

Council Performance & Budget Summary

January 2018

The monthly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor and manage service delivery. It shows performance against relevant targets.

Appendices

- A. Planning Update
- B. Section 106 Quarterly Update
- C. Property Transactions Update
- D. Partnerships Update
- E. Syrian Refugees Update
- F. ICT Strategy Update
- G. Housing Benefits Update
- H. Weed Treatment Contract
- I. Local Plan Joint Working with the South West Herts Group Update
- J. Planning Update (Part 2)
- K. Weed Treatment Contract (Part 2)

Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (January 2018) and its appendices.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Measures

As reported at Cabinet on 25 January, the external data source for these measures is out of action and is being rebuilt. During this downtime, alternative data reported to the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) and collated by the Community Safety Team can indicate these trends.

Crime statistics reported to RAG (on a quarterly basis) shows the following:

Month	All Crime	Anti-Social Behaviour
Jan-18	860	184
Jan-17	748	230

The Council's own data on cases of anti-social behaviour, responded to by the Community Safety Team, shows the following:

Month	Anti-Social Behaviour
Jan-18	21
Dec-17	35
Jan-17	53

Commentary

The table overleaf provides commentary for indicators giving more detailed explanation and any action the Council is taking to improve performance where appropriate.

	Measure	Comments
R	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	<p>The average time accommodation is left empty ('void') has increased slightly, compared to December 2017, for a number of reasons. One property proved difficult to let as it could only be taken by someone over the age of 60, so was vacant for 86 days. This pushed up the average time.</p> <p>Additional works were identified by the surveyor in some void properties over and above the original specification. These are carried out by a specialist contractor whose work is not included in the statistics for the key performance indicators. As they only measure the main void contractor, Roalco. Out of the 10 properties reported in January four were delayed due to specialist contractor work (40%). Compared to five being affected out of 13 in December 2017 (38%).</p>
R	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	<p>Rent arrears in cash terms increased by £62,000 over the December/January period, similar to trends in previous years. This is possibly due to people traditionally overspending at Christmas and prioritising other (interest bearing) debts ahead of their rent.</p> <p>In January there was a 60% increase (89) in the number of tenants making new claims for Universal Credit, accounting for approximately £12,000 of the arrears increase. This spike in claims may be part of a longer term trend or it may be due to seasonal contracts ending.</p> <p>The new rental monitoring software system was implemented in late January. We anticipate over the next few months that this will help us to target accounts requiring more in depth intervention, more effectively. Once a few months of data is collected, it will also assist managers in monitoring activity and performance.</p> <p>Officers have been trialling evening working to 7pm on a fortnightly basis, calling tenants in arrears, and the average additional income collected is between £2,000 to £4,000. We will continue with this approach over the coming months.</p>
A	Number of households in temporary accommodation & Average time in temporary accommodation	<p>The number of households in temporary accommodation has fallen. This is due to a new build housing association development providing 34 units. Several residents have received offers, and it has been a busy time for lettings after Christmas. In addition, many residents who were 'under offer' for permanent accommodation when we last reported in December have now moved out of their temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The average time in temporary accommodation does not yet</p>

	Measure	Comments
		reflect these changes. The number will naturally lag, but as new residents come into temporary accommodation, the figure will decrease.
G	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims & Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Please refer to Appendix G: Housing Benefits Update for more information.
A	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	<p>In January 2018, only three appeal decisions were received. Of these, two were dismissed and one was allowed in part. This equates to 67% of the Council's decisions being supported in the month. The low number of appeal decisions received has contributed to a lower performance than has been noted in terms of the figure for this month. However, the upward trend towards achieving the overall target continues in general.</p> <p>Dismissed appeals included a replacement dwelling and two dwellings within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The replacement dwelling was not considered to respect the character and appearance of the locality, and the other two were considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Both of which lacked the very special circumstances necessary to justify a grant of planning permission.</p> <p>The allowed appeal relates to a scheme for domestic extensions. This illustrates how the application of Local Plan Policy 72 is subjective. Senior officer analysis of appeal decisions will continue so performance in future months can improve.</p>
G	Parking Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued	<p>There was a 6.5% reduction in PCNs issued in January 2018 when compared to December 2017.</p> <p>The amount of time the Civil Enforcement Officers were deployed in January 2018 was 15% less than in January 2017. However, PCNs issued only dropped by 1.91%.</p>
G	Museum visits	<p>The figure for Hypocaust visits (6,780) is an estimate based on the previous January's figures. This is due to the door counter being out of commission at the moment. The repair work will be undertaken shortly. We now believe the low number of visits reported in December 2017 was due to the counter not working, as this wasn't discovered until early January.</p> <p>In January, we received a total of 4,965 visits to Verulamium Museum, compared with 2,395 in December 2017. The museum always receives fewer visitors in December due to the Christmas holidays and the last two weeks of term being less popular for trips. During the autumn term we made more schools sessions available per day. This resulted in schools being able to book mid-term visits rather than having to take</p>

Measure	Comments
	<p>end of term slots.</p> <p>The private hire figure (65) is based on one event, the annual St Albans local history society New Year party. This is a conservative estimate. All other figures are within the normal range of fluctuation for January.</p>

Key

The performance information is colour coded associated to the target or trend.

For indicators with a target – Green is where a target is achieved, Amber is up to 10% worse than target and Red is worse than 10% from target. For indicators with trend analysis – Green highlights an improved performance and Red a worse performance.

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Council Performance & Budget Summary

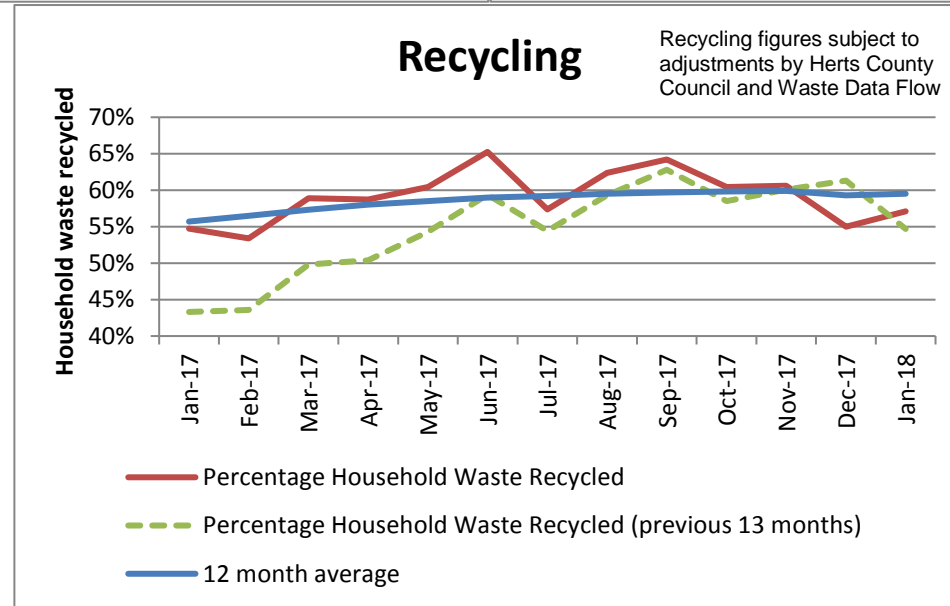
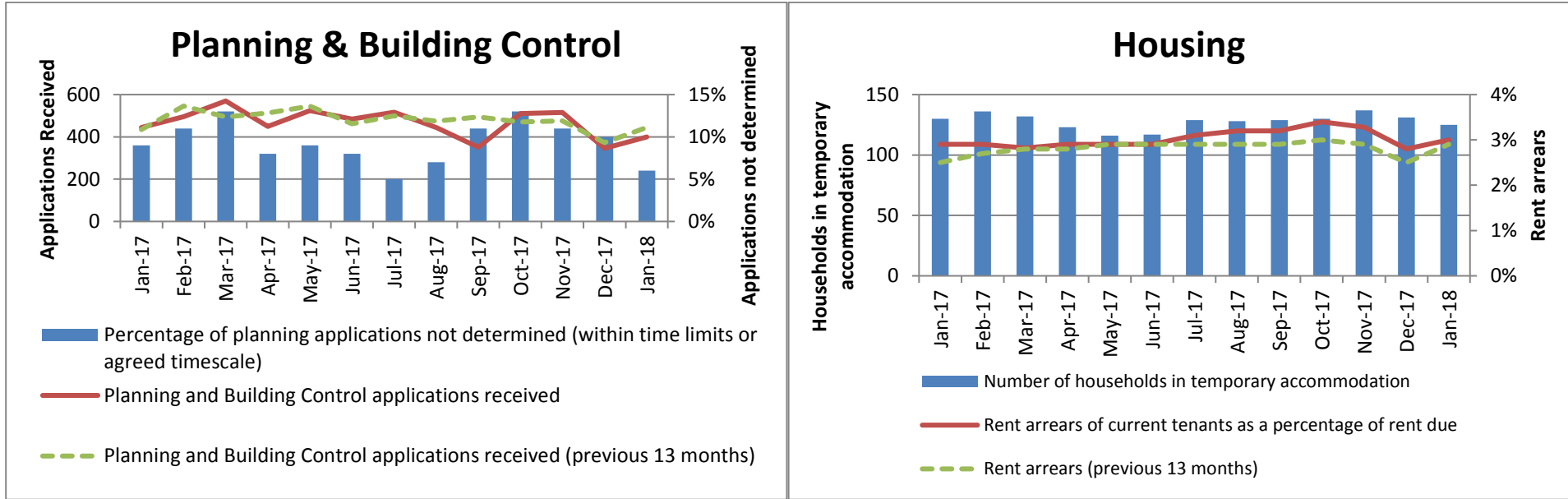
January 2018



