

**CABINET**  
**Monday 12 July 2021 at 7.30 pm**  
**Council Chamber, Civic Centre**

**Members**

Councillor Andrew Johnson, Leader of the Council and Lead on Economic Recovery  
Councillor Joel Charles, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience  
Councillor Simon Carter, Portfolio Holder for Housing  
Councillor Alastair Gunn, Portfolio Holder for Environment  
Councillor Michael Hardware, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth  
Councillor Russell Perrin, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance  
Councillor Dan Swords, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

**Other Attendees**

Councillor James Leppard  
Councillor Nicky Purse  
Councillor Matthew Saggars  
Councillor Gareth Williams

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest  
  
Councillors' declarations of interest (if any) in relation to any items on the agenda.
3. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)  
  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021.
4. Matters Arising  
  
Any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.
5. Written Questions from the Public  
  
To receive any questions from members of the public in accordance with Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules.
6. Written Questions from Councillors  
  
To receive any questions from Councillors in accordance with Rule 11 of the Council Procedure Rules.

7. Petitions

To consider any petitions that have been referred to the Cabinet under the Council's Petition Scheme.

8. Forward Plan (Pages 7 - 27)

To note the Forward Plan, which lists all upcoming Cabinet decisions and provides notice of key decisions and those expected to be taken in private session.

9. Year End 2020/21 Finance and Performance Report (Pages 28 - 77)

10. Capital Programmes Outturn Report 2020/21 (Pages 78 - 91)

11. Housing Revenue Account Outturn Report 2020/21 (Pages 92 - 101)

12. Renewal of Article 4 Directions (Pages 102 - 107)

13. Harlow Design Guide - Approval for Consultation (Pages 108 - 139)

14. Cabinet Policy Development Working Group Work Plan 2021/22  
(Pages 140 - 141)

To agree the Working Group's work plan for 2021/22.

15. Communications from Committees/Working Groups/Parties and Panels

16. Minutes of Panels/Working Groups

To note the following draft minutes of Cabinet appointed bodies. Minutes remain draft until approved by the relevant body.

17. Matters of Urgent Business

Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be received as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances to be specified in the minutes.

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET  
HELD ON**

17 June 2021

7.30 - 9.05 pm

**PRESENT**

**Committee Members**

Councillor Andrew Johnson, Leader of the Council and Lead on Economic Recovery

Councillor Joel Charles, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience

Councillor Simon Carter, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Alastair Gunn, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Councillor Michael Hardware, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth

Councillor Russell Perrin, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance

Councillor Dan Swords, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

**Additional Attendees**

Councillor James Leppard

Councillor Nicky Purse

Councillor Matthew Saggars

**Other Councillors**

Councillor David Carter

Councillor Mike Danvers

Councillor Bob Davis

Councillor Tony Durcan

Councillor Tony Edwards

Councillor Eugenie Harvey

Councillor Chris Vince

Councillor Nancy Watson

**Officers**

Brian Keane, Chief Executive

Andrew Bramidge, Head of

Environment and Planning

Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and

Deputy to the Chief Executive

Jane Greer, Head of Community

Wellbeing

Simon Hill, Head of Governance

Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Adam Rees, Governance Support

Officer

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Leader said that the next Cabinet meeting would now take place on 12 July due to the Mark Hall by-election.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

5. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

6. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

None.

7. **PETITIONS**

a) **Support Local Private Hire and Taxi Drivers**

Cabinet received a petition requesting that financial support be provided to Private Hire/Hackney Carriage drivers due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Councillor Perrin offered to meet with the drivers to discuss what actions could be taken to assist drivers.

**RESOLVED** that the petition was noted.

8. **FORWARD PLAN**

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan is noted.

9. **HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN SUSTAINABILITY GUIDANCE**

Cabinet received a report to approve the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainability Guidance and Checklist as a material planning consideration.

Proposed by Councillor Michael Hardware (seconded by Councillor Dan Swords) it was:

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet approved the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainability Guidance and Checklist (March 2021), as set out in Appendix A to the report, as a material consideration in the planning process for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purpose for all major residential development proposals (of 10 or greater dwellings); applications for change of use resulting in a major residential development; and Council-led housing.

10. **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY POLICY**

Cabinet received a report recommending the adoption of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy.

Proposed by Councillor Russell Perrin (seconded by Councillor Dan Swords) it was:

**RESOLVED** that:

**A** The Equality and Diversity and Inclusivity Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted.

**B** Through the Officer Equality Working Group, the Council looks at what 'inclusivity' means for Harlow and develops the Action Plan further to reflect this.

11. **PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATIONS**

Cabinet received a document setting out the Portfolio Holder delegations and areas of responsibility.

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Johnson (seconded by Councillor Michael Hardware) it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Portfolio Holder Delegations be approved.

12. **APPOINTMENT OF CABINET WORKING GROUPS, PANELS AND PARTNERSHIP BODIES 2021/22**

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Johnson (seconded by Councillor Russell Perrin) it was:

**RESOLVED** that the appointments to Cabinet Working Groups, Panels and Partnership Bodies 2021/22 be approved.

13. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/PARTIES AND PANELS**

None.

14. **MINUTES OF PANELS/WORKING GROUPS**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meetings are noted.

a) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 18 February 2021 of Shareholder Sub Committee

b) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 24 March 2021 of Harlow Local Highways Panel

15. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

# Harlow Council Forward Plan

Published on 9 June 2021

This plan contains all decisions that the Council's Cabinet expects to take over the coming year. Where relevant, each decision has been identified as a Key Decision or as involving consideration in private session.

The definition of a Key Decision is given in Article 12 of the Council's Constitution but is also set out here for clarity.

A 'Key Decision' means a Cabinet/Portfolio Holder decision which is likely:

- a) to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. For this purpose, expenditure or savings are deemed to be significant if they exceed £50,000
- b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living in an area comprising two or more wards in Harlow.

Each decision listed in this Forward Plan has been assigned an exemption status as follows:

**Open** – members of the press and public are expected to be allowed to attend during consideration of this matter.

**Confidential** – members of the press and public are expected to be excluded during consideration of this matter. The reasons for this exclusion will be stated in column 5, and relate to a lawful power to exclude the press and public when specific classes of information are being discussed, as contained in the [Local Government Act 1972](#).

A Decision Notice for each Key Decision is published within five days of it being made. Decision Notices and documents to be considered by decision makers are open for inspection on the Council's website [www.harlow.gov.uk](http://www.harlow.gov.uk) and at the Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, Harlow, CM20 1WG. Representations on an upcoming key decision can be made by writing to the Chief Executive, using the address above.

