuthbert	Cllr Poppy
Cllr Mrs Davies	Cllr Mrs Pound
Cllr Mrs Fulcher	Cllr Reed
Cllr Gorton	Cllr Rigby
Cllr Heard	Cllr Russell
Cllr Hirst	Cllr Sankey
Cllr Kendall	Cllr Slade
Cllr Laplain	Cllr Wagland
Cllr Lewis	Cllr White

### Apologies

Cllr Mrs Francois	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Gelderbloem	Cllr Wiles

### Officers Present

Phoebe Barnes	- Director - Assets & Investments
Phil Drane	- Director - Place
Zoey Foakes	- Governance & Member Support Officer
Claire Mayhew	- Acting Joint Director of People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Marcus Hotten	- Director - Environment
Jonathan Quilter	- Corporate Manager (Strategic Planning)
Jonathan Stephenson	- Chief Executive
Sam Wood	- Corporate Manager - Finance
Sonia Worthington	- Acting Service Manager, Democratic Services

## LIVE BROADCAST

[Live broadcast to start at 7pm and available for repeat viewing.](#)

### 190. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Francois, Gelderbloem, Mynott and Cllr Wiles.

### 191. Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interests were received from:  
Cllr White in relation to Motion 2 as it concerns to his employer.  
Cllr Hirst in relation to appointment of the PFCC panel.

### 192. Mayors Announcements

*"In the three months since we last met in this chamber, there have been some sad losses to this Borough, and I start my announcements this evening by paying tribute to two memorable people within our Borough.*

*We learnt of the passing of former Councillor John Newberry. John was a Brentwood Borough Councillor for Brentwood West, elected with myself and Cllr Francois, back in 2014 and served until 2018. A former police officer, he had a kind and caring approach to his work as a councillor and was well-liked and respected by all who served with him.*

*Then we have the loss of John Wyndham. He was not only the Founder of the Brentwood Imperial Youth Band, but also a Freeman of this Borough a role that he was appointed to by this Council in 2015 as a testament to his dedication to this community.*

*He was an inspiration to so many in Brentwood, a dedicated servant of our borough and always great company. He will be missed not just by everyone involved in Brentwood Imperial Youth Band, but anyone who has ever experienced their amazing contributions to us all.*

*As a testament to the contribution of these two great servants of Brentwood, instead of a minutes silence this evening, I would like to ask all present to pay tribute to these men with a minutes applause.*

*It is now four months since I was formally elected as Mayor and I have been delighted to meet so many of the Community and beyond. With many engagements and experiences since our last Ordinary Council meeting in June,*

*it has been an exciting time. I would like to thank the Deputy Mayor for also attending a number of engagements on my behalf also during this time.*

*Of note, I had an amazing experience spending time with both of our Town Twinning Organisations when during the Summer. I visited Roth in Germany and Montbazon in France. I was honoured to represent the Borough as first citizen during these visits and participate in some insightful, interesting and occasionally challenging activities. I would like to thank my respective hosts Thomas and Gertraud, and Eric, Sophie, Max and Pauline, for the kindness and all of the citizens of our twinned communities for the warm welcome I received. A special thanks as well to the officials at Roth and Sylvie, the Mayor of Montbazon.*

*It was a pleasure to attend Brentwood Town FC, see their fantastic FA Cup Preliminary Round victory and understand their community impact. It was also a notable experience to meet members of Brentwood Rugby Club for the opening match of their season (again a victory for Brentwood), and see first-hand their ethos and impact – I am also pleased to be wearing their club tie today.*

*I was honoured to join Deputy Lord Lieutenant Professor Michael Almond, Major Bold of the USAF, West Horndon Parish Council, and the wider Brentwood community to remember the loss of two American aircrews whose planes crashed near West Horndon. We remembered their bravery, service and sacrifice, remaining indebted to them for all that they gave to our country. It was also pleasing to join the community, fellow Councillors and our Ukrainian guests at Vespers for Ukraine at Brentwood Cathedral in late August.*

*I also enjoyed attending the Family Fun Days, which was so well attended and was enjoyed by so many families in the Borough, with tributes to be paid to our own leisure team and the sponsors who helped make it possible.*

*I am looking forward to the next few months ahead, especially where I will take on a very important Civic role at the Remembrance Sunday Parade where we will pay tribute to all those who fought for our Country and future.”*

### **193. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Ordinary Council held on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 were approved as a true record. The minutes contain a summary of the meeting, to view the full meeting, please visit [Ordinary Council - YouTube](#)

## 194. Public Questions

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, a member of the public resident within the Borough may ask a maximum of two questions relating to the business of the Council providing notice has been received by 10.00am two working days before the relevant meeting.

As Mrs Gearon-Simm and Mrs Smith were not present, the Mayor asked the questions on their behalf.

Mrs Jan Gearon-Simm has submitted two questions:

1. As responsible landlords, Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) will know how many and how habitable the properties they rent to Brentwood residents are. When I was a private landlord from 2004 to 2016, it was my responsibility to ensure that my property was in good condition and habitable. However, the only privately owned properties, which are legally required to be registered with BBC are Housing of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) and they are, of course, liable to a list of regulations. Does BBC know how many privately owned rental properties there are in Brentwood?

Cllr Dr Barrett responded as followed:

Brentwood's Private Sector Housing Policy was last reviewed in 2011, in line with our responsibilities as a strategic housing authority. This policy does not establish a framework to register private rental properties beyond HMOs, nor mandate any data collection on their number.

However, in July of this year, I requested that the officers commence a review of this policy as soon as possible that would address this, and a new policy approach presented to the Housing, Health and Community Committee for adoption at the earliest possible opportunity. This will also consider the possibility of introducing selective licensing for private landlords, as allowed under the Housing Act 2004.

We are developing a dedicated online report form for private rented sector housing complaints, which can be established ahead of this policy review.

For final clarity on your question, according to 2021 Census data there are approximately 16% of households are part of the private rented sector in the Borough, and there had been a greater percentage increase in this type of household since the last census compared to the rest of England.

2. Housing is a human need and "market forces" do not necessarily prevail in all areas of life. In order to encourage home ownership, there is a part rent/buy scheme. When tenants of council properties leave their home those properties remain in Council ownership. If those tenants, who have engaged in a part rent/buy contract, choose to leave their homes,

they are given back the amount of money they have saved during their tenancy. Such council-owned properties can then be rented to other tenants. Will Brentwood Borough Council instigate the part rent/buy scheme for council properties?