	Bigger or Smaller is Better	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	TARGET	
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	-2.9%	-2.5%	-6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-2.2%	-3.6%	-3.8%	-4.4%	-3.9%	-3.4%	-3.6%	-4.0%	0.0%
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	23	23	26	33	37	34	34	36	35	35	34	33	33	26
	Average time vacant for current voids (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	15	20	29	32	30	23	24	25	26	28	33	25	24	26
	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	Trend
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Smaller	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	3.1%	3.2%	3.2%	3.4%	3.3%	2.8%	3.0%	2.6%
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	130	136	132	123	116	117	129	128	129	130	137	131	125	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	28	29	28	29	28	27	25	24	25	24	26	27	27	Trend
	Percentage of repairs completed on time	Bigger	96%	97%	96%	100%	99%	98%	99%	97%	92%	100%	100%	97%	100%	98%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support	Smaller	6,974	6,951	6,920	6,934	6,896	6,899	6,861	6,836	6,831	6,812	6,778	6,678	6,705	
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	Smaller	22.3	18.0	22.3	21.0	22.4	21.3	17.4	26.3	23.1	24.6	24.1	28.6	17.9	22
	Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Smaller	2.6	2.6	7.2	7.0	6.8	7.1	6.0	7.7	8.6	10.3	9.0	8.1	5.6	7
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		445	495	570	449	524	485	517	444	351	510	515	346	400	
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	53%	52%	53%	56%	58%	60%	60%	58%	59%	57%	57%	62%	62%	66%
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	9%	11%	13%	8%	9%	8%	5%	7%	11%	13%	11%	10%	6%	25%
	Number of planning applications at end of month that have not been determined in time	Smaller	42	32	44	36	44	47	18	17	23	23	12	21	29	50
Community Services	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,413	1,389	1,494	1,469	1,513	1,743	1,575	1,660	1,610	1,969	1,910	1,488	1,386	Trend
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid	Bigger	85%	87%	92%	85%	90%	82%	87%	90%	91%	81%	88%	99%	89%	80%
	Fly-tipping incidents	Smaller	129	87	139	99	87	140	125	105	97	80	88	57	82	Year-on-year Trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	Smaller	38	28	40	35	32	37	32	32	35	34	30	29	33	40
Commercial & Development	Visits to Visitor Information Centre and www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	18,110	17,847	18,152	24,944	24,783	35,185	28,421	28,587	28,470	35,153	67,938	52,822	16,714	Year-on-year Trend
	Museum visits	Bigger	8,662	12,084	12,625	14,079	15,326	16,847	14,378	16,073	14,714	14,441	10,914	4,407	11,745	Year-on-year Trend
External	Claimant count	Smaller	710	740	785	790	810	805	820	810	825	810	805	835	835	
	All crime (in month)	Smaller	720	775	941	783	833	812	925	760	831	845	928	N/A*	N/A*	Trend
	Anti-social behaviour incidents (in month)	Smaller	218	276	319	363	397	398	363	297	332	327	267	N/A*	N/A*	Trend

* The Hertfordshire Community Safety Portal is undergoing maintenance; data will be added when accessible.

Performance Summary January 2018



Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)

Planning Performance

The table below shows the Council's performance against the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) planning performance thresholds.

Colour coding for table: Green – performance above threshold.

Measure and type of applications	Bigger or Smaller is Better	Current cumulative performance in assessment period	DCLG's 2019 estimated thresholds and 2 Year assessment periods	Performance over 2018 2 Year Assessment period	DCLG's 2018 thresholds and 2 Year assessment periods	
Speed of major development (% determined in time)	Bigger	94.6% (Oct 2016 to Jan 2018)	70% (Oct 2016 to Sept 2018)	80.5% Actual (Oct 2015 to Sept 2017)	60% (Oct 2015 to Sept 2017)	
Quality of major development (% overturned at appeal)	Smaller	7.4% (Apr 2016 to Jan 2018)	7.5% (Apr 2016 to Dec 2018)	5.6% Actual (April 2015 to March 2017)	10% (April 2015 to March 2017)	
Speed of non-major development (% determined in time)	Bigger	92.4% (Oct 2016 to Jan 2018)	75% (Oct 2016 to Sept 2018)	82.6% Actual (Oct 2015 to Sept 2017)	70% (Oct 2015 to Sept 2017)	
Quality of non-major development (% overturned at appeal)	Smaller	2% (Apr 2016 to Jan 2018)	7.5% (Apr 2016 to Mar 2018)	2.5% Actual (April 2015 to March 2017)	10% (April 2015 to March 2017)	

The table below shows the Council's performance and trend against Government and local targets.

Application Type	Target	% in time Jan 2018 (Bigger is Better)	Average Jan 2018 (Smaller is better)	Average Dec 2017	Average Nov 2017	Average Oct – Dec 17-18	Average July-Sept 17-18	Average April-June 17-18
'Out of time applications'	No more than 50 (local)	-	22	21	12	23	20	40
Major Applications*	13 weeks (national) 50% in time	100%	27.5 weeks	8.9 weeks	15 weeks	16.2 weeks	17.6 weeks	39.7 weeks
Minor Applications	8 weeks (national) 65% in time	94.1%	11 weeks	8.8 weeks	9.9 weeks	11 weeks	10.7 weeks	10.3 weeks
Householder Applications	8 weeks (national) 80% in time	97.9%	8.4 weeks	7.1 weeks	8.1 weeks	7.7 weeks	8 weeks	8.3 weeks

Colour coding for table: Green- performance above target.

* Large fluctuations can occur since we deal with relatively few major applications.

Applications where an 'extension of time' is agreed will have taken longer than 8/13 weeks, but are still considered 'in time'.

Local Plan

The current six week consultation closes on 21 Feb 2018. Further information regarding the Local Plan consultation can be viewed by visiting the link below:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/localplan2018

To date (10am on Tuesday 13 February) we have received 1780 responses. 1048 people have responded through the consultation portal. 703 people have completed hard copies of the booklet survey delivered to local homes. 29 people have sent in comments by email.

'Duty to Cooperate' Discussions with Adjoining / Nearby Local Planning Authorities

A Leader and Portfolio Holder and Chief Executive meeting was held with the South West Herts Group (Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford Councils) on 23 January 2018. Discussions were held on strategic planning objectives and approaches to joint strategic planning across the 5 Local Planning Authorities' Housing Market Area (see separate document labelled Planning Appendix - Annex 1).

The Planning Portfolio Holder had a meeting with the former Minister of State for Housing and Planning, and our two local MPs Anne Main and Bim Afolami, on 18th December 2018. The Portfolio Holder explained the local concerns about delivery and affordability of housing, and pressures on the Green Belt and infrastructure, including the issues of viability.

Potential Plan Making Intervention

The Secretary of State (SoS) announced his intention in November 2017 to start the formal intervention process with 15 local authorities, including St Albans Council.

The Council responded on 30 January 2018 setting out the background to the current position explaining why the previous Strategic Local Plan did not pass the Duty to Co-operate. It included the actions to date, including under Duty to Co-operate, to progress a new Local Plan.

Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP)

Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Panel met on 15 January 2018 to discuss strategic planning across the County.

The minutes from previous meetings can be found at:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Recycling-waste-and-environment/Planning-in-Hertfordshire/Planning-in-Hertfordshire.aspx

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)



Fees and Permissions in Principle

Regulations introducing a 20 per cent planning application fee increase came into effect on January 17. This includes increases for planning permissions in principle and fees for applications necessary because a permitted development right has been removed. It also includes a new fee for prior approval for a range of new permitted development rights.

The government has also published an order to allow developers to submit applications to local authorities for permission in principle (PiP). PiP aims to provide a fast-track route through the planning process, to speed up housing delivery. It splits the application process in two, so that a proposed residential development can secure PiP first, achieving full consent later through a further technical details consent. Councils can grant planning permission in principle for housing and "compatible" non-residential developments on sites identified as suitable in part 2 of their brownfield land registers.

Further information on St Albans Brownfield Land Register can be found at:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/planning/Planningpolicy/brownfield.aspx

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Timetable Update

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is currently revising the NPPF to implement its planning reform package. It intends to publish a draft revised NPPF before Easter. The MHCLG's ambition is to publish a final revised Framework in the summer.

Local Housing Need Transitional Arrangements

The former Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) conducted their 'planning for the right homes in the right places' consultation in September. DCLG set out that the new standardised method should be used, unless a Local Plan is to be submitted for examination on or before 31 March 2018, or before the revised Framework is published (whichever is later). In light of the timetable set out above, these transitional arrangements will apply to any plans submitted before the final revised Framework is published.

Enviro-tech Enterprise Zone

There was a meeting of the Enterprise Zone Board on 9 February 2018. The Board considered items on Building Research Establishment Open Innovation Hub Grant Funding, terms of reference for the Board and sub-groups, cash flow forecast and pooling agreement.

Green Triangle

The Board of the Green Triangle met on 18 January 2018 and reviewed the future work plan. A new work plan is in the process being developed, underpinning the objectives of the Green Triangle and the Partner organisations. This work plan will be aligned with Key Performance Indicators, milestones and clear outcomes. The key themes are Robotics, Big Data, Modern Methods of Construction, the Hertfordshire Enviro tech Enterprise Zone and Skills.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)



Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) Claim

A claim for compensation has been made against the Council, lodged at the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) under section 202E of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. This claim is in reference to a tree works application. Further information can be found in this appendix's Part Two.