The current members of the Cabinet are as listed on the Council's website at the following page <http://moderngov.harlow.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=121>

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 705	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainability Guidance	Cabinet	17 Jun 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 482	Equality and Diversity Policy	Cabinet	17 Jun 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Hill
I012 605	Year End 2020/21 Finance and Performance Report	Cabinet	8 Jul 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Leader of the Council and Lead on Economic Recovery (Councillor Andrew Johnson)  Brian Keane

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 606	Housing Revenue Account Outturn Report 2020/21	Cabinet	8 Jul 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman
I012 607	Capital Programmes Outturn Report 2020/21	Cabinet	8 Jul 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 706	Renewal of Article 4 Directions	Cabinet	8 Jul 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge, Jane Greer
I012 707	Harlow Design Guide - Approval for Consultation	Cabinet	8 Jul 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 619	Corporate Plan	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Leader of the Council and Lead on Economic Recovery (Councillor Andrew Johnson)  Brian Keane

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 608	Joint Finance and Performance Report, Quarter 1 2021/22	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 609	Housing Revenue Account, Quarter 1 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 610	Capital Programmes, Quarter 1 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman
I012 611	Annual Treasury Management Report 2020/21	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 872	Town Plan - Draft for Consultation	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration (Councillor Dan Swords), Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge, Jane Greer
I012 484	Use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to Advance the Development of Harlow and Gilston Garden Town	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021  Little Parndon and Hare Street; Mark Hall; Netteswell	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 709	Rolling Infrastructure Fund Memorandum of Understanding	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 851	Carbon Management Plan	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Environment (Councillor Alastair Gunn)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 854	Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Environment (Councillor Alastair Gunn)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 848	Harlow Community Hub	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Jane Greer

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 612	Debt Write Offs	Cabinet	9 Sep 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 710	Timetable for Local Plan Review	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 708	Adoption of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 711	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 873	Town Centre Masterplan	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021  Toddbrook; Little Parndon and Hare Street; Netteswell	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration (Councillor Dan Swords), Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Jane Greer, Andrew Bramidge
I012 712	Open Space Supplementary Planning Document - Approval for Consultation	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 847	Partnership Grant Review	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Jane Greer
I012 849	Community Resilience Strategy	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Simon Hill, Jane Greer
I012 874	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Cabinet	14 Oct 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Jane Greer

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 850	Local Plan - Statement of Community Involvement	Cabinet	4 Nov 2021 (Provisional date to be confirmed)	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 852	Environmental Enforcement Delivery	Cabinet	4 Nov 2021 (Provisional date to be confirmed)	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Environment (Councillor Alastair Gunn)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 853	Tree Planting and Bio-Diversity Management	Cabinet	4 Nov 2021 (Provisional date to be confirmed)	Key decision: <b>Yes</b> Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Environment (Councillor Alastair Gunn)  Andrew Bramidge

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 613	Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021/22: Mid-Year Review	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 614	Joint Finance and Performance Report, Quarter 2 2021/22	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 615	Housing Revenue Account, Quarter 2 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman
I012 616	Capital Programmes, Quarter 2 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>No</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 713	Development of a Local Community Infrastructure Levy	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 617	Debt Write Offs	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 131	Referral from Cabinet Policy Development Working Group - Housing Strategy	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Jane Greer

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 618	Referral from Cabinet Policy Development Working Group - Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals	Cabinet	2 Dec 2021	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 620	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 - 2024/25	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 621	General Fund Budget 2022/23	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 622	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2051	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman
I012 623	Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 624	Capital and Treasury Report 2022	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman
I012 625	Capital Programmes 2021/22 - 2023/24	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 875	Community Safety Strategy	Cabinet	27 Jan 2022  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Jane Greer
I012 626	Joint Finance and Performance Report, Quarter 3 2021/22	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 627	Housing Revenue Account, Quarter 3 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman
I012 628	Capital Programme, Quarter 3 Finance Report 2021/22	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor Simon Carter), Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Andrew Murray, Simon Freeman

Ref.	Decision title	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision and Ward(s) affected	Key Decision and private consideration status	Documents to be considered by decision maker	Portfolio Holder and Lead Officer
I012 714	Adoption of Open Space Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth (Councillor Michael Hardware)  Andrew Bramidge
I012 876	Community Engagement Strategy	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022  All Wards	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience (Councillor Joel Charles)  Jane Greer
I012 629	Debt Write Offs	Cabinet	24 Mar 2022	Key decision: <b>Yes</b>  Likely exemption status: <b>Open</b>	Officer's report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance (Councillor Russell Perrin)  Simon Freeman

**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 12 JULY 2021

**TITLE:** YEAR END 2020/21 JOINT FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

**LEAD OFFICER:** BRIAN KEANE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
(01279) 446200

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS:** SENIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD (01279) 446004  
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE TEAM  
(01279) 446252

**This is not a Key Decision**

**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012605**

**The decision is not subject to Call-in Procedures for the following reason:**

The recommendations are within the scope of the original budget and Corporate Plan approved by Full Council in February 2020.

**This decision will affect no ward specifically.**

**RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:**

- A** Acknowledges the outturn position set out in within the report in respect of the General Fund for the year ending 31 March 2021.
- B** Recognises the End of Year operational performance and risk management that has been achieved in 2020/21 across all Council services.
- C** Approves:
  - i) The carrying forward of £242,320 of budgets from 2020/21 to 2021/22 in respect of the General Fund as set out in Appendix 3B to the report.
  - ii) The transfer to reserves of £2,144,000 as set out in Appendix 3C to the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** To ensure that Cabinet reviews performance against the Council's approved budgets for the General Fund for 2020/21.
- B** To seek approval for the recommendations set out in the report in relation to transfer to reserves and carrying forward underspends to ensure that the resources remain to provide services in 2021/22 (paragraph 13).

## BACKGROUND

1. The closure of the accounts deadline for local authorities has been extended because of the impact of Covid-19. The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021 have extended the publication date for final, audited, accounts from 31 July to 30 November 2021. To meet the extended deadline the Council's 2020/21 must publish their draft accounts by 31 August 2021 so that the 10-day public inspection period can begin on 1 September at the latest.
2. The closure of the accounts enables the final contribution to the General Fund Reserve to be calculated representing the variance between the approved budget and the actual income received and expenditure incurred delivering Council services for the year.
3. Budget management has been made more difficult as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions that everyone has faced over the last year. The uncertain levels of reductions in income and additional expenditure, offset in the main by grants from Central Government, have added a layer of complexity when trying to forecast a year end outturn position. However careful management of service budgets has once again ensured any in-year pressures that have arisen have been effectively managed within the overall service budgets wherever possible.

## ISSUES/PROPOSALS

### General Fund

4. A review of the 2020/21 financial year indicates that service controllable budgets have overspent by £0.635 million, or 1.11 per cent. After adjusting for the requested budget carry-forward items detailed in this report (totalling £242,321), and other non-controllable variations there is an underspend for the financial year of £0.129 million or -0.22 per cent of the General Fund budget. The previous estimated position, based on December 2020 forecast and reported to March Cabinet I was for an underspend of £79,000, or -0.14 per cent.
5. Appendix 3A to this report summarises major budget variations across all service areas and non-controllable budgets.
6. The following table summarises the year-end financial position:

**Table 1 – Summary of Year End Financial Position**

	£'000
Total Service Variations	635
Windfall and non-controllable variations and reserve movements	(1,006)
Budget Carry Forward requests (Appendix 3B)	242
<b>Total General Fund outturn 2020/21</b>	<b>(129)</b>

7. As in previous years, budgets have been carefully managed across all services to guard against expenditure pressures and offset income reductions.

8. Significant variations have been reported to Cabinet during the year. Key areas that have contributed to the reported outturn position include:
- a) Additional Government grant in respect of business rates reliefs - £2.3million;
  - b) Higher than budgeted returns from HTS - £0.2 million;
  - c) Reduced PWLB loan interest payments - £0.7 million;
  - d) Additional transfer to earmarked reserves - £2.6 million.