Cllr Dr Barrett responded as followed:

The Council is currently considering all form of tenure in relation to its new build schemes including Shared Ownership, however each scheme and property tenure will be considered and decided based on the financial viability of the site.

However, any scheme is not legally able to operate in the way you described. The occupier can sell their shared ownership home at any time. If the occupier owns 100% of their home then they will be able to sell it on the open market. In usual circumstances if they do not own 100% of their home, they must tell the non-occupying co-owner that they want to sell their home, and this gives that body the opportunity to find a buyer for the residents share of the property. The co-owner has a nomination period (usually up to 12 weeks) to find a buyer.

The co-owner may offer to buy back the occupiers share but only in exceptional circumstances, if they wish to and have the funds and are under no obligations to do so. If the co-owner does not find a buyer within the nomination period the occupier owner can sell their share, and their share alone, on the open market. This would make a social rent element in any shared ownership scheme very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain given this open market sale.

Mrs Smith had submitted two questions:

1. If I understood him correctly Cllr Hossack denied that Brentwood Council Housing Department use fixed term tenancies when he responded to a previous public question of mine. Was that information correct please?

Cllr Dr Barrett responded as followed:

Noting that former Cllr Hossack does not have the opportunity to respond himself, I can state that he was mistaken to indicate that the Council Housing Department does not use fixed term tenancies, when in fact it does. This is made clear in the housing policies that have been in place and available online for several years.

This approach is taken as it is required by Government via the Housing and Planning Act 2016, but I can confirm that we, in Brentwood, are committed to providing tenants with secure and well maintained homes that are suitable for their needs.

In the current social housing environment where homes are in high demand, I recognise the combined importance of bringing down our council housing waiting list and offering security to existing tenants. Inherited policy is that flexible tenancies are issued only to new tenants and not those within sheltered accommodation, after the fixed term, which is made up of a 12 month introductory tenancy followed by a five year fixed term tenancy, the Council will expect that the majority of tenancies will be renewed unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

Looking ahead, the Housing, Health and Community committee will be looking at the practical necessities to add the option of a periodic secure tenancy - often referred to as a lifetime tenancy - at the end of this five year period as well, in line with the legislative limits we have at the current time.

2. Is there a forum for people with HIDDEN disabilities (such as autism) & their parents /carers in Brentwood where the Council (as represented by officers and councillors) can meet local people & properly productively discuss services & local issues affecting this group of people? Who is the contact please, (and will they just ignore me & parent / carers like me?)

Cllr Davies responded as followed:

Whilst officers from Brentwood attend the Health and Wellbeing Board (partnership board) and the Brentwood and Basildon Alliance, the Council does not have the statutory responsibility for the provision of these services or establishing these forums. This would be Essex County Council (Social Services) or Health with the Integrated Care Board through the Brentwood and Basildon Alliance.

There are a number forums and support services but I'm not aware of any in Brentwood specifically, these appear to be national forums:  
[Austismforums.com](http://Austismforums.com); [autism.org.uk](http://autism.org.uk); [wrongplanet.net](http://wrongplanet.net).

The Brentwood centre has a gym session which is supported by with a trainer for those with Autism. SNAP and the Walter Boyce Centre also offer a lot of support locally.

## **195. Memorials or Petitions**

No memorials or petitions were received.

## **196. Committee Chairs Reports and Members Questions**

Cllr Bridge requested that the full minutes for this item were recorded.

Members can ask up to two questions to two different Chairs.

Any Member may ask a Chair a written or oral question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Council's area and which falls within the area of responsibility of the Chair's committee.

The period allowed for written and oral questions and answers will not exceed 60 minutes without leave of the Mayor.

Two written questions were received from Cllr White. His first question was as follows:

**To the Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

In the last complete financial period for which figures are available, what was the average weekly income collected from parking charges collected at Coptfold Road Car Park?

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

The average weekly income received in years 2022/23 for the Multi Story Car Park is as followed:

Season tickets - £1,654.67

Parking Income - £2,399.34

Total = £4,054.01

Councillor White had a supplementary question:

There have been a number of complaints from residents or observations from residents that the charging machines haven't been working at Coptfold Road Car Park certainly since the 14th of September, I know one of my colleagues has got photographic evidence that there was a sign up saying we couldn't collect the money. Does the Chair know on how many days in the last three months we've not been collecting that money and how much that has cost the Council and what are we doing about it.

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

We aware of it um we had some problems from about the beginning of September which I highlighted and we were hoping these were going to be short-term issues. There are some operational issues there with the ticket machines which are

being resolved. Unfortunately it's not quite as simple as we'd have hoped. When the contract was signed, it was signed a few years ago there are various contracts maintenance agreements service agreements that were signed up to and we've had to obviously work through what we can get done. I would say in terms of cost, I'm happy to be corrected but I'd have thought somewhere between £10-14K could be the potential loss at this moment in time, that's the situation we're in but action is being taken has been taken over this last few weeks. It's not been quite as simple as hopeful.

Miss branes added, we have been aware that there are issues with the system at the Multi Storey Car Park. We are working with the engineers to get the system back up and running and get it online. The car park is a pay on foot car park therefore we cannot take payment at the moment because of tickets not being produced. What we are doing is working with the engineers, following that if the system is still not able to get up and running we could close the car park to those that pay on foot - season ticket holders could still have access as well as the residence of Beckett's House, but what that does mean is we would have to have an officer man the system.

For the season tickets that are paid, we would give them an additional time on their permits rather than refund them. We will extend their permits with the amount of

time that the payment system has been down - that then reduces the financial impact onto the council because it's only the pay on foot that we're currently losing now. We are looking to what we can and at the same time on how to enhance our system there so we are looking at getting the AMPR system for a better payment system that will make the car park secure so there are resolutions.

Councillor white presented his second question:

**To the Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

What is the target collection rate for emptying the most heavily used litter bins in the borough and what do the council's records monitoring the delivery of this service show in terms of how frequently this has been achieved, and how often it has not, across the past three months?

**Response from Cllr Aspinell, Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

There is no chair of "Environment Committee" – I am the Chair of Clean and Green Committee – Cllr Rigby will read my response:

Thank you Councillor White for the question; The bins are on a set schedule, those target areas that are considered to have heaviest footfall and therefore legitimate use, such as the Highstreets and shop fronts are emptied once a day for 6 days of the week, with the exception of Brentwood and Shenfield highstreets that are also emptied on a Sunday.

The collections have been emptied on schedule as per the plan in the last 3 months.