London Plan Consultation

The new draft London Plan is out to public consultation until 5 March 2018. Cllr Ellis attended a London Summit regarding the London Plan on 25 January. Further information about the consultation can be found at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan>

Significant Planning Applications

Planning Decisions (Note 1*)	Decision/comments
<p>Land at Three Cherry Trees Lane and Cherry Tree Lane (5/2016/2845) 600 dwellings, land for primary school, local centre uses (A1, A3, A4, A5, D1, D2), landscaping open space and play areas. Cross-boundary outline planning application falling within Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and St Albans City and District Council administrative areas.</p>	<p>The application is in outline form. The numbers of dwellings within the St Albans District part of the site is likely to be approximately 150. The application will be considered under delegated powers. The application was considered by the Development Control Committee at DBC on 17 August 2017. DBC's committee have resolved to grant permission subject to a S106 Agreement* and referral to the Secretary of State due to an objection from Sport England. Negotiations on the S106 Agreement* continue.</p>
<p>Former Radlett Aerodrome</p> <p>Five applications for Reserved Matters approval have been submitted:</p> <p>5/2016/2964 (Infrastructure) (Omits area at new junction on A414) 5/2016/3006 (Development site – details of buildings, etc in the terminal itself) 5/2017/0864 (Landscaping) (Omits area at new junction on A414) 5/2017/1938 (Infrastructure) (Includes area at new junction on A414) 5/2017/1995 (Landscaping) (Includes area at new junction on A414)</p>	<p>Application refs. 5/2016/2964 and 5/2017/0864 were withdrawn on 01/12/17. The Council received amended plans and additional information on 13 November and 8 December 2017. Further public consultation commenced on 8 December. The three outstanding reserved matters applications (refs. 5/2016/3006, 5/2017/1938 and 5/2017/1995) will be reported back to the Planning Referrals Committee for decision.</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)



Planning Decisions (Note 1*)	Decision/comments
<p>Sixteen 'discharge of conditions' applications have been submitted:</p> <p>(5/2016/2880, 5/2016/2881, 5/2016/2962, 5/2016/2963, 5/2016/3003, 5/2016/3004, 5/2016/3005, 5/2016/3013, 5/2016/3187, 5/2017/0865, 5/2017/0869, 5/2017/0870, 5/2017/0871, 5/2017/1168, 5/2017/2599, 5/2017/2770)</p>	
<p>Former British Gas Land, Griffiths Way, St Albans (5/2016/3386)</p> <p>Outline application for mixed use development comprising Class A1 (discount food store), Class A1 (non-food retail), D2 (gym) and Class A3/A5 (restaurant and drive-through) with associated access and ancillary works. All matters except access and scale have been reserved.</p>	<p>Conditional Planning Permission was granted on 26/01/2018, following the decision of the Secretary of State not to call the application in.</p>
<p>Building Research Establishment (BRE), Bucknalls Lane, Bricket Wood (5/2017/1550)</p> <p>Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 100 dwellings with associated access from The Kestrels, landscaping, parking and infrastructure.</p>	<p>This is a full application for a similar form of development to that previously granted outline planning permission at appeal. This revised scheme involves a separate access via The Kestrels rather than through the BRE site itself. The Planning Referrals Committee have resolved to grant conditional planning permission subject to the completion of the S106 Agreement. This is to secure affordable housing (35%), a bus service scheme, infrastructure contributions, a water scheme and a woodland management plan. Negotiations continue to progress on the S106 Agreement*.</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)



Planning Decisions (Note 1*)	Decision/comments
<p>Civic Centre (South) Victoria Street St Albans (5/2017/1060) Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site consisting of 86 residential units, 2,101sqm commercial floorspace (flexible uses class A1-A4, B1, D1) and 2,697sqm office floorspace with associated works, access, parking and landscaping.</p>	<p>This is a full application. The Planning Referrals Committee have resolved to grant conditional planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 agreement* to secure affordable housing (35%), infrastructure contributions, fire hydrant provision and a travel plan. Negotiations are continuing on the S106 Agreement.</p>
<p>Pan Autos Site, 22-24 Grove Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PX (5/2017/3209) Outline application (access, layout and scale sought) for demolition of existing and construction of three blocks comprising four, one bedroom and 39, two bedroom flats with associated underground and surface level parking, amenity space and associated works</p>	<p>This is an outline application (access, layout and scale sought) for the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of three blocks. The blocks comprise 4 one bedroom and 39 two bedroom flats with associated underground and surface level parking, amenity space and associated works. The application has not been called into Committee and will be considered under delegated powers. The application is currently pending consideration by officers which will include seeking professional advice in respect of the viability appraisal which forms part of the application submission.</p>

Planning Consultations (Note 2*)	Decision/comments
<p>Land at Junction of Lower Luton Road and Common Lane, Harpenden (5/2017/2733) Proposed application for the construction of new 6 FE school buildings, vehicular access/egress onto the Lower Luton Road, vehicular access onto Common Lane, two pedestrian accesses/egresses onto Common Lane, car parking, cycle storage, coach parking, playing fields, tennis courts/multi-use games area, surface water attenuation measures,</p>	<p>The District Council is a consultee, with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the decision-maker on this new secondary school. The District Council's Committee has resolved to recommend that prior to making a decision, HCC satisfies itself that the case for very special</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Planning Update (Part One)



<p>hard and soft landscaping and other associated development.</p>	<p>circumstances is met for development in the Green Belt. Also that matters relating to highway impact; archaeology; ecological impact; whether all sports facilities are essential and whether part of the land could be retained for agriculture, are satisfactory to the decision-maker. The need for a S106 Agreement* and conditions to be imposed on any grant of planning permission are also recommended. The application is yet to be determined by the County Council.</p>
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* Section 106 (S106) financial contributions can be secured from developers in certain circumstances, through the planning process.

Notes:

- (1) Where St Albans City and District Council is the determining authority.
- (2) Where St Albans City and District Council is a consultee.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Section 106 Quarterly Update



Section 106 (S106) financial contributions can be secured from developers in certain circumstances, through the planning process. In the Council's case these financial contributions are for new recreational infrastructure. The Council's approach to recording S106 agreements is focused on a four stage process:

- Stage 1 is a list of planning applications yet to have planning permission granted.
- Stage 2 is a list of planning permissions that have been granted, but where work is yet to start.
- Stage 3 is a list of contributions received, showing whether they are committed, or as yet uncommitted.
- Stage 4 is a list of fully spent and completed contributions.

Up-to-date financial information associated with each of the four stages, is available on the Council's website. See: <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/community-and-living/improvements/section106projects/default.aspx>

Since the last Cabinet update project funds have been committed in wards as follows:

- Batchwood (Toulmin Drive Play Area)
- Colney Heath (Tyttenhanger Play Area)
- Harpenden North (Woodend Play Area)
- Harpenden West (Rothamsted Park Recycle Bins)

The funds for the following agreed projects have now been drawn down by the project proposer:

- Batchwood (New Museum and Gallery Project)
- Batchwood (Everlasting Lane Play Area)
- Colney Heath (Roestock Park Play Area)
- Redbourn (Flamsteadbury Play Area)

Table 1 below shows a list of contributions received, showing whether they are committed, or as yet uncommitted (stage 3 of the process).

Note to Table 1:

1. RAG rating - the deadline for when S106 contributions must be spent varies depending on the agreement. Where multiple contributions are identified in a ward, the RAG rating reflects the date of the earliest deadline.
2. Where an allocation has no repayment date stated on the agreement, a 5 year spend or repay deadline comes into effect. The 5 year timeline starts from the date that the funds are received by the Council, from the developer. The Council is close to receiving project proposals for the current red rag contributions below.
3. For wards not mentioned in the table, there are no current S106 balances.
4. For wards where a project is yet to be identified - officers will work with both the District Ward Councillors and local Parish Council (or the City Neighbourhoods Committee) to identify a project over the next few months.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Section 106 Quarterly Update