### General Fund Balance

9. The position on the General Fund balance is:

**Table 2 – General Fund Balance**

	<b>£ millions</b>
<b>General Fund closing balance 31 March 2020 (as per the unaudited accounts)</b>	<b>4.511</b>
2019/20 budget Carry Forward Requests	-0.163
<b>Pension Deficit Payments</b>	<b>-1.605</b>
<b>Effective General Fund closing Balance 31 March 2020</b>	<b>2.743</b>
Service Variations 2020/21	-0.635
Non-Service Variations	1.156
Service Carry Forward Requests	-0.242
<b>General Fund Closing Balance – 31 March 2021</b>	<b>3.022</b>
Proposed Covid – 19 Reserve	-0.150
<b>Final General Fund Closing Balance 31 March 2021</b>	<b>2.872</b>

10. After adjusting for proposals previously approved by the Council and proposals set out in this report, the General Fund balance will move from an opening position of £4.511 million to £2.872 million at the year-end.
11. As part of the 2021/22 budget setting process and as approved in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the minimum level for the General Fund Reserve balance over the life of the current MTFS is £2.5 million.
12. This level was set to ensure that the Council has adequate reserves given the financial uncertainty resulting from the Government's welfare reform, the Local Government Resource Review proposals, and the impact of the on-going economic conditions in the medium term and more recently the local impacts of Covid-19. Subject to Cabinet decision, the forecast level for 2021/22 will be £372,000 above the minimum recommended balance.

## **Carry Forwards Affecting the General Fund Balance**

13. Cabinet is requested to approve the carry forward of 2020/21 budgets of £242,321. These have been reviewed by the Senior Management Board (SMB) and are detailed in Appendix 3B to this report. No funding is currently provided within the 2021/22 budget for the items identified and if the carry forwards are not approved it is unlikely that the work/ projects will be carried out.

## **Transfers to Reserves**

14. It is recommended that the net movement in reserves for 2020/21 of £2,144,000 as set out in Appendix 3C to the report is agreed.

## **Summary of the End of Year Operational Performance - 2020/21**

15. The Council's Year End operational performance is set out in Section 5 to this report. The Council performed on or above target for 46 out of 49 (94 per cent) of its monthly, quarterly, and annual key performance indicators.
16. The Council continues to improve its performance in key areas linked to its Corporate Priorities and Principles. Some of the indicators that have contributed to this achievement are set out in the 'good performance' table of Section 5 to this report.
17. The Council successfully completed 72 per cent of its corporate milestones. One per cent were significantly off track; and three per cent were slightly delayed due to Covid 19. Sixteen per cent were cancelled due to Covid 19 or suspended and moved to the new financial year 2021-2022. Eight per cent of the milestones are 'on-going' and will be carried over to the new financial year 2021-22.
18. At Year End, the Council had no exceptional strategic risks (rated 20 or higher – high likelihood, high impact) recorded in the Council's Risk Register.

## **SIGNIFICANT RISKS/OPPORTUNITIES**

19. The Council continues to operate in a period of major change driven by both worldwide economic conditions and legislative changes being introduced by the Government and at the end of 4th Quarter 2020/2021 is starting to see impact from Covid-19. Key changes that will or continue to impact on the Council include:
  - a) Variations in income from fees and charges and other specific grants.
  - b) Ongoing low staff turnover rates which put at risk the achievement of the vacancy savings targets allocated to each service within the Council's budget.
  - c) The uncertainty with regard to the funding arrangements for the local government sector beyond 2022/23. This ongoing uncertainty stems

from both the proposals regarding the new distribution methodology and the actual level of resources to be distributed through that mechanism.

- d) Short and medium term impacts of the Brexit process following the UK's exit of the European Union in December 2020.
- e) Effects of Covid-19 pandemic. Working with key partners and businesses has been key through lockdown and will continue to be necessary as the Government's roadmap out of lockdown is implemented.

20. Significant opportunities continue to arise and develop to benefit the town and its residents. The Council must ensure it continues to work with all stakeholders to realise those benefits. Examples where opportunities arise include:

- a) Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- b) Enterprise Zone delivery and skills plan to support development of a skilled workforce.
- c) Public Health England relocation to Harlow including partnership working to address employment skills development and supply chain opportunities. This remains under close review following the government's announcements around National Institute for health Protection (NIHP)
- d) Road and transport infrastructure including completion of M11 Junction 7a and associated improvements to Gilden Way.

21. The Senior Management Board continues to review strategic risks on a regular basis to assess future impact and necessary controls required to keep risks at acceptable levels.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning**

### **Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive**

### **Housing**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

**Community Wellbeing**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

**Governance (Includes HR)**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance**

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Joint Finance & Performance Report, Year End 2020/21

**Background Papers**

None.

**Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

IAP – Improvement Action Plan

KPI – Key Performance Indicators

MHCLG – Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government

MTFS – Medium Term Financial Strategy

SMB – Senior Management Board

**Harlow Council**

**Year End 2020/21- Joint Finance and  
Performance Report**

## The Council's aim for 2020-21:-

**"to improve Harlow for residents, businesses and visitors"**

### The Council's priorities:

1. Resilience and Recovery



2. More and Better Housing



3. Regeneration and a Thriving Economy



4. Wellbeing and Social Inclusion



5. A Clean and Green Environment



6. Successful Children and Young People



## Foreword from the Chief Executive



### **Report Summary from Brian Keane, Chief Executive, Harlow Council**

As I introduce this year-end financial and performance report I reflect back on what has happened over the last year.

I always say that our best asset is our people, and this last year has really put that into focus once again.

It has been a tough, and, at times, an emotional year all round for our residents, businesses, staff, and partner organisations. Harlow families have mourned the loss of loved ones, the council has mourned colleagues with the passing of staff and councillors and some of the organisations we work with have sadly lost people too.

As a council we have had to adapt to a new way of working while dealing with the uncertainty and anxiety the situation has created for us all. As a community leader we have put responding to the COVID pandemic and protecting the public as our top priority.

With the pandemic have come new operational and financial challenges, I am extremely proud at how our staff have all risen to the task of keeping our services going and focusing on supporting our residents and businesses.

Despite the difficult times, the resilience of our residents and businesses has shone through and they have been brilliant, and the resilience shown by staff has been equally impressive. We haven't been able to do all the normal things that we take for granted, like delivering services face-to face that make such a difference to people's lives, but we have adapted and found new, and in some cases, better ways of providing services and working with others to support people in a time of need. We can be proud of our achievements and be proud of how we have managed the financial challenges.

I believe that our resilience and the willingness to do the right thing for our town puts us in a good place to deal with the opportunities and challenges ahead as Harlow recovers from the pandemic. Team work and a team spirit, with councillors and staff working together, will see us through. While most of the year has been hard, there has been times when we can look to the future with positivity. We take some of the positivity with us now as we start to get back to a more normal way of life again.

I cannot be any more prouder of this council or this town.

## Introduction

The Central Government requires all Councils to collect and report data relating to their function as a Local Authority in areas such as waste, planning, benefits, and housing.

The Council monitors its performance against its Corporate Priorities, Principles and Goals through its Performance Management Framework. The Framework sets out the mechanisms and the range of tool utilised by Officers and Councillors in gathering and reporting the Council's performance data.

The Council's Priorities, Principles, Goals 2021/22 are set out in its [Corporate Plan 2021 - 2022](#), available on the Council's website.

To view the Council performance data and reports, please visit our website at <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/spending-and-performance/performance>

## Covid 19 Recovery Group

The Council established a Cross Party Members Working Group to co-ordinate its response to the Coronavirus pandemic, including the responsibility for the corporate priority specific action plan and performance. The Groups meetings can be found here

<https://moderngov.harlow.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=299&Year=0>

## Corporate Achievements for 2020/2021

In February 2020, we published our Corporate Plan to reaffirm our commitment to our Corporate Priorities, Principles and Goals for 2021-2022, whilst recognising and responding to changes to legislation, government priorities and opportunities to implement innovation.