Councillor White had a supplementary question:

Given the state of overflowing litter bins in a number of places around the borough, would you please share those records?

Councillor Aspinell agreed to this.

**Cllr Slade put a question to the Chair of Housing, Health & Community:**



Brentwood Borough Council awarded Axis a Strategic Asset Management contract made up of 10 initial years I understand. The scope of work comprises of reactive repairs and maintenance avoids planned and technical work and heating systems with specialist works to include asbestos removal Roofing and damp works. Again, I understand the services covered the entirety of Brentwood Borough council's Housing stock. At the time, Axis Director of Maintenance Tim Hayes commented on the contract wins, we are more than confident that we can enhance their existing service and bring added benefits to the wider community with a former Chair of the Community, Health and Housing Committee commenting it was important that we were able to find a partner that offers value for money and excellent customer service. In my first year as a Councillor from 2022 -2023 I was a member of both Community Health and Housing and Audit and Scrutiny Committees, from the reports presented to both committees it became evident we were not enhancing the existing service nor providing excellent service with a number of formal complaints raised. As reflected on Facebook with residents posts, anyone having issues with Axis repairs, the lack of communication and delays and repair along with communication is terrible an attitude of some is awful. Sadly it's also been my experience as a pavement repair on Brentwood Borough Council housing land I requested in June via the members portal as of 5pm this evening has not been actioned nor have there been communication as to the reasons of the delay. As the current member of the Housing, Health and Community Committee and a former member of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee, I have grave concerns how the contract of Axis negatively impacts residents and therefore both committees, as has recently demonstrated with the recent KPIs presented at Audit & Scrutiny Committee meeting yesterday evening. Members of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee also raise their concerns with my fellow ward member asking the Chair to consider the contract and performance of Axis be held to account by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. I understand with Housing, Health and Community Committee requesting Axis' attendance, the Chair made a decision that Audit & Scrutiny did not need to include the Axis contract on the Audit and Scrutiny work program for the year, however as a Councillor and a member and former member of the affected committees, it is clear that Axis need to be answerable responsible and fully held to account. Therefore, I ask that the Leader considered the creation of an Axis Working Group to work with Audit & Scrutiny members to address and resolve the issues which impact both committees, and moreover to ensure our residents are provided at the level of service they deserve.

**Response from Cllr Dr Barrett, Chair of Housing, Health & Community:**  
Obviously the Axis contract predates this Administration and my time as Chair. We are in this for until it expires but we are looking at ways to improve it because we all do know and it was discussed at the Housing Committee that we are unhappy with the performance. I will consider a working group but I will take that away with officers and come back to you. As a point of principle though, I do think that there is an important scrutiny function of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee, that is separate from a policy committee and therefore those functions should not be merged together but absolutely. I

think also it's important that we continue to hold Axis to account in a public forum where obviously we've already seen some results in them actually coming back to us with an Improvement plan.

**Cllr Hirst put a question to the chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

It became clear at the meeting of Audit & Scrutiny yesterday that we have a problem with our Auditors actually providing the capacity to complete or needing to start our audit of the 22/23 accounts. The question is, will the council extricate itself from the existing five-year agreement with the public sector audit appointers so that we can complete our 22/23 audit on a timely basis.

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

The issues we're facing are the issues faced by councils across the country as you know, we are not alone in this situation. I spoke to Mr Willis this afternoon about this issue, we're currently reviewing the situation so we will give you a written response in terms of where we're at, but we're reviewing all the options that we've got because this issue has dragged on for far too long and you know we're far from happy with the situation. If we were unique, if it was just us, it'd be one thing but it's councils across the country with basically exactly the same issue. So we're looking at what options are open to us and we'll give you a response.

Councillor Hirst had a point of information, he said that he represented three of the local authorities which are outside of the PSA arrangements and all three of those are up to date with their accounts.

**Councillor Reed put a question to the chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

It became clear in the Audit & Scrutiny Committee meeting yesterday that our treasury management strategy does not currently have a focus on social and government issues in the way that we are governing our investments. Could I please ask the Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee to clarify which body of the council reviews our treasury management strategy before it is put to Full Council for approval; and could I ask if he could arrange for there to be a joint working group between that body and the Council.

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

The honest answer is I don't know but I will find out for you and we'll come back and give you a response but it would be helpful with that type of question if we had a little bit more warning.

**Councillor Russell put a question to the Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

Residents and businesses have noticed the deterioration of the street scene over the last few months with general litter and overgrown vegetation and weeds. Will the Leader of the Council and the Chair of Clean and Green Committee call once more on our partners at Rochford to fill the gaps on the depot resources or recruit agency staff to bolster the under-resourced depot.

**Response from Cllr Aspinell, Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

The situation is well known, it is something that we've inherited from the previous administration and it's something that we're taking very seriously. I've looked at various options of getting further support in these sectors and our director is working strenuously to come to some sort of resolution. I will let all members know when that has been resolved.

**Councillor Parker put a question to the Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

At the last FAIR Committee, Councillor Kendall referred to a report from Moody's investor service which stated that Brentwood Council was 11th in the most indebted authorities in relation to its size an income ratio of 9.7% income debts £226. We should note that it's not seen as a problem for the past administration who had factored the debts and income into their past budgets. Councillor Kendall was stated this week that Brentwood Council was already as already stated have been highlighted to those borrowings he went on to state "there is to reassure our residents, staff, councillors the council's medium-term financial strategy is robust and our governance process is robust. The value of our assets far outweigh our overall debt and the returns we get from these assets provides the additional income that we invest back into Services we provide. We also have mitigations in place to reduce the negative impact and unforeseen economic events". Taking into account the statements made by Councillor Kendall made on behalf of the coalition administration, would you agree that continuous comments made by him and others at the time they were in opposition concerning the council's financial position over at least the last four or five years was either due to the fact that they did not understand the safe hands the financial situation was in or was it just political posturing? If so, does he not think that the word recovery or the title of the FAIR Committee should be removed. I know it might be a bitter pill to swallow, would you not agree that the robustness he so fondly refers to was due to a Conservative administration and not the Coalition.