Table 1 – List of Contributions Uncommitted or Committed

Ward	No	Received (£)	Committed (£)	Uncommitted (£)	Project	RAG
Ashley	1	2,684	2,684	0	Camp Open Space Play Area (complete by end of Apr 18)	2027
	1	8,874	8,874	0	Camp Open Space (complete by end of Apr 18)	2027
	1	14,038	14,038	0	New Museum & Gallery (complete by end of May18)	2027
Batchwood	2	36,717	36,717	0	Toulmin Drive (complete by end of Feb18)	2022
	1	24,583	24,583	0	Bernards Heath Open Space (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2027
	1	9,130	9,130	0	Downedge Play Area (complete by June 18)	2028
	1	17,312	17,312	0	Downedge Open Space (complete by June18)	2028
	1	27,387	27,387	0	William Bird Pavilion (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2028
Clarence	1	8,016	0	8,016	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2021
Colney Heath	1	31,399	31,399	0	Alban Way (complete by end of Aug 18)	2018
	1	21,966	21,966	0	Tyttenhanger Play Area (completion date to be confirmed by Colney Heath Parish Council)	2018
	1	3,419	0	3,419	Westminster Lodge Swimming Pool – disability changing room (project details to be confirmed)	2017
Cunningham	4	44,369	44,369	0	Foxcroft Play Area (complete by end of Feb 18)	2020
	1	2,520	2,520	0	Camp Play Area (complete by Apr 18)	2026
	1	10,820	0	10,820	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2020
Harpenden East	1	29,021	29,021	0	Marquis Lane Play Area (complete by May 18)	2024
Harpenden North	1	6,739	6,379	0	Wood End Play Area (complete by end of Mar 18)	2017
	1	113,980	113,980	0	Harpenden Leisure Centre (complete by Winter 20)	2021
Harpenden West	3	87,691	87,691	0	Harpenden Leisure Centre (complete by Winter 20)	2021
	1	26,690	26,690	0	Rothamsted Park (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2022
	1	6,026	6,026	0	Rothamsted Park Recycle Bins (complete by end of Mar 18)	2021
London Colney	4	88,302	0	88,302	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2021
	2	12,024	12,024	0	Samuel Ryder 3G pitch (complete date TBC)	2022
	2	8,736	8,736	0	Napsbury Residents Wildlife Improvements (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2021
Sandridge	1	15,304	15,304	0	St Leonards Play Area, Parks & Gardens (complete by Autumn 18)	2027
St Peters	1	79,870	79,870	0	Abbey View Track (complete by Autumn 18)	2025
	1	8,958	8,958	0	Municipal Gardens (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2022
	1	5,663	5,663	0	Clarence Park Pavilion (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2022
	1	8,137	8,137	0	Verulamium Park Play Area (location committed, project to be	2020

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Section 106 Quarterly Update



					confirmed)	
	2	33,151	0	33,151	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2025
Verulam	1	8,601	8,601	0	Verulamium Park Play Area (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2021
	1	86,629	86,629	0	New Museum and Gallery (complete by Apr 18)	2023
	3	40,914	0	40,914	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2021
Wheathampstead	1	93,726	93,726	0	Butterfield Rd (location committed, project to be confirmed)	2021
	2	20,400	0	20,400	Project to be identified (see note 4)	2019

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C: Property Transactions Update



The purpose of this report is to provide visibility on the progress of key property transactions. **Completed transactions during period 01/10/17 – 31/01/18**

Item	Date Completed	Property	Transaction
1	03/10/17	Garden area by Civic Centre	Licence for Foodsmiles St Albans Limited to occupy and use the land as a community food garden.
2	12/10/17	Scout Hut, Oakdene Way, St Albans	Twenty-year lease to The Scout Association to enable 16 th St Albans Scout Group to continue using the building.
3	21/11/17	Garage Sites at St Leonard's Crescent and Langley Grove, St Albans	Access Licences enabling the Council to enter 5 properties bordering the former garage sites to carry out boundary structure works, which will facilitate redevelopment of the sites.
4	02/11/17	37A Market Place, St Albans	Licence for a pop-up shop selling ladies' fashion clothing, bags and jewellery over the Christmas period.
5	09/11/17	Blundell Close & Partridge Road Garage Sites, St Albans	Minor Works Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council enabling the Council's contractor to carry out highway works as part of the redevelopment of these former garage sites.
6	07/12/17	Jubilee Centre, Catherine Street, St Albans	Seven-year lease to Hertfordshire Independent Living Service which provides a local meals- on- wheels service and a weekly luncheon club for the elderly.
7	08/12/17	Amenbury Lane Car Park, Harpenden	Wayleave re-routing electricity supply across Amenbury Lane Car Park, which will facilitate redevelopment of Harpenden Cultural & Leisure Facility.
8	18/12/17	Unit 6 Sandridge Gate Business Centre, Ronson's Way, St Albans	Licence for a local history society to use the premises for storage.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C: Property Transactions Update



Status of key transactions as at 31/01/18

Item	Property	Transaction	Date first reported	Status (current position in bold)
1	Marshalswick Community Centre & The Ridgeway Car Park, The Ridgeway, St Albans	Transfer to Sandridge Parish Council	September 2014	<p>Sandridge Parish Council has confirmed it is content to use the model legal documents used for Harness Way Playing Fields. We asked solicitors at North Herts District Council to prepare draft documents ready to send to Sandridge Parish Council. We had anticipated that these would be ready by 30/04/16. The draft documents have since required further work to tailor them to this specific property.</p> <p>The Parish Council has now agreed that the Community Centre and the Ridgeway Car Park are to be transferred to the Parish Council in a single transaction.</p> <p>We prepared a fresh plan which combines the Community Centre and Car Park in a single transaction. The transaction has been delayed while our solicitors prepared a fresh set of documents based on this plan.</p> <p>In the last report we anticipated completion by 31/10/17. Our solicitors have since advised that the registered title should be updated before the land is transferred. We anticipate the title can be updated by 31/3/18. The community centre and car park will be transferred to the Parish Council as soon as possible after that.</p>
2	William Bell Recreation Ground, Furse Avenue, St Albans	Transfer to Sandridge Parish Council	September 2014	<p>Sandridge Parish Council has confirmed it is content to use the model legal documents used for Harness Way Playing Fields. We asked solicitors at North Herts District Council to prepare draft documents ready to send to Sandridge Parish Council. The documents will require further work to tailor them to this specific</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C: Property Transactions Update



				<p>property.</p> <p>Statutory advertisements required for a disposal of open space were posted and no objections were received. Our solicitors sent a revised set of draft documents to the Parish Council.</p> <p>We responded to conveyancing enquiries from the Parish Council.</p> <p>The Council and Parish Council have executed the documents and the transfer will complete in February 2018.</p>
3	80, 82 and 84 Sopwell Lane, St Albans	Compulsory Purchase	September 2015	<p>Notice of the Compulsory Purchase Order was published on 5 July 2017. The six week challenge period has expired and we have received no challenge.</p> <p>Housing is monitoring the repair works and will carry out a further inspection before 28/2/18. It is expected that the properties will be ready to let by 31/3/18. The owner died recently and we are seeking details of his executors.</p>
4	Leisure Contract Property Transactions	Leases of leisure facilities to the Council's leisure operator, 1Life Management Solutions Limited	June 2016	<p>Following the extension of the Leisure Management Contract in February 2016, the contractor's existing leases will be renewed to enable the continued performance of this Contract.</p> <p>The contract extension permits the contractor to continue to occupy until the leases are formally renewed. The lease renewals have been delayed due to other pressing priorities. This has no impact on the services provided to the public under the Leisure Management Contract.</p> <p>We sent a draft model lease to 1Life's solicitors in November 2017 and await their approval. The lease renewals are now a standing agenda item at the Council's monthly contract meetings with 1Life. In anticipation that</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C: Property Transactions Update



				the draft model lease will be approved, we are preparing a draft lease for each facility based on the model. We anticipate sending these to 1Life's solicitors for approval by 28/2/18.
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Footnote:

Transfers of land or buildings to Sandridge Parish Council are within the delegated limits set by Cabinet and will include clawback provisions if the site is sold for development

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Partnerships Update



A [Strategic Partnership](#) framework is in place to encourage collaboration. The Council has also developed partnership agreements with other key organisations on areas of mutual interest. Updates on these partnerships are outlined below.

	Area of collaboration	Summary of key achievements for 2017	Meetings Held	Chair
<p>Strategic Partnership Executive Involves members of key public, business and voluntary organisations in the District.</p>	<p>Considers various themes on a rotating basis, including the local economy, community safety, health and well-being, education and the voluntary sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular information sharing on key issues affecting the District. In 2017 the Strategic Partnership discussed issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime levels, cyber-crime and modern slavery Impact of 'office to residential' conversion on businesses Increasing digitalisation of public services Pressures on local health services Being good employers for mental health and wellbeing Implications of the Housing White Paper on the provision of affordable housing, as well as the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act Roll out of Universal Credit. 	<p>Every 6 weeks</p>	<p>Cllr Alec Campbell</p>
<p>Community Safety Partnership A statutory partnership which includes Herts Constabulary, Fire and Rescue, Probation services, the Clinical Commissioning Group, and the District and County Councils.</p>	<p>Develops and delivers an annual Community Safety Strategy to keep the District safe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to tackle crime and ASB through partnership working. This includes using all available legal powers and supportive interventions. Particular areas of focus included Safe-Guarding and Modern Slavery where training was delivered for hundreds of front-line staff. The popular 'Crucial Crew' programme was delivered by a range of partners to hundreds of Year 6 children and covering a wide range of inter-active safety scenarios, including cyber-bullying. 	<p>Quarterly with an annual half-day workshop in December.</p>	<p>Amanda Foley</p>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Partnerships Update



	Area of collaboration	Summary of key achievements for 2017	Meetings Held	Chair
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding was secured from the PCC's office for the Onside Football project for three years from April 2017. This is delivered in 5 locations and involves over 90 young people in out of school activities, which have been shown to be effective in preventing youth ASB. 		
<p>Health & Well-Being Partnership Comprised of councillors, the three NHS Trusts, Herts Valley CCG, the District and County Councils, St Albans and Harpenden Patients Group and other local voluntary and community sector organisations.</p>	Provides local leadership and enables a greater voice locally for health and wellbeing issues across the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017 the Partnership looked at the Herts & West Essex STP, changes to local services funded by the CCG, current and future hospital provision, the impact of planning policy on public health and the potential to work with the NHS to facilitate affordable housing. Working through the Public Health Working Group to deliver the Health & Well-being Strategy to improve physical and mental health. Projects funded through Phase 2 of the District offer include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social prescribing, including Arts on Prescription; - 1Life physical activity advisor in GP surgeries; - Men's weight loss course delivered by Watford FC's Community Trust. - Young people's Emotional Wellbeing programme delivered by YC Herts. Continued to promote public health campaigns including One You and Time to Change. 	Quarterly	Cllr Robert Donald
Inclusion &	Gathers information to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group supported the update of the SADC 	Quarterly	Chief