To co-ordinate our response to the Covid 19 Pandemic a Cross Party Members Working Group was established. The Group also managed our new Corporate Priority 'Resilience and Recovery'. The Council's six corporate priorities and three principles are set out below.

### Council Priorities

- Resilience and Recovery
- More and Better Housing
- Regeneration and A Thriving Economy
- Wellbeing and Social Inclusion
- A Clean and Green Environment
- Successful Children and Young People

### Council Principles

- Being the Community Leader
- Sound Resource Management
- Equalities and Fairness

The table below illustrates some of our achievements for each of the above Priorities and Principles in the financial year 2020/21.

#### Resilience and Recovery

Staff have adapted to a more flexible working approach in order to keep delivering services, with many staff working from home. The council has continued to provide essential services during the pandemic as well as set up new ones to help residents affected by coronavirus.

From March 2020 to March 2021, we:

- Paid out a total of £174,000 to 348 residents who were told to self-isolate between October 2020 and March 2021
- Paid out up to £40m in government grants and reliefs to local businesses
- Paid out £866,729 in additional Council Tax support to over 6,000 households
- Dealt with over 150,000 enquiries (calls, emails, online forms, applications, and social media messages)
- Published over 3,000 social media posts to keep residents informed
- Received 387,154 views, with 85,741 views of coronavirus support pages, on the council's website
- Bin crews collected 12,196 tonnes of non-recycling, 6,566 tonnes of recycling and 2,439 tonnes of food waste, with services remaining largely uninterrupted.

### **Being the Community Leader**

Cross-party working on Harlow's response and recovery from the pandemic including regular joint statements and messages from political leaders on measures residents need to take and support expressed for the efforts of key workers, volunteers and local organisations and businesses .

To support vulnerable residents impacted by the pandemic the council took on the running of the Harlow Community Hub working in partnership with Rainbow Services: The hub has:

- Answered over 4,500 calls from residents
- Made over 9,300 welfare calls to vulnerable residents to see how they're doing
- Answered 500 calls from residents who needed advice, were lonely or concerned about the welfare of someone else
- Supported 1,700 residents by referring them to other partner agencies for help
- Helped with 773 general food enquiries and 875 requests from people who needed help with collecting essential food shopping
- Collected 664 prescriptions for those unable to collect them with 356 referrals made to Goodsam for prescriptions.

The council has successfully moved all its public council meetings online which are streamed live leading to increased public engagement and improvements in making decision making more open and transparent.

Led the remembrance for 'D' Day, Armed Forces Day, and other events.

### **More and Better Housing**

- Accommodated and supported 64 rough sleepers through the Covid pandemic with options, advice, and where required, facilitated "moving on" to settled housing in line with the "Everyone In" Government initiative.
- Added to the supply of Council Housing with the purchase of 45 homes on the open market to be allocated to the Council's Housing Needs Register for much needed homes.
- Enhanced our resident access routes with the enhancement of Housing's online digital tenancy platform enabling tenants, leaseholders, and housing applicants to make housing applications on- line, view and manage their housing and garage rent accounts, providing 24/7 access along with repairs requests.
- Enhanced our Decent Homes programme by completing Covid secure major external refurbishments to flat blocks including roof and window renewals, external insulation, external decoration, fencing and landscaping.
- Provided additional support/contact throughout the Covid pandemic and supported tenants and leaseholders with their payment schemes, provided support to vulnerable tenants and leaseholders along with signposting other services and support.
- Maintained income levels and reduced the number of upheld complaints.

### **Regeneration and a Thriving Economy (Economic Growth)**

- The council's Local Development Plan, which sets out the framework to guide and shape development in Harlow to 2033, was officially adopted.
- In March Global business Renesas signed the first lease at the Nexus building in Harlow Innovation Park.
- Successful introduction more Article 4 Directions to protect business areas from unwelcome permitted developments.

### **Regeneration and a Thriving Economy (Regeneration)**

- Secured initial funding from the Towns Fund for regeneration of the town centre, which is being used to refurbish East Gate.
- Supported businesses to become COVID-secure and introduced measures in the town centre and neighbourhood shopping centres to support the safe reopening of shops and services.
- Distributed up to £40m in government grants to support local businesses to March 2021.
- Working with partners as part of the Harlow Growth Board, the council coordinated and submitted a multi-million pound bid to government to support projects which will help make Harlow a better place to live, work, visit and learn.
- The council is working with partners to establish the £50m Harlow Investment Fund to drive forward the regeneration of the town centre. The council has allocated £5m to this fund and secured £5m from Essex County Council.

### **Wellbeing & Social Inclusion**

- Up to £10,000 was donated from the fireworks display fund to Harlow Foodbank helping to feed 400 children during school holidays.
- The council actively supported the rolling out of COVID testing sites around the town including the site within the Civic Centre, Mead Park Depot and at the football and rugby clubs.
- The council help set up the large vaccination centre at Harlow Leisurezone.
- The council joined the Sunflower hidden disability scheme – wearing the sunflower discreetly tells staff that you need additional support, help or a little more time.
- To help promote healthy lifestyles during the pandemic repairs to council-owned cycle tracks were carried out to complement a programme of works by Essex County Council to the cycle tracks they maintain in the town.

- During the pandemic, the Leah Manning Centre staff continued to help support their customers by providing a vital outreach service, spending hours every day preparing and delivering care packages for their customers, as well as making daily welfare calls. The team also liaised with key services including social workers and supported housing teams to be able to signpost their customers when needed.
- The council promoted a range of available health and wellbeing services on social media, Harlow Council website and Harlow Times including Social.Active.Strong. We also shared an ECC campaign on getting fit for Winter and NHS Better Health campaign.
- Advice for those suffering domestic abuse during lockdown.
- In September 2020, a major police operation supported by the council took place with raids on 18 addresses in the town. Nineteen people were arrested on suspicion of being involved in a criminal network in the town which has included supplying cocaine to county lines gangs.

### **A Clean and Green Environment**

- More than £3,500 raised for charity from Christmas tree recycling collections booked by residents.
- Following the introduction of a new garden waste service, premium subscriptions increased from 1122 to 3261 and more than 810 tonnes of garden waste was collected and sent for composting compared with 469 tonnes the previous year.
- Green Flag awards for the 5th time for Town Park, the 12<sup>th</sup> time for Parndon Wood and the first ever for Harlow Museum and Walled Garden.
- The Town Park became a Grade II listed site and Pets' Corner achieved a TripAdvisor Travellers Choice award, placing it in the top 10% places to visit worldwide.
- Construction of a new access path linking Todd Brook and Netteswell Pond has recently been completed to create a safer and more pleasant route. The work is part of a larger project involving accessibility improvements at the beauty spot.
- Figures published in July 2020 showed that the council had achieved its target to reduce its emissions by 25% by 2021 a year early.
- External funding of £418,297 has been secured to help support the town's climate change pledges, reduce public building running costs and reduce the council's carbon use. The funding from Salix via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme will be used for Solar PV Panels, LED Lighting, and replacement energy efficient hand dryers.
- Around 800 trees were planted by the 'Green Team' Volunteers completing the first stage of hedgerow restoration project at Parndon Lock Meadows. This was the sixth consecutive year of the project which has seen an ancient hedgerow restored by coppicing and

additional planting with 3,500 new trees.