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

It's very easy to just answer "no". The situation we have is this - we are still finding out a number of issues regarding the finances of this Council. I think one of the things that has become more likely evident is that under the previous administration a lot of things were channelled through one person; we have a more devolved operation here where chairs take on their responsibilities and it's taken very seriously and undertake them to the best levels they can. We were asked about the Moody's report which basically highlighted 20 Councils I think, we're at number nine. What was concerning about the Moody report, it didn't look at the council's finances in the round. If you actually look where we are based on our published accounts, we've got assets worth £549 million against debts of £192 million. So from a simple perspective we've got obviously more assets that we have on debt. If you also

look at our total long-term debt as an average life of 30 years which provides us with a great deal of certainty because we have interest rates around about 2.3%, which in today's current environment is very low and we're happy with the overall the accounts and finances. Our debt is high in relation to other Councils, our Capital program needs to be drilled down in great detail and there's a lot of capital spend there which is rolled over year after year after year and this is always to be looked at. We are in the process at the moment of investigating other areas of finances to make sure that all members are aware of what the situation is because mostly, when you take over something, the previous government found this, you only find out information when you actually take over, we're finding out more and more through the various meetings that we're having. I make no apologies for the last five years, our job was to hold you to account and to try and be constructive, your job is to do exactly the same with us - we'd expect nothing less - but is the overall financial picture rosie? - it's not how I would like it but it's what we've inherited and we'll deal with it, so as I say I made no apologies for where we are, I certainly wouldn't change the title of FAIR Committee and I think it makes it very clear Finance, Assets, Investment and Recovery from your period of office and that's what we're going to try and do.

**Councillor White put a question to the Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

There was a report on an internal audit on Tree Management which was reported that Audit & Scrutiny last night - one of the observations of the internal audit team was that the Clean and Green Committee, previously Community, Environment and Enforcement Committee provides some oversight of the number of trees planted by the service - however our review of the three most recent meetings identified no scrutiny has been implemented during regarding the absence of pre-inspections. Can I ask the chair what he's doing about it please?

*Councillor Marsh left the Chamber due to a pecuniary interest that her husband is a relevant Council officer on this matter.*

**Response from Cllr Aspinell, Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

Yes, this is something else that we've discovered we've inherited - there hasn't been a decent tree survey done in Brentwood for the last 20 years. We have a sorry state of affairs where we've only been a reactive Council rather a proactive Council. We as opposition at the time nominated many trees in our wards that we felt needed urgent attention some of those were never looked at some of those were ignored or through lack of manpower was never got round to. County Council had a lot to do with that as well because they have responsibility for Highway trees maintenance and they allowed us to do their work for them as they've done in many other areas and there was just too much work not enough people and not enough attention to detail at the time from the relevant committees that was dealing with the trees. Now we have a problem and the clues in our name, there's a lot of them about and there's a lot that could be in dangerous situations. That's why it was on the risk register I believe at the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. We will welcome the report and now we will take action and I warned all the Councillors and the watching Millions on the web at the Clean and Green Committee that there was something coming down the road

that was going to cost us dearly - there will be a price to be paid for this and the FAIR Committee will be putting that into their budgets for next year. There will be an immediate reaction to any that we find that are in a dangerous state but we will have to have a budget put aside for this work. It's going to be long, it's going to be detailed, and it will be done properly this time.

**Councillor White put a question to the Chair of Housing, Health and Community Committee:**

It was particularly important since it was just suggested that chairs last year didn't take the brief seriously, within Housing I did and I was proud of the fact that we managed after covid to finally get things like electrical inspections and gas inspections up above to the target. At Audit & Scrutiny Committee last night, it was said that in terms of Housing having reached the target of 100% last quarter under the previous administration, I would add the gas servicing dipped below target and can I ask the Chair of Housing why that is and our measures in place to ensure it doesn't happen again.

**Councillor Dr Barrett, the Chair of Housing, Health and Community Committee responded:**

I wasn't at the Audit & Scrutiny Committee and I haven't had a chance to read the minutes yet so thank you for making me aware. I'm looking into the reasons.

**Councillor White put a question to the Chair of Audit & Scrutiny Committee:**

Can I first of all thank him for yesterday's meeting, I think it was a productive one in which all members got to do their jobs. One of the points which came up during discussion of Treasury Management, although it was said that the two particular things I looked at when we're considering who to borrow from was financial risk and reputation it became clear during the discussion that there apparently are no checks in terms of the reputation ethical investment register checks and such like done from the organisations that we borrow from. So I know that he seemed to indicate from the chair that he would be looking into it but can I ask him to confirm that is the case and that he'll be bringing forward a report to committee?

**Councillor Sankey, the chair of Audit & Scrutiny Committee responded:**

Yes it was a very interesting meeting and I thought everybody contributed very well in that particular point. Mr Willis hasn't actually responded I don't see any of the email

but he did make the point where he confirmed that there are actually checks on counterparties. He has suggested a way forward which I would like to explore with him and I actually agree with what he was proposing.

**Councillor Wagland put a question to the Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

In Ingatestone, we have as I think many people know the listed Church St Edmund and St Mary and on the path that runs along the front of that from the High Street which forms part of the route that most people take to get to the station. This is very well trafficked and there is a bin or there was in terms of a functioning bin because that has been wrapped in black and yellow tape. It is overflowing and I have received a number of complaints from residents about this particular bin, not least because of its setting and where it is but the fact it is creating a personal problem for me in fact because there is an assumption that this might be a matter for me in my capacity as an Essex County Councillor. But residents have confirmed what I've also ascertained from ECC that this is not an ECC bin, it's not an ECC footpath or owned by them. So my question for the Chair of Clean and Green is when will this be repaired or replaced?

The Mayor clarified that in normal circumstances no question should be put to the chair relates exclusively toward an operational resident matter that could not otherwise be resolved by reasonable use of the casework system. The Mayor confirmed with Councillor Wagland that as she had only just ascertained that it was not an ECC bin, she had not entered it into the casework system. Therefore the Mayor refused the question until it had the chance to be answered as a ward matter in the member casework system.

**Councillor Bridge put a question to the Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

I'm a little bit confused about your answer frankly to Councillor Parker because you were quoted in the media only a few days ago saying our

medium return financial plan is robust and yet you're saying here that we're still investigating, we're still looking into things, we're still recovering and if it's robust, why do we need to recover?

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

Based on what we know, and that's key, based on what we know at the moment, it is as robust as the finances can be. As I say we're still investigating, we're looking at various issues if and when we have a situation when we need to highlight anything, rest assured we will bring this to your attention.

**Councillor Bridge put a question to the Vice Chair of Planning Committee:**

I was just asking would he join me to thank in particular relation for later item on the agenda, would you join me in thanking Essex County Council in particular the great effort they did under the then responsible Cabinet Member Councillor Lesley Wagland for the fantastic work that's been done in producing the CIL report which I believe is going to be worth £28 million to this Council?