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Partnerships Update



	Area of collaboration	Summary of key achievements for 2017	Meetings Held	Chair
Equalities Information Sharing Group Involves: St Albans Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Central and the District Council.	identify existing and emerging issues relating to deprivation, equalities, diversity and social inclusion across the District.	Inclusion Strategy 2017-20. They reviewed outcomes from the Inclusion Strategy delivery plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of disability on access and inclusion has been identified as the first focus area and will be the subject of equality themed seminars in 2018. 		Executive, Community Central (Chaired at last meeting by Sarah Yexley)
Economic Sustainability Information Sharing Group St Albans District Chamber of Commerce, University of Herts, Oaklands College, Community Central, Jobcentre Plus and the District Council.	Share information on local labour market projects and raises joint areas of concern.	<u>Support to people out of work</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's Housing Benefits Team has been co-located in the Job Centre to help people with the new Universal Credit roll-out. The Job Centre with a local employer held a series of workshops aimed at helping people return to work. 70 people attended the first workshop with 29 people now on training courses. <u>Further Education and Skills</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of relevant Apprenticeship schemes between Oaklands and employers e.g. Planning, Environmental lab technician; and a new Construction centre and welding centre to re-train workers. Conference held by Oaklands to identify skills gap in the hospitality sector. 	Quarterly	Graham Lane (Vice President, St Albans District Chamber of Commerce)
Green Triangle Partnership organisation with BRE, Rothamsted Research, University of Hertfordshire and with	To establish Hertfordshire as a globally renowned centre of excellence in green technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting BRE in securing European Regional Development Fund bid to bring in £60,000 to the partnership. The project aims to bring innovative new products and services to market to provide low carbon solutions for businesses. 	Quarterly	Cllr Julian Daly

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Partnerships Update



	Area of collaboration	Summary of key achievements for 2017	Meetings Held	Chair
the support of District Council and Oaklands College.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oaklands, BRE and Rothamsted Research have produced a matrix of skills requirements to identify skills gap in this sector. The Green Triangle became world ambassadors for the Green Apple Awards 2017 and were also finalists for the National SME Awards. 		
City of Expertise Includes 20 local firms from the accountancy, surveyor and legal sectors, plus the District Chamber of Commerce and District Council.	Putting St Albans on the map as a centre for professional services excellence.	The Partnership agreed a work plan, which will expand the marketing of the City of Expertise and continue to deliver events for schools and young professionals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted jobs at four secondary school fairs Careers showcase held in November 2017 attended by nearly 50 young people Held three Young Professionals networking events Updated advertising at St Albans City and West Hampstead stations Search Engine Optimisation work resulted in increase of 113% to website.(Sept 17- Sept 17) New member – Van Zyl & De Villiers (Oct 17). 	Quarterly	Cllr Beric Read
Visitor Partnership Comprises leading businesses and organisations representing the local visitor economy sector.	To work together to establish St Albans as a top UK visitor destination, and to deliver significant growth in the visitor economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Chair appointed - Alison Berneye (from Magenta Star Ltd) and new chair of the Marketing sub-group: Richard Pagett. PR Contract retender until July 2018. Renewed Visits Herts www.visitherts.co.uk investment for year 2. Visitor Guide 2018 print and design funded through advertising. 	Quarterly	Alison Berneye, Managing Director of Magenta Star

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Partnerships Update



	Area of collaboration	Summary of key achievements for 2017	Meetings Held	Chair
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR coverage – 70 items on St Albans secured in print and online in local and national press. • Visitor Partnership stand at the Excursions (Jan 2017) and Herts County Show (May 2017). • Initiated joint working with the new Business Improvement District (BID), covering new Christmas lights, and which will hopefully cover advertising and PR. 		
<p>University of Hertfordshire (UH) A memorandum of understanding between senior members of the Council and the University.</p>	Strategic level collaboration on projects of mutual interest between the Council and the University	<p>The partnership plan covers key projects in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered work in connection with Green Triangle (see above) • New Museum and Gallery • A Cultural Strategy for the District • Graduation Day • Research support • Leadership and Management programme. <p>Latest meeting in September 2017.</p>	Twice a year	Cllr Alec Campbell
<p>Cathedral Partnership An informal partnership between senior members of the Council and the Cathedral.</p>	Strategic level co-ordination of common areas of working between the Council and Cathedral.	<p>A new partnership plan has been drawn up which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, maintenance and upkeep, landscaping and the environment. • Visitor Partnership (above), and the marketing of the St Albans offer including to group tours. • Community and Civic events, including WW1 commemorations. Promotion of events like the Christmas Market, Alban Weekend. • Community welfare, including homelessness, and Interfaith relations. <p>The most recent meeting was in January 2018.</p>	Twice a year	Cllr Alec Campbell

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix E: Syrian Refugees Update



In September 2015, the Council committed to resettle 50 Syrian refugees over the course of 5 years.

As of January 2018, 126 people have been resettled by local authorities across Hertfordshire.

To date, St Albans City and District Council has resettled 10 families, totalling 41 people.

Network Homes has provided 5 properties. Private landlords have provided a further 5 properties. The resettled families are keen to welcome new arrivals and to introduce them to the local area.

Many people are now attending formal 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL) classes at Oaklands College. Those who are unable to do so, due to mobility issues, are receiving informal classes in their home. Some people are now able to communicate without the use of an interpreter, both verbally and by email.

In February, 'Herts Welcomes Syrian Families' recruited a Coordinator of ESOL Volunteers to work across Hertfordshire. The post has been funded through 'Herts Welcomes Syrian Families', 'Strategic Migration Partnership' and participating local authorities in Hertfordshire.

Some of the younger people have now moved into employment and others are encouraged to volunteer. All of them have now written CVs, with the help of the Refugee Council.

The Refugee Council continues to support the families and any new arrivals. They continue to encourage families to move towards independence and to socialise with other families in Hertfordshire.

A private landlord has offered us a further property for use under the scheme. The keys for this property were collected on 22 January 2018. A family of 5 have been matched to this property and we are currently awaiting an arrival date.

To date, we have spent £327,056.92 and we have received £399,664.04 in income. The income table below details how much will be received by the Council for each person throughout their time on the scheme.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
£8520	£5000	£3700	£2300	£1000

All the properties rehousing the families have rental values that are above the Local Housing Allowance. Many of them have also been affected by the benefit cap. This has resulted in Discretionary Housing Payment applications to the Housing Benefits Department. To date, 4 families have been affected by the benefit cap and £15,697.33 has been paid from the Discretionary Housing Payment fund.

Due to the decline in funding over subsequent years, we anticipate that we will need to carry over any surplus from this year. This is to enable the Council to provide financial support towards housing costs.

Appendix E: Syrian Refugees Update

Managing the scheme requires an officer to source a property and liaise with the Home Office to match a family to the property. The officer then has to furnish the property and liaise with the landlord to make any relevant payments. Once the family arrives, the Refugee Council will meet them and provide housing and social support. The Council's officer remains responsible for claiming grant money, making necessary payments and supporting the Refugee Council as required.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix F: ICT Strategy Update

The Council's ICT Strategy was updated in December 2017. It sets out high-level objectives for the delivery of ICT and digital tools for the three years 2018-2021.

A link to the Digital and ICT Strategy is here:

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/ICT%20Strategy%202017-2020%20 tcm15-63106.pdf>

This strategy supports the '**Shaping our Future**' programme. The strategy covers four key areas:

- Customer Experience
- Workforce Development
- Applications
- Infrastructure

Our Customers (residents, visitors, businesses)

The way people wish to transact with us is changing, reflecting the online nature on many people's daily lives. The strategy outlines how we will be developing online services. This includes:

- Launch of a new online 'MyStalbans District Account' for residents - March 2018.
- Website redesign project to simplify and improve the Council's website making it quicker and easier for people to get the information and advice they need.

Our Workforce

All our people need to be confident in the use of digital and ICT tools. A digital skills training programme will be developed to help support our workforce in the use of new digital tools.

Our ICT Environment (Applications and Infrastructure)

As part of the strategy we aim to move away from traditional legacy IT systems in Housing, Environmental Waste and Planning that limit mobile and flexible working.

Over the next 3 years (2018- 2021) the aim is to reduce our legacy onsite systems by approximately 50% from 43 to 21. During 2018 we will focus on using Office 365 to retire:

- Our onsite Exchange environment
- The Blackberry infrastructure
- The Citrix environment, replacing it with Remote Desktop Services

Our aim is to have more of our applications managed in the Cloud. This will provide greater flexibility in how staff access systems (devices and locations). It will also improve the Council's ability to respond quickly in a disaster recovery situation, by reducing our reliance on slower, "cold" Disaster Recovery service provision.

The following services will be moved to Software-as-a-Service (SAAS) meaning we can retire our onsite equipment:

- Backup
- Anti-Virus

In our Application Environment, we aim to move the following services to SAAS, retiring our on-site equipment:

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix F: ICT Strategy Update

- Forms and Website Content Management System
- Payments system

We will also be assessing at the possible migration of our Planning services environment to SAAS.

Security

The focus is on ensuring that our customers' data continues to be handled securely.