- The council agreed to a year's trial with NES to provide environmental enforcement services in the town. A team of environmental crime officers are targeting those antisocial people who don't dispose of their litter in a responsible way, fail to pick up after their dogs or dump waste.

### **Successful Children and Young People**

- A Facebook group was created to promote school readiness sessions, share information, and create an online community for parents with young children in Harlow. The group currently has 128 members.
- Harlow Youth Councillors have continued to work closely with each other virtually throughout the pandemic. The young people have worked on a number of projects and activities, including; a knife crime awareness campaign, stay safe during pandemic posters for schools, and environmental posters to promote the positive things that young people can do to help protect their local environment.

### **Sound Resource Management**

- Through careful financial management the council has ensured that it has had the right resources in the right places to maintain its services provision throughout the pandemic without the need to set an emergency budget.
- Harlow Playhouse was successful in three bids to Arts Council England totalling £829,956 to help develop our audience and cover budget costs whilst closed to the public.

### **Equalities and Fairness**

- The council continued working on the Equality and Diversity Policy and following close work with the Audit and Standards committee, the Policy and associated documents including the action plan will be taken to the Cabinet meeting in June 2021 for approval.
- The council continued to promote inclusive events in Harlow by using social media and by live streaming events such as Harlow Pride, Black History Month Event and Holocaust Memorial Day 2021.

## Operational Performance

This report provides a summary of the Council's operational performance of its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Service Milestones, Finance and Risk for the Year Ending 31 March 2021 (Quarter 4 2020/21).

Officers have provided the following commentary on the performance of their Service Milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for which they are responsible.

### Community Wellbeing, Jane Greer

The CWB Service milestones for 2020/21 are completed or on track despite difficult circumstances.

During the last year some of the CWB services adapted to provide a service to resident in other ways, and as such we continued to provide support at home to vulnerable elderly residents who would normally attend Leah Manning Centre, provided services for young people and more vulnerable children online, and adapted our museum service and Pets' Corner so that it could be delivered in a different way.

A bid to enable further development at the Enterprise Zone was made to the Get Britain Building fund was submitted and was successful. Harlow Growth Board was established, and a Town Investment Fund was developed and submitted to Government, with the announcement expected early in the 2021/2022 municipal year.

The CWB Team, along with other Council teams provided support to the Community Hub, which supported (and continues to support) residents of Harlow requiring support due to effect and implications of Covid 19 were "paused" due to lockdown and other restrictions.

### Environment and Planning, Andrew Bramidge

Performance on tree works in the fourth quarter has maintained its steady improvement in the previous two quarters following the cessation of services in the first Covid lockdown. The performance target was not reached during the year however due to the extent of the backlog to be managed. Given the gradual improvement in the service in recent months, performance targets should be reached by the mid-year point.

Monitoring in Quarter 4 by the Keep Britain Tidy Group showed that performance on measures such as littering "compared favourably to national and regional benchmarks". However, both littering and detritus on roads showed increases in the year despite still remaining below national benchmarks.

Waste collection services were generally maintained during the quarter despite ongoing Covid related absences at the contractor. Food waste collections were suspended for a four week period to enable capacity for refuse and recycling collections to be maintained.

The fourth quarter saw all of the Government's Planning Performance targets being exceeded

for 2020/21 as the Development Management team maintained their strong performance the year.

With the adoption of the Local Plan being completed in Q3, the Forward Planning team began work on the next stage of implementation, bringing forward a Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable and Specialist Housing as well as commencing work on an update to the Harlow Design Guide – both forecast to be adopted in 2021/22.

### Housing, Andrew Murray

Demand for housing has continued to increase in 2020/21.

Increased responsibilities as a result of the Covid 19 (Everyone in) Government Initiative has meant a major increase in accommodating rough sleepers, taking vulnerable individuals off the street, and finding suitable settled accommodation.

The numbers in T/A have increased from 251 in Q4 2019/20 to 284 this quarter. It is expected for there to be an increase of over 20% in the numbers in temporary accommodation with increased resources being required to tackle housing need. Prioritisation continues against resources available; officers are reporting that due to acute housing need growing, the numbers in accommodation is likely to increase by 20% in the next two years. It is expected there will be an increase in the use of emergency accommodation (B&B). The service continues to focus on the prevention of homelessness as well as other types of housing related support.

In addition, Covid 19 restrictions has meant a reduction in income in 2020-21 for housing support (Telecare installations) which has meant a need to realign budget estimates for 2021-22.

### Governance, Simon Hill

#### **Operational Performance:**

As a result of Covid-19, the way that we have dealt with customers has significantly changed. Contact Harlow has continued to deliver services throughout the pandemic from the Civic Centre through the call centre and between lock downs provided a face to face service to those that needed it most.

A drive towards encouraging our customers to use online services has meant that a significant amount of pressure has been taken away from back office services and allowed them to concentrate on delivering key services to those that need it most. Visitors to the website have been at an all-time high with the information on how we are providing services in the pandemic the most popular pages.

The Community Hub, staffed by Governance staff amongst others, has ensured that our most vulnerable residents have had access to information and assistance with food and prescriptions collection.

Through our social media channels and Harlow Times, we have ensured that residents have been kept up to date on the assistance available to them and allowed us to monitor issues as they arrive so that they can be dealt with.

Despite the Playhouse being closed for the majority of the year, it has successfully been awarded grant funding which has meant that it has underspent against budget.

The new HR system has meant smoother processes for dealing with sickness and absence management resulting in a more efficient service.

**Financial Outturn:**

The Governance Service, at year end, shows a significant underspend which reflects the challenging year and also difficulties with understaffing. A significant element of the underspending also reflects the cancellation of elections scheduled for May 2020.

**Finance and Property, Simon Freeman**

The service has performed well even under the significant restrictions that have been experienced as a result of the national Covid crisis. Normal activity has continued to operate as expected and where necessary adjustments to comply with changing national restrictions and guidelines have been implemented. In addition it should be recognised that the service has also had a significant additional workload to accommodate in direct response to the crisis since April 2020.

The key area of performance that is off target is the collection statistics for Council Tax and Business Rates. This is not unexpected due to the current climate and formal recovery action has been placed on hold at the current time due to the closure of the Courts during the initial lockdown, government guidelines associated with recovery and the recognition locally of the impacts the crisis is having on residents. This situation is replicated across many other local authorities and the moves by the government to allow deficits to be carried across three financial years as opposed to just one is a clear indication that this matter is being recognised nationally.

The financial performance of the service is significantly affected by the crisis as reflected in this report and the table of service variations. Two key issues impacting the service budget and reflected within the major variations table are –

- Firstly the loss of income from the closure and subsequent reduction in usage of the towns car parks and
- Secondly the extremely difficult market conditions that have been created in terms of letting the new council owned Nexus building at the Science Park.

Whilst it was not possible to rectify these issues through corrective management action during the year the income compensation scheme and other government funding provided to support the Council (shown in the non-service variations in the variations table) totalling £1.5m has been provided to help local authorities deal with these and other direct Covid impacts.

Good progress is being made with the Nexus building with two tenants due to take up occupation during Q1 and Q2 2021/22 and a third tenant in active discussions to lease another large part of the building. If all negotiations are successful the building is expected to be over 80% occupied during the next financial year.

## Section One: Key Considerations

The key issues relating to the Council's finances, performance, risks, and corporate plan:

### FINANCE

The outturn position for 2020/21 is that the controllable General Fund revenue budget has overspent by £635,000 on its gross controllable costs. This represents an overspend of 1.11% of the Council's approved gross budget for the General Fund. Taking into consideration the budgets which are not controllable by services, there is an overall forecast underspend of £129,000 or 0.22%.