**Councillor M Cuthbert, Vice Chair of Planning Committee responded:**

I'm not entirely sure which part of the report that you're talking about would you be able to clarify that (*this was clarified as the CIL report*) and which parts were Councillor Wagland involved in?

Councillor Bridge clarified he was asking a general to the (Vice) Chair of Planning about the fact that there's still policy that has been jointly led by Essex - we got funding from Essex to do it and I wanted to acknowledge the work. I was asking would you join me in so doing the work done by Essex in particular the responsible Cabinet Member at Essex at the time, Councillor Lesley Wagland, over the wonderful opportunity of the money this is going to bring the Council.

Councillor M Cuthbert continued, I'm happy to thank anyone who's been involved in the CIL assessment because I do think it's going to be an excellent thing for this Council so I'm grateful for absolutely everyone's input who has been involved in this situation.

**Councillor Davies put a question to the Chair of Finance, Assets, Investment and Recovery Committee:**

Does he agree that all elected members of this Council should feel safe and protected in line with the art officer's safeguarding policies. As local councillors we visit residents to better serve our community and address their needs. If a resident is on the council's danger/high risk register should we not

need to be made aware of this - of course would be confidential and used for a legitimate and lawful purpose on a need to know basis. I'm assuming different teams in the council share safeguarding issues so why could it not be shared with Councillors

**Response from Cllr Kendall, Chair of Finance, Assets, Investments and Recovery Committee:**

I fully agree with Councillor Davis in terms of the point she's making in her question. I think it's an important issue for all members across the chamber and is something that does need to be addressed. I know other councils have policies on this and I think we need to review those. If I'm able to, I'd like to refer to the Leader if he has anything to add.

Councillor Aspinell, Leader of the Council added that he believed that we've seen some horrible examples of elected members getting murdered, assaulted, having horrible things done to them when they are identified as to where they are at any certain time or in fact where they live so I would plead with everyone, I would ask everyone here when you fill in your form for election, you put in "care of the Town Hall" - that is a perfectly sane thing to do. I'll give you an example, I was elected in 1982 and in 1983 I had my young son pick up the phone got a stream of abuse from this lady nothing to do with me just because I was the first name on the council's phone number list alphabetically. It become evident that you are putting yourself forward as a potential target and we should all look and respect that so at all stages I believe we should protect our anonymity and it's within our law because our addresses and our contact details are known, they don't have to be given out by this Council. If we have as had been explained a risk register held by a certain department in the council that appertained to staff being aware, that there's someone that they have to take special measures of like go in twos to see this person, the ward members where that person is, I believe should be involved and should be told. I think that's the due courtesy to us doing our job. Also a couple of my members, have had people just knock on their doors, residents wanting to talk to them because they're their local councillor - that's okay in the extent if people know you because you've been around a long time, that's fine but when it's a stranger on your doorstep - who knows what could happen. That's what happened to Cllr Davies not too long ago it's happened to me two or three times, so yes I think we should take this safeguarding more seriously than we have in the past. I attended the safeguarding seminar by the Council about four years ago but I don't believe the new Council has a new intake had that same thing, if it has then I apologise but it needs to be upgraded, it needs to be involved with Scrutiny. I think maybe and we take a stronger view about it in the more serious way in these very sad and troubled times.

Mr Stephenson added that there is a policy for officers and members and we treat them both the same. There may be an issue around communication and training which I know we've arranged some sessions with members coming



up very soon because with regard to the list you refer to, there is a confidential list. It's protected on the Data Protection Act so we can't just share that with everybody. If someone is looking to attend a property they refer to the process to find out - it's a need to know basis, there's not a long list of people that the council hold that can be circulated across the organisation. We'd expect the same thing for members as well and also the challenges for anybody to go into a property alone, we would not do that as officers, some members are sometimes put in a situation where possibly you're asked to come in to look into property and there is a risk so we all need to look at how we can reassure you with our training and LGA training. There is a cautionary advisory list for officers which can be referred to and we will look to share with members if there is a requirement for that member. This list is on a need to know basis as you can expect and is reviewed annually and it will be unfair to share that type of information with everybody because people might be aware of those residents for friendships or relationships. There is some training and development around ensuring that members are fully aware of that process moving forward and I also recognise the challenges. You are at risk and the same for officers or member on their own, it's your word against theirs if they're in their property as well so we really would advise not to go alone but we also understand sometimes you are in a difficult position. There will be further development and training and support members and just reassurance and support where we can.

**Councillor Barber put a question to the Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

Previously I've asked about the schedule for rolling out the electrical vehicle charges around the borough and I think at the last meeting I was told that there would be substantially more EV charges by the end of September. Given that we're only a few days away from the end of the month could the Chair of Clean and Green please tell us how many additional new charges will be rolled out by the end of this week?

**Response from Cllr Aspinell, Chair of Clean & Green Committee:**

I haven't got that information, I apologise, I should have done. I know that two of the applications at two of the potential sites had to go to Planning Committee and I don't know what happened to them there. I hope they were approved because we were told that they probably didn't need to go to Planning Committee in the first place but once the process was started we might as well finish. I don't know and I do apologise.

Also, due to circumstances not all the working groups for Clean and Green met this last cycle, and so there will be some coming up and there is a new working group we're introducing under the Constitution for Clean and Green we can look at Highway matters so now that the Parish Councillors and local members are no longer part of the County Council's Local Highway Panel,

we're going to start our own here and refer it on to the Local Highways Panel through myself or through Councillors Wagland or Willes in the future so that's just to put a marker down. We are going to meet and all the Parish Councils who will be invited.

**Councillor Barber put a question to the Chair of Community, Health and Housing Committee:**

In previous meetings I've asked about the medical arrangements in Ingatestone, Fryerning and Mountnessing and we were assured that there that was centre of the administration's platform. Could I ask please are regular meetings being held currently with the NHS specifically on the topic of medical provision within Ingatestone, Fryerning and Mountnessing about nursing and if so, how frequently are they meeting and how many meetings since the last Ordinary Council meeting?

**Councillor Dr Barrett, the Chair of Housing, Health and Community Committee responded:**

We are still looking at working with NHS for the future provision across the borough as well as Ingatestone. From myself, there hasn't been any communication meetings with the NHS at the moment, we are attempting to have more meetings with them although I believe the Chief Executive has been regularly meeting with the NHS and maybe he can update you on that issue.