We will be updating our cyber security plan to ensure that it keeps pace with emerging technology threats. Our software, hardware and physical environmental security will continue to be strengthened and modernised.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix G: Housing Benefits Update

This update provides information about the Council's performance on processing Benefits applications.

Below, we discuss matters that can hinder the swift completion of applications. We also discuss performance in December 2017 and January 2018, and what remedial action we might take in future should that be necessary.

It should be noted that in December 2017 no complaints were received from landlords or tenants regarding delays in payments. The section will prioritise any outstanding claim from a vulnerable tenant or relating to an impending eviction.

Issues:

- When it comes to Housing Benefit, the performance data 'clock' starts ticking from the date a claim is submitted online. For claims made on a Saturday, for example, we could be 2 days into our processing target time already, by the time they are allocated for action.
- A claimant has one calendar month to provide supporting information to enable their claim to be assessed. If the information is not supplied until towards the end of that period, the case could be over target by the time it is assessed.
- If a claimant makes a speculative application for benefit and does not respond to requests for documentation, the process time for this claim will exceed 30 days.
- The department is mindful of the needs of vulnerable clients. We will access information to expedite their claims with agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and HM Revenue and Customs.
- In some instances the case can be extremely complex. These include applicants who are self-employed, Directors of Companies, potential non-commercial cases. The information needed to assess these claims can be extensive and complex. In many cases information provided by the claimant generates additional enquiries delaying the assessment further. These types of cases have a significant impact on the average performance target.
- Other examples of delay include landlords not providing confirmation of rent and service charges, and support workers not responding to requests for information on behalf of their clients.
- Since 1 November 2017, the Benefits section has been trialling co-location working with the Job Centre. The objective is to assist customers who are applying for Universal Credit, helping with rent arrears, Council Tax, digital services and budgeting support. This means that there is one fewer Benefits Assessment Officer available each day to assess ongoing Housing Benefit claims.
- Benefits Assessment Officers are now assisting vulnerable claimants with applications for Universal Credit. These applications can take up to an hour

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix G: Housing Benefits Update

and a half. This is a new responsibility for the Officers concerned and means they are not able to process claims whilst assisting these claimants.

- Evaluation of the co-location work continues, with feedback sought from managers, staff and the DWP. This may impact on the service we provide as more people move onto Universal Credit.

December Performance

There are a number of factors that impacted on December's performance data (see performance indicators in this Performance Report pack). These include:

- Loss of assessment days:
 - 25 ½ days due to Annual Leave.
 - 2 days due to Bank Holidays.
 - 1 ½ days due to Christmas office closures.
 - 29 days due to staff sickness.
- A number of outstanding complex claims submitted prior to roll out of digital service.
- Continued roll out of the co-location service with DWP.

January Performance

	TARGET (days)	ACTUAL (days)	ON TARGET	OVER TARGET
NEW CLAIMS	22	17.91	70% (61 claims)	30% (26 claims)
CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES	7	5.62	89.5% (1528)	10.50% (179)

Both the processing of New Claims and Change of Circumstances are comfortably within target. The improvement in New Claim performance is a result of an increased focus on processing new claims. In addition, fewer Housing Benefit claims are made as the roll out of Universal Credit continues.

Change of Circumstance performance traditionally shows an improvement in January and February as local authorities deal with changes that are effective from April in advance of the date of change. These include annual rent increases and changes in state benefits and pensions. Change of circumstances claims remain in payment until any changes have been assessed and processed.

Performance figures will continue to be monitored for the duration of the trial period of co-location at the DWP (described above). A full evaluation is being carried out and will be completed in March. This will consider the future role and priorities of the Housing Benefit section.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix G: Housing Benefits Update

There are 5 residual complex claims, received prior to November 2017, still to be determined.

The table below indicates the type of claim that can take a longer period of time to process.

Top 5 New Claims taking over 22 days to process		Reason for claim being over target
1	106 days	Dispute between landlord and tenant over amount of rent outstanding and therefore whom payment should be made to.
2	104 days	Investigation into whether tenancy was on a commercial basis.
3	92 days	Self-employed claimant – some dispute over whether he should have been claiming Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.
4	68 days	Open Door claim. System error prevented assessment of claim.
5	61 days	Syrian Refugee family. Delay in DWP benefits being awarded following arrival in country. Given vulnerability of family, decision made to keep claim open while they were waiting for other benefits to be awarded.

Contingency Plans

If the time to process new claims were to increase markedly again there are a number of proposals to consider to improve performance. These include:

- Not sending Assessment Officers to the Job Centre. This may impact Council Tax Arrears and reduce help offered to customers on other issues such as applying for Discretionary Housing Payments and budgeting advice.
- Asking staff to work overtime.
- Employing agency staff.
- Reallocating different types of work to different Assessment Officers. This could improve performance targets but may have the effect of ‘de-skilling’ staff.
- Consider asking the Quality Checking Officer to perform less accuracy checking to help with assessment work. However, this could lead to errors being undetected.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix H: Weed Treatment Contract (Part One)



Overview

The Council is developing a programme of activities intended to improve the management of weeds across the District.

The Council will take on responsibility for managing weeds across the District. This will include directly managing the weed spraying (weed killing) programme, which currently sits with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

As part of our Weeds Management Programme, we will address all locations currently undertaken by HCC. In addition, we will seek to identify similarly 'high-demand' locations and include these as part of the programme.

Our Weeds Management Programme will start in March 2018, with a 'deep clean' of 6 to 10 streets. Each of these will have been identified as having a long-standing and significant build-up of weeds and organic detritus. Our plan is to remove such material before weed spraying takes place in those locations.

The Weeds Management Programme will be fully operational by April 2018 – the anticipated start of the District-wide weed spraying activity. It will continue to March 2019 at the earliest.

Background

St Albans City and District Council's current Grounds Maintenance (GM) contract was awarded to John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance Limited, JOC) in March 2014. Coverage included areas for Harpenden Town Council (HTC), Sandridge Parish Council (SPC), and St Albans Abbey. It also included HCC Highways - specific locations of adopted public highway (roads and pavements).

Grounds maintenance of St Albans Abbey and HCC highways was subsidised by St Albans Council for many years in previous grounds maintenance contracts. Within the first few months of the JOC contract award the District Council took steps to withdraw the subsidy from its highway work. This resulted in a significant financial saving to the District Council. HCC paid the full contract sum (i.e. unsubsidised by SADC) for highway work in the first year of the GM contract (2014/15).

In October 2014 HCC took back management responsibility for the Highways work (with the exception of shrub beds and roundabouts). HCC elected to manage this work directly through their own contracts and contractors.

In 2015/16, the highway verge maintenance work (grass verge cutting, weed control, footways, gullies and hedges) was undertaken by Ringway, HCC's principal contractor.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix H: Weed Treatment Contract (Part One)



St Albans Council's Proposals

The proposed Weeds Management programme offers an opportunity to improve management of weeds across the District.

'Weeds Management' in this context includes all aspects of dealing with weeds across the District. There are three main components:

1. **Weed Treatment:** The District Council will take responsibility for weed treatment/weed killing on public highways across the District. At present, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is responsible for 'weed killing' locally. It is a legal duty, resulting from their status as the Highway Authority. HCC can choose to devolve this responsibility to Districts, through a formal Agency Agreement. HCC has already done this for the majority of Hertfordshire districts. The weed treatment frequency will be increased to three per year where necessary.

At present, HCC's contractor works to a schedule of planned activities. These are centred on nine urban areas:

1. Harpenden;
2. Redbourn;
3. Wheathampstead;
4. Sandridge;
5. Smallford
6. St Albans;
7. Chiswell Green;
8. Bricket Wood; and
9. London Colney.

For each of the above areas, HCC work to detailed coverage maps. These illustrate the extent of public highway (carriageway and footways) they intend to treat. HCC sets out to apply two cycles of weed treatment per area per year.

Weed treatment is normally applied during the main weed growing season - typically, April to September.

It should be noted that HCC do not set out to treat weeds on all public highway across the District. St Albans Council's Weed Management programme will cover all of the areas currently undertaken by HCC. In addition, we will seek to identify other problem locations and include these as part of the programme.

- 2. Semi-Urban Roads:** HCC does not treat weeds on any rural or semi-urban roads across the District. These locations have not been part of the HCC scope of works for several years. It is clear that several of these roads are in need of a substantial 'deep clean'. This will be necessary to remove years of weeds and detritus build up. This build-up of material restricts the width of accessible footway as well as serving to trap litter, hampering cleansing operations.

As part of our programme, the District Council will include management of weeds on some rural or semi-urban roads. A list of 6 to 10 target locations will be compiled during February 2018. These will be scheduled for 'deep clean' and extensive removal of built-up weeds and detritus during March 2018.

St Albans Council will not be removing weeds from designated high-speed routes (such as the A414). Designated high-speed routes are characterised by the prevailing traffic speed limit and often have no public footway adjacent to the carriageway. Consequently, detailed and relatively expensive traffic management arrangements are necessary to safely operate in those locations.

Management of high-speed routes also requires significant input from HCC regarding coordination of activities, arranging temporary road closures/operational licences and the scheduling of other activities which could usefully be done at the same time.

- 3. Improved 'Street Scene':** The coordination of weeds management and street sweeping activities will be improved as part of this programme. Put simply, street cleansing activities will be timetabled to follow planned weeds removal or weed treatment/weed killing activities.