Key risks in relation to financial management are currently:

- The risks and volatility associated with the current Covid crisis and its impact on the council's budgets and the local economy over the next one to three years.
- The future impacts of council tax and business rates collection performance on 2021/22 and future years.

The uncertainty regarding the future financial settlements, the impact Government policy relating to the recovery from the crisis and the state of national finances will have on public sector funding.

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The following indicators had poor performance in Quarter 4 2020/21:

- CS25Q Percentage of Customer Complaints responded to within target time
- HTS3.11d Tree works carried out within 80 working days
- BV010 NNDR collected (%)

### PERFORMANCE

### RISK

At the end of Quarter 4 2020/21, there are no exceptional strategic risks (rated 20 or higher – high likelihood, high impact) recorded on the Council's Risk Register

The position of the Corporate Milestones as at the 31 March 2021 is broken down as follows:

- 72% (111 out of 153) were successfully completed.
- 1% (1 out of 153) was significantly off track.
- 3% (4 out of 153) were slightly delayed due to Covid 19.
- 16% (24 out of 153) were cancelled due to Covid 19 or suspended and moved to the new financial year 2021/22.
- 8% (13 out of 153) will be carried over into 2021/22 as ongoing milestones.

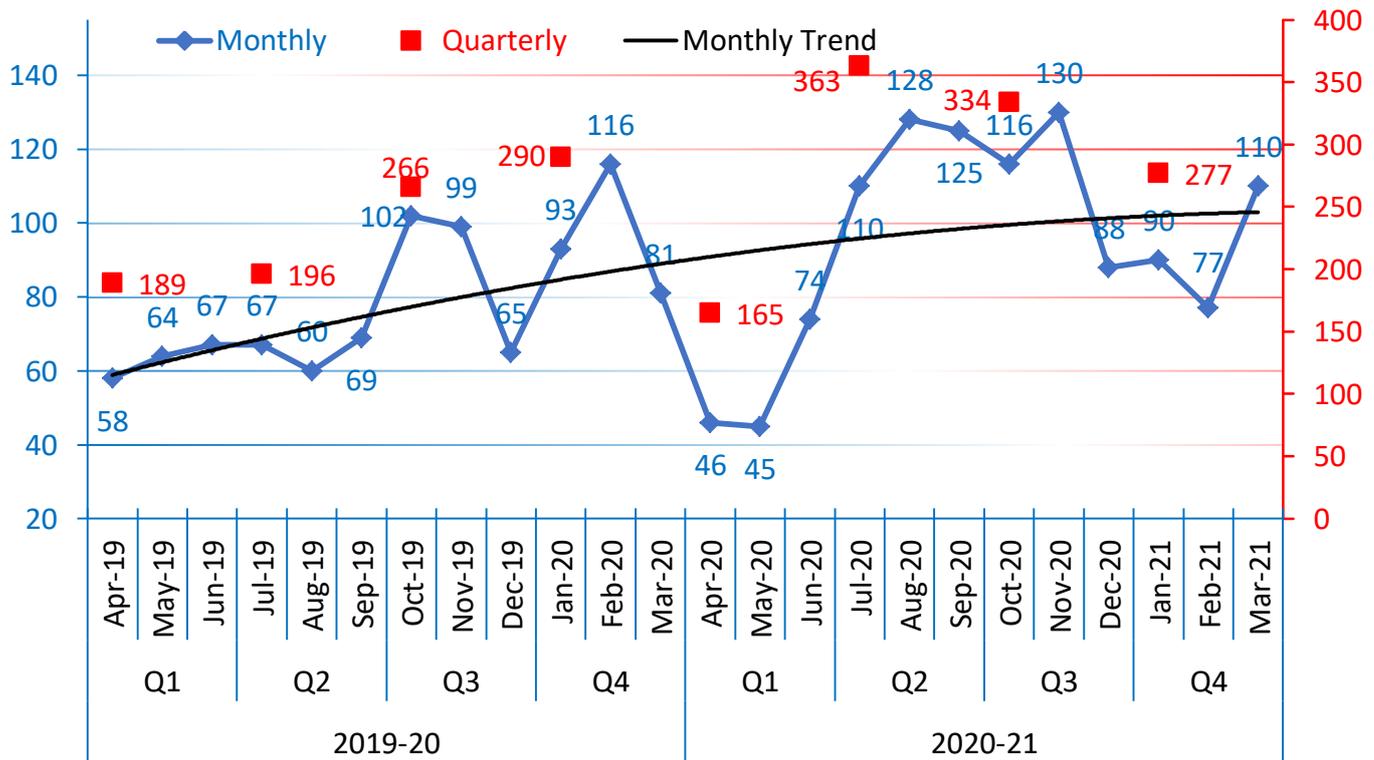
### CORPORATE PLAN

## Section Two: What our Customers are telling us (Complaints)

The council provides and commissions a large number of services, to a population of around 87,100 residents (2019 estimate). Every year the council undertakes over 600,000 housing transactions and deals with hundreds of thousands of enquiries at Contact Harlow. Contact Harlow also provides an administrative service for housing benefit and local council tax support.

The council aims to respond and resolve all stage one and stage two complaints within 10 working days, and stage three complaints within 15 working days.

The chart below shows two years of complaints (April 2019 to March 2021) by the monthly and quarterly figures, monthly is in blue and quarterly is in red.



When quarter four of 2020/21 is compared to the same quarter in 2019/20, there is a reduction of 4.5% in the number of complaints received. In the last twelve months (April 2020 to March 2021) there was an average of 95 complaints per month, whereas in the previous 12 months (April 2019 to March 2020), the monthly average was 78. The increase in this period, equates to 21.79%

The level of complaints has slightly reduced in quarter four although work was undertaken to ascertain the trends. It was found that:

HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd - There were a number of key themes identified in the analysis of HTS complaints including customer contact, communication, and access issues. These themes continue to be monitored as part of the response to the Covid-19 implications and organisational priority requirements.

Housing - Housing complaint totals for quarter four were consistent across each month however the cumulative total received has reduced significantly when compared to Q4 2020/21 and is now lower than Q4 2019/20.