Mr Stephenson added that with regard to the question, that the last meeting and previously I've met a number of times the Alliance Director this week and I'm meeting them again on the 14th ahead of the member All Member Briefing on the 16<sup>th</sup> October where they are looking to present information data on their approach to infrastructure and provision for the NHS across Brentwood which will pick up Ingatestone, Mountnessing and Fryerning as well. There has been discussion about the need and they wanted to bring it up in the presentation but obviously there is local discussion around need for more GP provision and surgeries. They've also got some data around a different provision of what the NHS are moving forward and it's not just necessarily just GP surgeries and GPs and they'll bring it up in the presentation on the 16th October. I've got a preview of that but probably best to have that presentation and perhaps a follow-up Q&A afterwards or bring back to a relevant Committee following the briefing.

**Councillor Barber put a question to the Chair of Planning:**

At a recent Planning Committee meeting, we had to re-run a planning decision on an item within my own ward and there have been I believe three significant procedural failures during planning meetings since the change of administration. So my question to the Vice Chair of Planning is what training

and Improvement is planned for the Chair and the Vice Chair of that committee to make sure that that doesn't happen again?

**Councillor M Cuthbert, Vice Chair of Planning responded:**

At present we have not been asked to take any additional training for that role.

Monitoring Officer Mrs Mayhew added, there's been some talks with Steven Bell from Birketts who is going to do extra training and pick up the points that you've just mentioned.

**Councillor Reed put a question to the Mayor:**

When we met on Monday night as a group to discuss the agenda, this item hadn't been published. Can I please ask that it is published a little bit earlier because it's given us no time to properly read the reports that were published yesterday.

**The Mayor of Brentwood responded:**

I can confirm from the Monitoring Officer that reports are compiled from the meetings and agendas of relevant committee meetings. At this period the committee meetings were quite close to the Ordinary Council meeting indeed Audit & Scrutiny being an example that was only yesterday. Going forward this will be updated and improved as appropriate and looking to make sure these narratives appear earlier for Councillors to have the opportunity to have oversight, this circumstance was limited by the narrow period of meetings before the Council and I do apologise for that. There's actually no report here from the chair of Audit and Scrutiny because the meeting took place last night.

**197. Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Adoption**

The report sets out the outcomes of the examination of the council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and sought to formally approve and publish the Council's CIL Charging Schedule, in accordance with Regulation 25 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The report advised that, subject to council adoption on 27 September 2023, the Brentwood CIL Charging Schedule will take effect on the 15 January 2024. This date is informed by an ongoing programme of work to set up all necessary guidance, administrative and financial systems and processes for CIL implementation.

The report summarised the preparation process that has been required to produce the CIL Charging Schedule and the stages of consultation and formal examination that have been involved. The report sets out how formal adoption by the council is now required in order to commence and implement CIL.

Once CIL is brought into effect, the Council will become a 'CIL Charging Authority' and 'CIL Collecting Authority'. Moving forward it will be important for Members to approve the governance arrangements for the prioritisation and spending of CIL receipts. This report provided Members with an update as to the consideration of governance arrangements and a commitment for this to be the subject of a future committee report within the next 12 months.

Cllr M Cuthbert **MOVED** and Cllr Aspinell **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**R1. Adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (Appendix A), with an implementation date of 15 January 2024.**

**R2. Adopt the Instalment Policy (Appendix B), with an implementation date of 15 January 2024.**

**R3. Delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, any necessary further minor editorial changes to the Charging Schedule or Instalment Policy and a change to the implementation date if necessary.**

**R4. Approve that governance options and arrangements for the priorities and spending of CIL receipts be brought to committee in the next 12 months.**

#### **198. Report of the Constitution Work Group (CWG)**

Following a motion at Ordinary Council on 21 June 2023, which stated:-

"The Council notes:

- 'Chairs Reports and Questions' at Ordinary Council should provide democratic accountability of its leadership.
- Recently, Leaders have chaired PRED committees, allowing a very broad range of questions to be put to them. This may not be the case when a Leader chairs a Policy Committee with a more focused remit, or none at all.
- This motion therefore calls for immediate amendment to Procedural Rule 7.2 that limits the scope of questions to (and omits specific inclusion of) the Council Leader.

This council resolves to:-

1. Require the council's leader to be fully involved in chairs questions sessions across all areas of Council activity to promote public trust, encourage robust discussions, and enable greater scrutiny of actions and policies;

2. Introduce with immediate effect changes to fully include the Council Leader in Ordinary Council's 'Chairs Report and Questions' session (to be renamed Leaders and Chairs' Report and Questions) to cover "all areas of Council responsibility within the council's area";

3. Request the monitoring officer, in liaison with the Constitution Working Group, to bring forward to the next Ordinary Council the necessary changes Procedural Rule 7 (Chair Report and Questions) to give effect to this change."

Under chapter 4, 8.3.7 (a) (i) The motion was referred to an appropriate body (CWG) for consideration with a report being brought back to the next meeting of Council.

Cllr Laplain **MOVED** and Cllr White **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**R1 To adopt the Leader's Report under the chapter 4 paragraph 7, 1-3 to form part of the Chair's Reports and Questions within the Constitution.**

**R2 The Monitoring Officer to make the change required to the Constitution with immediate effect.**

#### **199. Honorary Titles – Aldermen and Alderwomen**

The Council wished to recognise those who merit the highest awards that the Council can bestow on a person or organisation.

Members spoke in support and endorsed the nominations before them.

Cllr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Haigh **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**R1. That, in pursuance of section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of the Council being of the opinion that eminent services have been rendered to the Council by former Councillors Tony Sleep, Roger Keeble, Pauline Myers and Jean McGinley, that the Council confers them with the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman.**

**R2. That the presentation of these honorary titles will take place at the Civic Dinner on 5 April 2024.**

#### **200. Substitute appointment of representatives on an Outside Organisations 2023/2024**

*(Cllr Hirst declared an interest and left the Chamber and did not vote on this item due to his role as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.)*

Following the appointments to Outside Organisation at Ordinary Council on 21 June 2023.

Essex Police & Fire Panel had asked that the Council nominate a substitute to attend meetings in replace of the nominated representative, when necessary, as a statutory requirement. No other requests for substitutes for any of the other outside organisations have been made.

An annual Outside Organisation review had been undertaken to ensure effective partnership working wherever appropriate to help deliver the Council's objectives and to ensure that the Council's time is spent productively and effectively and forms part of the Scrutiny Work Programme.