For weed removals, street cleaning will be done as soon as the weeds have been removed. Removal will be achieved through the use of specialist plant and equipment. The associated debris will be removed using a mechanical broom, deployed on the same day as weeds removal takes place.

For weed treatment locations, sweeping will be scheduled to take place around the time weeds should have died back. Typically, this is 4-6 weeks after the weeds have been treated.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix H: Weed Treatment Contract (Part One)



Communications/Access to Information

It is clear that success of such a programme depends on the various activities being correctly scheduled and then carried out. Our Weeds Management Programme will operate to a clear planned works schedule. Details of that schedule will be made available to residents. This will be either through the Council's website or as part of a customer's individual My St Albans District Account.

Agency Agreement

As mentioned earlier, HCC is required to consent to St Albans City and District Council undertaking treatment of weeds locally. This consent takes the form of an amendment to the current Agency Agreement between HCC and individual districts or boroughs. SADC and HCC have been working closely towards achieving this outcome. It is anticipated that the necessary arrangements will be in place by 19 February 2018.

The money received from HCC is expected to cover all internal and contractor costs of providing the services described in this document. Details of the expected internal and contractor costs are set out in a Part 2 section of this report.

Trial Period

Our Weeds Management Programme will continue until March 2019. During its operation, both the District Council and HCC will carefully monitor the success of the programme. We will take into account the physical results, residents and other customers' feedback before deciding to extend the agreement.

Appendix I: Local Plan Joint Working with the South West Herts Group Update

1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 Delivering more homes to meet growing need has become a key issue for Government. Recent Government announcements indicate that the Duty to Co-operate is going to be strengthened in favour of more formalised joint strategic planning among local authorities. A Leader, Portfolio Holder and Senior Officer meeting was held in January 2018 where the principle of a South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan was agreed. The preparation of a joint plan and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are the next steps in this process.
- 1.2 A number of important changes have occurred since the Council prepared the Strategic Local Plan. These include the Government's approach; the approach taken by nearby Local Planning Authorities; the Judicial Review outcome; and the new opportunities provided for lobbying and bidding for infrastructure.

2. **Background Information**

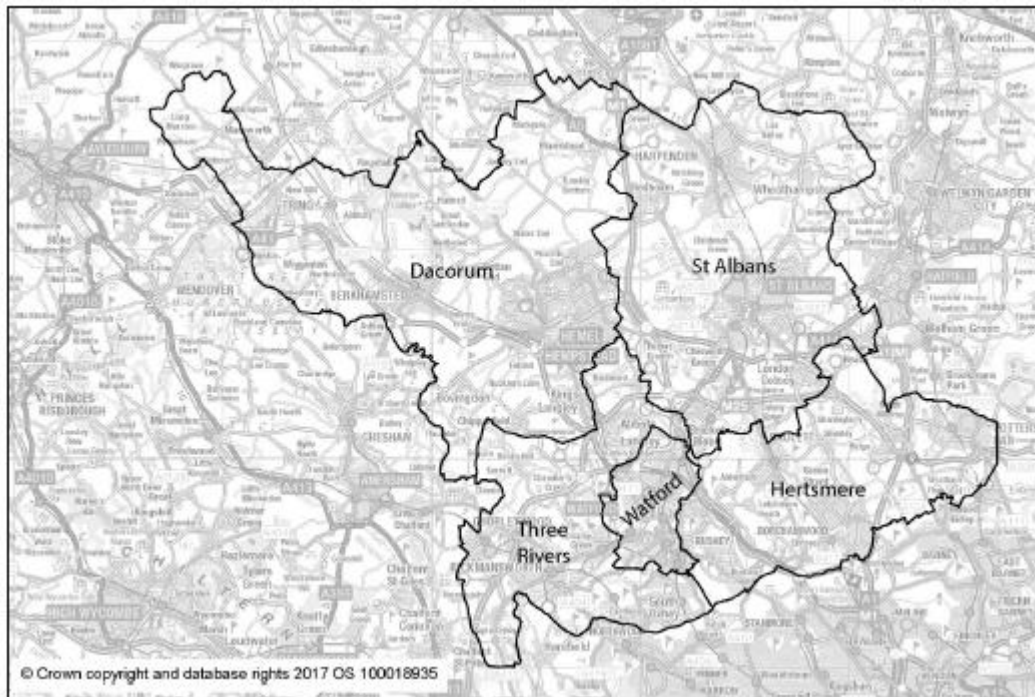
- 2.1 South West Hertfordshire faces significant strategic challenges in accommodating the required new homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure over the next fifteen years and beyond. The five local authorities in this area – Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers, St Albans and Watford - continue to experience an acute shortage of new and affordable housing. Beyond existing built up areas, they are almost entirely designated as Green Belt land.
- 2.2 The scale of growth required by Government cannot be delivered sustainably by individual local authorities working in isolation. Neighbouring authorities are therefore increasingly being encouraged to work together to provide the high quality homes, jobs and infrastructure. The opportunity for strategic planning across the area is particularly timely as authorities are now at a similar stage in the plan making process.

3. **Analysis and Findings**

- 3.1 Leaders, Portfolio Holders and Senior Officers from the five councils and Hertfordshire County Council met on 23 January 2018. At the meeting it was agreed to progress a joint strategic level plan for South West Herts. Officers will be moving forward with this work and the preparation of a South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan as set out in the governance arrangements below.
- 3.2 Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford Councils have been working together as an informal planning group since 2014. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment and an Economy Study were jointly commissioned to inform the Local Plan reviews. Further joint technical work, including a Retail and Leisure Study and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, is underway. Since November 2017, St Albans Council has formal Member agreement to move forward with joint work on this SW Herts geography (see Figure 1 below).

All five authorities have already been working as a group with Hertfordshire County Council on transport matters, including the SW Herts Growth and Transport Plan.

3.3 Fig.1 South West Hertfordshire Housing Market Area and Functional Economic Market Area



3.4 The Duty to Co-operate

The duty to cooperate (DtC) was created in the Localism Act 2011. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis. This is to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

3.5 Local planning authorities must demonstrate how they have complied with the duty at the independent examination of their Local Plans. If a local planning authority cannot demonstrate that it has complied with the duty then the Local Plan will not be able to proceed further in examination.

3.6 In 2017, the Housing White Paper: 'Fixing our broken housing market' proposed a new spatial local plan based on effective joint working. To strengthen the DtC a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) would also be required. The expectation from Government is that these would be prepared on Housing Market Area geographies.

3.7 The Government's 'Right Homes in Right Places' published in November 2017 proposes two new tests of soundness for local plans including:

- a) plans should be prepared based on a strategy informed by agreements over the wider area, and
- b) plans should be based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities, which are evidenced in the statement of common ground.

Appendix I: Local Plan Joint Working with the South West Herts Group Update

- 3.8 The Government is driving a step change in housing delivery. These proposals are likely to be implemented in 2018 with the publication of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), expected by the end of March. The soundness tests mean councils will need to change the way they work together on strategic and cross boundary matters for their plans to be found 'sound'.
- 3.9 At the same time the Government is offering resources to local authorities to support wider area based plans. A SW Herts bid for £220,000 has been submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to support the development of a joint plan. It is understood that further funding opportunities will be announced.
- 3.10 **Examples of Joint Planning**
- It has become evident that many key planning and infrastructure issues extend beyond individual borough and district boundaries. A number of authorities are working together on strategic planning matters.
- 3.11 Some partnerships of local authorities have taken a non-statutory approach to preparing infrastructure frameworks and plans. Areas that have been doing this include West Sussex and Greater Brighton and South Essex. Such plans are useful for bringing infrastructure providers together and helping co-ordinate growth. However as they are non-statutory they only have of limited weight when guiding the preparation of individual Local Plans and strategic development proposals. As a result of this limitation, a number of authorities are now working together to prepare statutory Spatial / Strategic Plans. Examples include Greater Exeter, Oxfordshire and Greater Manchester.
- 3.12 The closest example of what is being considered for SW Herts is a statutory document akin to the emerging [West of England Joint Spatial Plan](#). This covers Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. The emerging plan contains 7 high level policies and 12 area policies which sets the broad direction and strategic approach for development across the whole area. This is then supported by detailed policies in each authority's own local plan. These two levels of plans are being prepared in tandem.
- 3.13 **Benefits**
- A statutory joint plan has a number of significant benefits. The first is that it provides a more effective way of place shaping, by providing a bigger canvas to direct development to the right areas. These growth delivery areas can be supported by the right infrastructure.
- 3.14 Secondly, it can deliver immediate and potentially significant cost savings. These can result from a combined plan-making process including Local Plan examinations, public consultation, stake holder engagement and evidence base preparation. This includes making more efficient and effective use of limited staff resources.
- 3.15 Thirdly, joint planning brings with it increased funding opportunities. It also brings wider support from Government and other agencies, such as Homes England (formerly Homes and Communities Agency) and the Local Enterprise Partnership. Joint plans are increasingly favoured by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (i.e Housing Infrastructure Fund and Planning Delivery Fund). There is also greater potential for a bespoke housing deal to deliver strategic infrastructure where significant growth is proposed.