Cllr Aspinell **MOVED** and Cllr Laplain **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**R1 That the substitute appointment on the Essex Police & Fire Panel in Appendix A be approved.**

## **201. Notice of Motion**

Any one or more Members of the Council may, by notice received by the Monitoring Officer no later than 10.00 am eleven working days before the day of the Council meeting, require the Council to consider a motion about a matter relating to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Council's area. A notice of motion may be accompanied by a statement of not more than 200 words setting out the reason for the proposed motion.

The Monitoring Officer shall include all notices of motion and accompanying statements in the agenda for the next relevant meeting of Council in the order received.

Three Notices of Motion has been submitted in accordance with Rule 3 in Part 4.1 of the Constitution - Council Procedure Rules and are listed in order of the date received.

**Motion 1 – Received 16th August 2023 @ 14:54**

**Mover: Cllr Dr Barrett**

**Seconder: Cllr Aspinell**

*(Cllr Aspinell declared an interest as an Essex County Councillor)*

Statement:

Brentwood High Street was redeveloped into its current form over a decade ago, at a cost of over fourteen million pounds, and considerable negative impact on local businesses during the implementation of the works.

Currently large areas of paving slabs on the High Street are broken, dislodged sunken or move. The Road condition also suffers from major dips and sunken sections.

Brentwood Access Group has consistently raised concerns over the state of the High Street and its impact on local residents. Residents, businesses and Councillors have also raised numerous issues regarding the state of repair of the High Street both directly and indirectly with appropriate stakeholders.

Motion:

This Council believes:

- Brentwood residents and businesses deserve a High Street environment that is in good order and a beacon for the Borough.
- The current state of Brentwood High Street is unacceptable and is causing a direct negative impact on both resident enjoyment and economic development of our main retail area.

The Council resolves:

- To demand Essex County Council, as the Highway Authority, acts on their responsibility to maintain Brentwood High Street to a good standard.
- That it will request Essex County Council completes a full audit of the high street and within three months produce a schedule of repairs to be made publicly available.
- That Brentwood Borough Council will provide all appropriate assistance necessary to deliver this audit and any repairs programme.
- That we will work with SEPP on any element that requires changes to parking, waiting areas or enforcement activity to assist in this programme of repairs.

An **AMENDMENT** to the motion was **MOVED** by Councillor White and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hirst:

- **To work with all relevant bodies such as Essex County Council, Brentwood Bid, SEPP, bus companies, retailers and our own environment and enforcement teams to improve Brentwood High Street.**
- To **demand** work with Essex County Council, as the Highway Authority, to **ensure it** acts on its ~~their~~ responsibility to maintain Brentwood High Street to a good standard.
- ~~That it will request Essex County Council~~ **To** completes a full audit of the high street **and submit this to Essex CC** within three months **to assist it in** production of a schedule of repairs to be made publicly available.
- That Brentwood Borough Council will provide all appropriate assistance necessary to deliver this audit and any repairs programme.
- That we will work with SEPP on any element that requires changes to parking, waiting areas or enforcement activity to assist in this programme of repairs.

The original mover and seconder did not accept the full amendment but did accept the to include:

*- To work with all relevant bodies such as Essex County Council, Brentwood Bid, SEPP, bus companies, retailers, Pubwatch and our own environment and enforcement teams to improve Brentwood High Street.*

The mover and seconder of the amendment withdrew all other amendments.

The amended motion was **CARRIED** as follows:

This Council believes:

- Brentwood residents and businesses deserve a High Street environment that is in good order and a beacon for the Borough.

- The current state of Brentwood High Street is unacceptable and is causing a direct negative impact on both resident enjoyment and economic development of our main retail area.

The Council resolves:

- To work with all relevant bodies such as Essex County Council, Brentwood Bid, SEPP, bus companies, retailers, Pubwatch and our own environment and enforcement teams to improve Brentwood High Street.

- To demand Essex County Council, as the Highway Authority, acts on their responsibility to maintain Brentwood High Street to a good standard.

- That it will request Essex County Council completes a full audit of the high street and within three months produce a schedule of repairs to be made publicly available.

- That Brentwood Borough Council will provide all appropriate assistance necessary to deliver this audit and any repairs programme.

- That we will work with SEPP on any element that requires changes to parking, waiting areas or enforcement activity to assist in this programme of repairs.

**There was an amendment to the order of Motions as agreed by the Mayor where Motion 3 was heard ahead of Motion 2.**

**Motion 3 – Received 11th September 2023 @ 08:17**

**Mover: Cllr White    Seconder: Cllr Hirst**

This Council recognises the critical importance of a healthy natural environment to the overall wellbeing and quality of life of our residents, and the pressing need to protect nature.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic lockdowns raised awareness of how human health and wellbeing is intrinsically linked to the health of the natural environment. Use of parks and public green space, such as woodland, increased as people sought solace, exercise and recreation in nature.



Considering the responsibility this Council has for the management of local parks, local planning policies and land it owns, this Council resolves to:

1. Establish a climate and nature advisory committee to guide Members and council officers.
2. Include ecological impact assessments alongside climate and sustainability considerations in all committee and council reports.
3. Work towards making nature recovery a top strategic priority in planning policies and design guidelines for new developments. This includes:
  - a. Identifying suitable areas for habitat restoration, establishing 'green allocated sites' and embedding Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) in local plans and policies.
  - b. Promoting Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), extending the minimum requirement from 10% to 20%.
  - c. Minimising the impact of development on existing habitats.
  - d. Enhancing access to nature-rich green spaces within a 10-minute radius for all residents.
  - e. Requiring new developments to commit to a minimum of 30% tree canopy cover.
  - f. Increasing tree canopy cover in existing housing estates where it is below the 16% urban average for England.
4. Support initiatives, including community run tree nurseries, to increase the supply of local saplings.
5. Prioritise the use of council land holdings, for habitat creation and restoration, by transitioning where appropriate from maintaining grass to planting trees. Finally, Council urges all stakeholders to come together to protect and restore our natural assets, recognising their intrinsic role in securing a sustainable future for our community.

An **AMENDMENT** to the motion was **MOVED** by Councillor Aspinell and **SECONDED** by Councillor Worsfold:

At end of first sentence add: "We also recognise the important contribution protecting nature and promoting biodiversity will make to achieving our ambitious Net Zero objectives."

In third paragraph add between "this Council" and "resolves": "acknowledges the work of the Clean and Green Committee and its Working Groups (established this year by the Joint Administration) to address all the issues detailed below within its Constitution and"

Add at end of clause 3(b): "which should be sustainable for at least 30 years."

Add at end of clause 3 (d): "including promoting the establishment of new footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes."

**New clauses:**

6. Identify potential sites for new permanent and temporary allotments, especially in the parts of the borough currently poorly served by allotment provision.

7. Ensure all of these issues are prioritised in the review of the Local Development Plan and communicated urgently to all developers looking at building on sites in the borough.

The amendment was accepted by the original mover and seconder subject to change below:

In third paragraph add between “this Council” and “resolves”: “acknowledges the work of the Clean and Green Committee and its Working Groups (established this year by the Joint Administration) and those of the previous administration to address all the issues detailed below within its Constitution and”

The amended motion was **CARRIED** as follows:

*This Council recognises the critical importance of a healthy natural environment to the overall wellbeing and quality of life of our residents, and the pressing need to protect nature. We also recognise the important contribution protecting nature and promoting biodiversity will make to achieving our ambitious Net Zero objectives.*

*The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic lockdowns raised awareness of how human health and wellbeing is intrinsically linked to the health of the natural environment. Use of parks and public green space, such as woodland, increased as people sought solace, exercise and recreation in nature.*

*Considering the responsibility this Council has for the management of local parks, local planning policies and land it owns, this Council acknowledges the work of the Clean and Green Committee and its Working Groups (established this year by the Joint Administration and those of the previous administration) to address all the issues detailed below within its Constitution resolves to:*

*1. Establish a climate and nature advisory committee to guide Members and council officers.*

*2. Include ecological impact assessments alongside climate and sustainability considerations in all committee and council reports.*

*3. Work towards making nature recovery a top strategic priority in planning policies and design guidelines for new developments. This includes:*

*a. Identifying suitable areas for habitat restoration, establishing ‘green allocated sites’ and embedding Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) in local plans and policies.*

*b. Promoting Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), extending the minimum requirement from 10% to 20% which should be sustainable for at least 30 years.*

*c. Minimising the impact of development on existing habitats.*

*d. Enhancing access to nature-rich green spaces within a 10-minute radius for all residents including promoting the establishment of new footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes.*

*e. Requiring new developments to commit to a minimum of 30% tree canopy cover.*

*f. Increasing tree canopy cover in existing housing estates where it is below the 16% urban average for England.*

*4. Support initiatives, including community run tree nurseries, to increase the supply of local saplings.*

*5. Prioritise the use of council land holdings, for habitat creation and restoration, by transitioning where appropriate from maintaining grass to planting trees. Finally, Council urges all stakeholders to come together to protect and restore our natural assets, recognising their intrinsic role in securing a sustainable future for our community.*

6. Identify potential sites for new permanent and temporary allotments, especially in the parts of the borough currently poorly served by allotment provision.

7. Ensure all of these issues are prioritised in the review of the Local Development Plan and communicated urgently to all developers looking at building on sites in the borough.

*Finally, Council urges all stakeholders to come together to protect and restore our natural assets, recognising their intrinsic role in securing a sustainable future for our community.*

**Motion 2 – Received 10th September 2023 @ 21:40**

**Mover: Cllr Heard Seconder: Cllr Barber**

Pigeon droppings under Shenfield Railway Bridge

The situation regarding pigeon droppings under the Shenfield Railway Bridge has deteriorated badly over the summer months and has become totally unacceptable. Such waste material contains harmful fungal spores which can lead to respiratory disease.

Effective measures such as erecting wire and fencing, use of a falcon or deployment of sound devices can all help to provide a solution.

It is the council's view that the health risks to members of the public from the current unhygienic situation cannot be allowed to persist.

This Council resolves to :

- i) Deploy the necessary resources to treat the affected area to effect a deep clean and maintain a regular cleaning regime until adequate measures are taken to deter the pigeons from the area.
- ii) ii) Arrange an urgent meeting with Network Rail and the relevant Borough Council officers to secure delivery of the necessary work to both the Bridge and the Railway Station roof to deter pigeons from nesting.
- iii) iii) Bring back a report to the Clean and Green Committee with the details of steps taken and progress made.

An **AMENDMENT** was **MOVED** by Councillor Worsfold and **SECONDED** by Cllr N Cuthbert:

In 1st line after "Shenfield Railway Bridges" (add an s) insert "and the two railways bridges that cross Alexander Lane"

New third paragraph: "We are very disappointed that Network Rail has still not produced a plan or estimate for replacing the netting under the Hutton Road bridges a year after undertaking to do so. We are also frustrated at the lack of response from Greater Anglia about the need to deal with the pigeons nesting around the station building despite several approaches by ward councillors."

In point 1 i) amend "area" to "areas"

Replace point 2 ii) with: "Arrange an urgent meeting with Network Rail, Greater Anglia, Essex County Council and the relevant Borough Council officers to secure delivery of the necessary work to all four bridges and the railway station roof to deter pigeons from nesting."

This amendment was accepted by the original mover and seconder subject to a change in:

Replace point 2 ii) with: "Arrange an urgent meeting with Network Rail, Greater Anglia, Essex County Council ~~and the relevant Borough Council officers~~ *and any other organisations* to secure delivery of the necessary work to all four bridges and the railway station roof to deter pigeons from nesting."

The amended motion was **CARRIED** as follows:

Pigeon droppings under Shenfield Railway Bridges and the two railways bridges that cross Alexander Lane.

The situation regarding pigeon droppings under the Shenfield Railway Bridge has deteriorated badly over the summer months and has become totally unacceptable. Such waste material contains harmful fungal spores which can lead to respiratory disease.

Effective measures such as erecting wire and fencing, use of a falcon or deployment of sound devices can all help to provide a solution. We are very disappointed that Network Rail has still not produced a plan or estimate for

replacing the netting under the Hutton Road bridges a year after undertaking to do so. We are also frustrated at the lack of response from Greater Anglia about the need to deal with the pigeons nesting around the station building despite several approaches by ward councillors

It is the council's view that the health risks to members of the public from the current unhygienic situation cannot be allowed to persist.

This Council resolves to :

- i) Deploy the necessary resources to treat the affected areas to effect a deep clean and maintain a regular cleaning regime until adequate measures are taken to deter the pigeons from the area.
- ii) ii) Arrange an urgent meeting with Network Rail, Greater Anglia, Essex County Council and any other organisations to secure delivery of the necessary work to all four bridges and the railway station roof to deter pigeons from nesting.
- iii) iii) Bring back a report to the Clean and Green Committee with the details of steps taken and progress made.

## **202. Urgent Business**

There were no items of business to discuss.

The meeting concluded at 10.15pm.