Appendix I: Local Plan Joint Working with the South West Herts Group Update

- 3.16 Fourthly, a joint plan can help local authorities to manage their housing delivery more effectively. The Government is proposing to allow 5 year housing land supply and the Housing Delivery Test to be managed across strategic areas where there is a joint plan. This could be useful where very complex and large scale developments are being progressed with significantly longer lead-in times.
- 3.17 Fifthly, joint planning can provide a more robust and coherent basis for negotiating with others. In the SW Herts case, by working together we would be in a stronger position. For example, when dealing with the Greater London Authority to ensure that there are greater mutual benefits arising from London's growth. Also to the north, how we work with the Cambridge- Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth corridor where one million new homes are proposed and being supported by Government.
- 3.18 Finally, by having a joint plan in place it would address the duty to co-operate and help to deliver technically sound and legally compliant local plans.
- 3.19 **Risks**
- The primary risk is for one of the partners to break away from the arrangement. To reduce the risk of this occurring, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would establish the governance and ambitions for the new plan. It increases the likelihood of that authority failing Duty to Co-operate requirements and the possibility of the Secretary of State intervening in the Local Plan process. The preparation of a MOU would be followed by the authorities agreeing a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) which would identify the key cross boundary issues. This SoCG is expected to be a new statutory requirement, introduced by the new NPPF.
- 3.20 Resource availability and changes in staffing would be a risk to the plan's preparation as resources would need to be committed from all participating authorities. To address this, a skills bank would be prepared and officers would be expected to work with Officers of all other member authorities on the joint plan.
- 3.21 The risk of programme slippage significantly increases when multiple parties are involved. To address this, a governance structure is proposed in the Memorandum of Understanding. A standard project planning approach will be put in place across the participating authorities.
- 3.22 **Budget**
- A joint 5 LPA funding bid has been submitted for £220,000 to central government to support two staffing posts for the 2018/19 period. It is not considered at this stage that additional resources would be required in the 2017/2018 or 2018/2019 periods. However in 2019/20, these two posts would need to be resourced – either through another funding bid to Government, or by the SW Herts authorities direct. Further resources will also need to be found across the 5 authorities to support the plan's examination in public. There will be some additional resource required for consultations, specialist evidence work or legal advice amounting to c. £130,000.
- 3.23 **Formal Agreement**
- The first step to embark on a SW Herts Joint Plan is for members from all the authorities agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding. The next step will be to progress a Statement of Common Ground. This document will identify the relevant

Appendix I: Local Plan Joint Working with the South West Herts Group Update

cross-boundary strategic priorities, set out how growth will be distributed across the area and what key supporting infrastructure will be required. The five SW Herts authorities and Hertfordshire County Council will be the signatories. During the time the Statement of Common Ground is being drafted, a new timetable for the plan's preparation will be drafted. Officers will be working to progress the evidence to support the new plan.

3.24 **Retention of Sovereignty**

A new joint plan would need to be agreed individually by all authorities. Members would be consulted as the plan progressed at each stage through a series of workshops and broader consultation events. Each authority would continue to maintain its own Local Development Scheme, setting out arrangements for both the preparation of its own Local Plan documents, as well as the agreed timescales for the Joint Strategic Plan.

- 3.25 Both the Submission and Adoption documents would need to be approved by each Council. Whilst an adopted joint plan will form part of the development plan for the district/borough, local planning committees would retain sovereignty when it came to determining planning applications in their area.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING
IN SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE**

February 2018

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Dacorum Borough Council

Hertsmere Borough Council

St Albans City & District Council

Three Rivers District Council

Watford Borough Council

Hertfordshire County Council

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out how cooperation between the five local planning authorities in South West Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council will be managed in respect of strategic planning issues.

The Localism Act 2011 places a Duty to Cooperate on local planning authorities and county councils¹ (amongst other public sector organisations), requiring them to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of plans where this involves strategic matters. Local planning authorities will be tested in relation to legal compliance with the Duty at examination, as well as whether strategic cooperation has resulted in a ‘sound’ and robust approach to delivering strategic objectives.

The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017² requires local planning authorities to “identify the strategic priorities for the development and use of land in the authorities’ area and set out policies to address those priorities in the development plan documents, taken as a whole.” This clause was included to allow greater flexibility in the way that local planning authorities prepare local planning documents, and specifically to support the preparation of ‘strategic’ local plans, whether prepared individually or jointly with neighbouring authorities. However, several recent announcements from

¹ Localism Act 2011, Section 110.

² Neighbourhood Planning Act Part 1, Section 8

Government on proposed planning reforms indicates strongly that the Government's preferred approach is for strategic priorities to be managed on a joint basis across housing market areas through the use of joint spatial plans.

Building on the existing strong foundations of cooperation developed through the Duty to Cooperate, the Local Authorities have agreed to move to a more formal approach to strategic planning. This will be developed through a 'portfolio' of plans, with a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) setting out strategic spatial and infrastructure priorities that are considered to be of mutual benefit, prepared alongside a suite of Local Plans to manage delivery within each of the local planning areas.

Work on the JSP will be steered within the governance structure of the Joint Member and Officer Board (JMOB) to ensure that it aligns with other strategic priorities. Although the JSP will be prepared on the basis of collaboration, formal decisions on the JSP at key stages in its preparation (identified in each local planning authorities' Local Development Scheme) will be taken by the individual local planning authorities which will continue to retain the statutory local planning duty (as set out in the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the 2017 Neighbourhood Planning Act).

A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) will be prepared by the Authorities, setting out the process and timetable for the plan, what local delivery plans will be needed (and how current local plans will be managed through the transition process), governance and working arrangements, and the key evidence needed to support the JSP. Although the focus will be strategic development (housing and economic development) and infrastructure, other strategic priorities may be included where they are required to support delivery of the long term shared vision for South West Hertfordshire. The Statement will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated as and when needed. This will form key evidence to support the JSP and individual Local Plans and should therefore be made available on each of the partner authority's websites.

In preparing the JSP, all partners agree to:

- Engage constructively, actively, openly and on an on-going basis in relation to strategic planning matters under the Duty to Cooperate (or equivalent processes);
- Ensure a broad and consistent approach to strategic planning and development issues in South West Hertfordshire;
- Support better alignment between strategic planning, infrastructure and investment priorities in South West Hertfordshire;
- Adhere to the governance structure set out in this document and ensure that activities are delivered, actions are taken and communications are made as required;

- Be accountable for ensuring that the role and responsibilities as agreed in the Statement of Common Ground are adhered to;
- Be open and communicate about concerns, issues and opportunities in respect of collaboration and joint working;
- Act in a timely manner, recognising the time critical nature of consultations, technical projects and plan preparation;
- Adhere to statutory requirements. Comply with applicable laws and standards, data protection and freedom of information requirements;
- Encourage, develop and share best practice in strategic planning matters;
- Ensure adequate resources and staffing are in place to undertake effective collaboration and joint working (resources to be agreed by the South West Hertfordshire Authorities through the Statement of Common Ground).
- Seek to align informal and formal decision making to ensure the completion of key stages works effectively for all partners

Area Covered

For the purposes of this MoU the geographic area of South West Hertfordshire applies to the administrative areas of Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmeire Borough Council, St Albans City & District Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council.

Status

This MoU cannot override the statutory duties and powers of the parties and is not enforceable by law. However, the parties agree to the principles set out in this MoU.

This MoU is not a development plan, nor a legally binding document, but will be used in the consideration of how the local authorities have jointly approached strategic planning issues and legal compliance with the Duty to Cooperate.

This MoU may be supported by other documentation, and other subject specific MoUs, which set out in more detail how the parties will work together to tackle more detailed matters with respect to strategic planning in South West Hertfordshire.

It is accepted that an individual party or group of parties that are signatories to this MoU may also be signatories to other MoUs between themselves, or with other parties outside South West Hertfordshire in respect of the Duty to Cooperate.

Key outputs of this MoU are:

- A Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) setting out strategic spatial and infrastructure priorities across South West Hertfordshire;
- A Delivery Strategy setting out how the strategic policy framework of the JSP will be delivered, accompanied by a risk assessment and risk management plan;
- A Statement of Common Ground setting out how a JSP will be delivered, what the evidence base is, including identification of various development needs;
- A JSP monitoring process to chart and monitor delivery of the JSP.

Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

Preparation of the Joint Spatial Plan and associated Delivery Strategy will be steered under the governance arrangements of a Joint Member and Officer Board (JMOB). Formal decisions on the JSP at key stages (to be set out in individual Local Development Schemes) will be taken by individual Local Planning Authorities on the advice and recommendations of JMOB. The JMOB will comprise the Leader and the Chief Executive (or equivalent) from each of the District/Borough authorities and the Portfolio Holder and Lead Planning Officer from Hertfordshire County Council.

A Strategic Planning Members Group (SPMG) will be accountable for the overall project management of the JSP, supported by a Strategic Planning Officers Group (SPOG). The SPMG will comprise political representatives from each of the partners (to be appointed by individual authorities) with appropriate authority to make key decisions on progress with the SoCG and JSP. The SPOG will comprise the Heads of Service (or equivalent) from each of the partner authorities, and the lead officer for strategic planning.

'Task and finish' groups will be used to develop specific policy areas, to be identified by the SPMG as and when needed.

Terms of Reference for all groups will be established, setting out the roles, responsibilities and administration. These will be agreed by all partners and reviewed annually to ensure they remain relevant.

Local authorities should ensure that adequate resources are provided in order to undertake the joint work programme as set out in the Statement of Common Ground. Additional resources may be provided by other relevant bodies, as agreed to undertake specified tasks under the work programme.

Review of the MoU

This MoU is effective from the date it is signed by the Chief Executive and Leaders of all parties. It will be reviewed as and when indicated through the Statement of Common Ground.

Table of Signatories

Signature	Role	Authority	Date
	Leader of Council		
	Chief Executive		