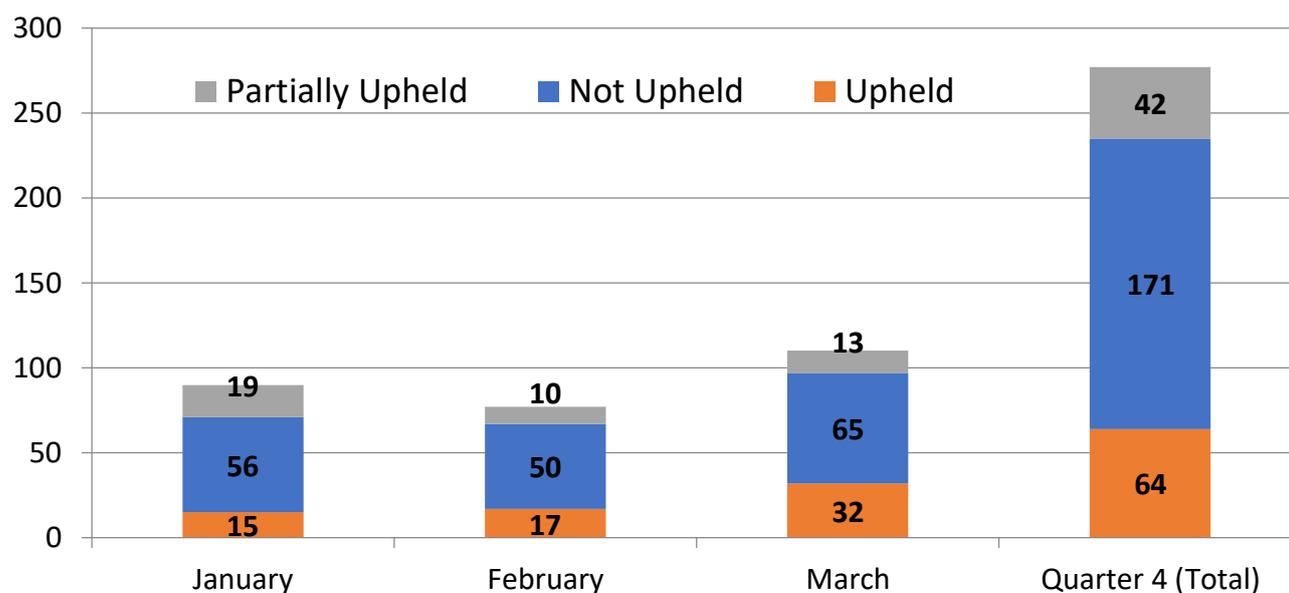
Analysis of the formal responses indicated that over 80% of the complaints received were not upheld.

There has been a continuation in the key themes predominately relating to accessing accommodation and there were also a considerable proportion of dampness/condensation issues reported which is consistent for this time of year. Officers are currently reviewing existing processes for dealing with these cases however it should be noted that the lack of suitable accommodation has resulted in increased occupation levels in flatted accommodation causing higher incidences of severe condensation.

Environment and Planning – The complaints raised continue to exclusively be in relation to refuse collections. There has continued to be direct pressures on the availability of staff by Veolia and increased regulatory requirements which together impacted the team’s capacity.

The council continues to work closely with Veolia to ensure that practicable mitigations are put in place and that best use is made of the available resources.

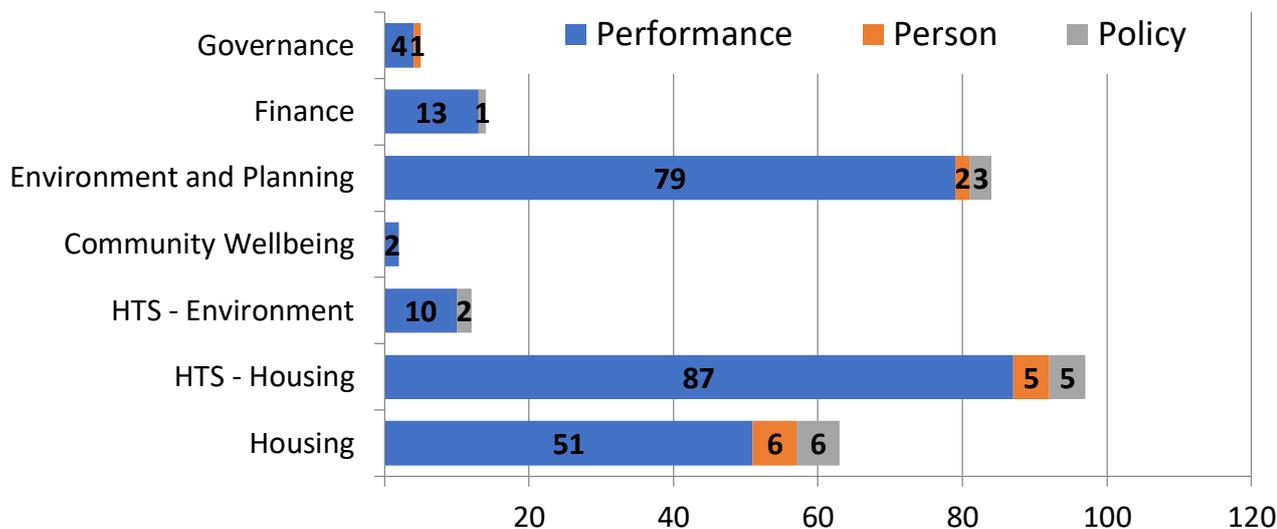
In quarter four of 2020/21, the council received a total of 277 complaints. These complaints break down as 64 (23%) upheld, 171 (62%) not upheld and 42 (15%) partially upheld. The chart below shows the breakdown by classification for each month and the quarter total.



The table below shows the breakdown of complaints by the stage, for each month in Quarter Four. There were 81% of complaints resolved by stage one, 14% of complaints were resolved by stage two and 5% of the complaints reached stage three.

Month	Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three
January	75	10	5
February	61	14	2
March	88	15	7
<b>Quarter Four Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>

The chart below shows a breakdown of the three complaint types and the number of complaints against the relevant service area. In quarter four there were 246 performance; 14 person and 17 policy related complaints.



Additional information is collected on all closed complaint that were either upheld or partially upheld, to ensure lessons are learnt to improve service delivery and minimise the risk of reoccurrence.

This information is logged by the service areas responding to the complaint and includes:

- What will be done as a result of the complaint?
- Who by?
- By when?

The Customer Services Officer receives monthly reports, to ensure that action(s) are being completed. Any failures/blockages are reported to the Customer and Media Services Manager, to progress to the relevant Head of Service.

Reports on trends and resolutions are provided to the Senior Management Board, to ensure continuous improvement.

## Section Three: The Latest Financial Performance

The impacts of the Covid crisis have influenced the Councils overall financial position in 2020/21. As previously reported additional costs and more importantly the loss of income have been the key issues directly impacting the budget for the financial year.

During the year, regular returns have been made to the Government in relation to the financial impacts affecting the Council and in total £1.5m of financial support has been received as reflected in this report. Most of the final quarter of the year was impacted by the further national restrictions placed on the country by the Government.

As previously reported council tax and business rates income remains a concern with collection rates down by 3.1% and 5.9% respectively when compared to the same period in 2019/20. Deficit on the Collection Fund must be met through a charge against future years general fund resources. A new scheme Local Tax Income Guarantee Scheme (TIG) has been launched by the Government to help support losses from Council Tax and Business Rates income and this is combined with the extension of the Sales Fees and Charges (SFC) scheme for the first quarter of 2021/22.

The variations included within this report reflects the impact that the fall in business rates collection will have on the Council as a direct result of a reduction in anticipated benefits from the Essex Business Rates Pool in 2020/21. This was also reported as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process reported in January and reflected as a pressure in the 2021/22 financial year as well.

The outturn position being reported presents a positive outcome for the Council and is a reflection of the good financial management being exercised across all service areas. Whilst some significant pressures have manifested themselves during the financial year they have been managed in the wider context of the council's budget and in line with the financial support made available by the Government to help with Covid specific pressures.

The outturn remains aligned with information previously presented to Cabinet throughout the year and this further supports the good financial control being exercised by the Council, its officers and Cabinet.

Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Head of Finance and Property

[Movement in General Fund \(Q4 2020\\_21\); The Major Variances \(Q4 2020\\_21\); Carry Forward Requests for 2020/21; Transfer to Reserves](#)

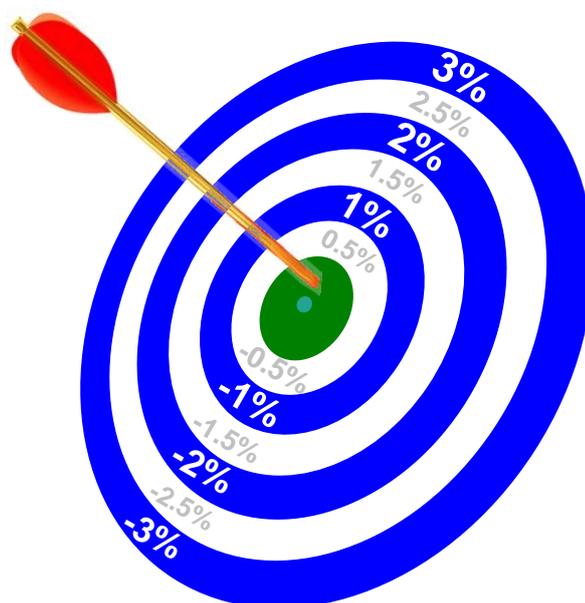
## Movements in General Fund Balance in Quarter Four 2020/21

	<i>£millions*</i>
<b>General Fund closing balance as at 30 March 2020</b>	<b>4.511</b>
<b>Variation resulting from previous Cabinet / Council decisions:</b>	
• Carry forwards from 2019/20 to 2020/21 (Sept Cabinet)	(0.163)
Application of GF to meet 3year pension deficit payment (Jan Cabinet)	(1.605)
<b>Effective General Fund closing balance as at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>2.743</b>
<b>Current Variations</b>	
• Service budget variations	(0.635)
• Other variations	1.156
Creation of Covid Reserve (Sept Cabinet)	(0.150)
2020/21 Carry Overs	(0.242)
<b>Balance on General Fund at 31 March 2021 (Projected)</b>	<b>2,872</b>

\* Note: Figures in brackets ( ) reduce the projected General Fund Balance.

### 2020/21 Forecast Outturn

The Council projects to underspend by a margin of 0.22% on its gross General Fund revenue budget.



## Appendix 3A - Major Variances - Quarter Four 2020/21

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
<b>Finance and Property Services</b>				
Accountancy	193		193	Staff vacancies offset by consultancy and advertisement costs.
Nexus	842		842	Loss of rental income during 20/21 as a result of delays due to Covid-19 in addition to unbudgeted security costs.
Commercial Rental Income	75		75	Loss of rental income from commercial units as a result of Covid-19
Car Parks	938		938	Loss of income as a result of Covid-19.
Civic Centre		(60)	(60)	Reduced overtime and building related costs
Garages		(105)	(105)	Reduced RCCO
Housing Benefits	144		144	Overpaid rent allowances
Revenues and Benefits		(35)	(35)	Staff vacancies
ICT		(38)	(38)	Staff vacancies and funding of staff secondment
Insurance		(349)	(349)	Reduction in insurance premiums following tendering exercise
Minor Service variances		(31)	(31)	
<b>Total Finance and Property Services</b>			<b>1,574</b>	
<b>Chief Executive</b>				
Chief Executive	6		6	
<b>Housing GF</b>				
Housing Options and Advice		(62)	(62)	Increased cost of Temporary Accommodation offset by vacancies, grant income and other running expenses
Minor Service variances	2		2	
<b>Total Housing General Fund</b>			<b>(60)</b>	
<b>Governance</b>				
The Playhouse		(62)	(62)	Grant received from Arts Council
Legal		(177)	(177)	Staff vacancies - new structure not yet being implemented.
Relationship & Commissioning		(85)	(85)	Staff vacancies - new structure not yet being implemented.
Human Resources / Payroll		(34)	(34)	Staff vacancies and underspent consultancy budget subject to carry forward request.
Electoral Services		(142)	(142)	Saving resulting from postponement of May 2020 district elections.
Other minor variances		(36)	(36)	
<b>Total Governance Service</b>			<b>(536)</b>	

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
<b>Community Wellbeing</b>				
Pets Corner	40		40	Reduction in income due to facility being closed
Paddling Pools		(62)	(62)	Reduced costs due to pools not being open
Events		(53)	(53)	Savings as a result of events (fireworks display and Harlow Carnival) not proceeding
Leah Manning Centre	97		97	Loss of income partially offset by reductions in cost
Community Safety		(38)	(38)	Vacancy savings
Enterprise Zone	98		98	Additional costs relating to security and professional fees
Museum		(83)	(83)	Reduced costs due to Museum not being open
Other Minor variances		(49)	(49)	
<b>Total Community Wellbeing</b>			<b>(50)</b>	
<b>Environment and Planning</b>				
Refuse Collection	31		31	Additional expenditure on service delivery contracts
Recycling		(239)	(239)	Additional income from recycling credits
Taxi Licencing	36		36	Loss of income due to Covid-19.
Planning Services	25		25	Staff vacancies offset by agency costs
Cemetery and Crematorium		(60)	(60)	Additional income
Environmental Health		(67)	(67)	Staff vacancies
Other minor variations		(23)	(23)	
<b>Total Environment and Planning</b>			<b>(297)</b>	
<b>Service Specific Variations</b>			<b>635</b>	<b>Sub-total</b>
<b>Other</b>				
Covid-19 Support Grant		(1,519)	(1,519)	Grant received from Central Government to offset additional costs incurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Covid-19 income recovery grant		(776)	(776)	Estimated value of grant to be received to offset income lost between April and August as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Covid-19 Hardship grant net of expenditure		(67)	(67)	Covid 19 hardship grant net of expenditure
Transfer to reserve	67		67	Transfer unspent Covid 19 Hardship Grant to reserves
Covid-19 expenditure	210		210	Directly related Covid-19 expenditure

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
Additional bad debt provision	77		77	Increase in bad debts once enforcement action resumes.
HTS Profit Share		(195)	(195)	Increase in HTS profit share
Interest payments		(704)	(704)	Reduced PWLB loan interest payments.
Interest income	59		59	Interest lower than anticipated.
EZ Loan Interest	450		450	
Court Costs	310		310	Covid restrictions have prevented any court action so no costs
P14 HRA recharges	17		17	Effect of period 14 HRA recharges
19/20 carry overs	163		163	19/20 approved carry overs
Use of reserves		(50)	(50)	Net use of reserves
Section 31 grant		(8,168)	(8,168)	Additional section 31 grant income
Transfer to reserve	8,772		8,772	Transfer 100% of section 31 grant income to specific reserve
Council Tax / NNDR		(2,616)	(2,616)	Additional income from EZ Business Rates and technical adjustments
Transfer to EZ Regeneration Reserve			2,616	Transfer of additional income to the EZ Regeneration Reserve
Other	18		18	Other net minor variations
Contribution to Covid Reserve	150		150	Contribution to support further Covid impacts in 2021/22.
2020/21 budget carry overs	242		242	As detailed in Appendix B
Essex Pooling Impact	180		180	Anticipated Impact of reduced rating income on the Essex pool
<b>Total Other Variations</b>			<b>(764)</b>	<b>Sub-total</b>
<b>Total General Fund Budget Variations</b>			<b>(129)</b>	

**Appendix 3B - Carry Forward Requests for 2020/21**

REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21							
SERVICE/COST CENTRE	EXPENDITURE CODE	AMOUNT £	Description and reason for underspend	Contractually Committed (Y/N)	Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)	If different - Justification	Consequence if carry over not approved.
Members 3310	11458	2,000	Councillor Training, due to Covid, we have had less training with Councillors this year	N	Y		I would like to have a greater budget for Training as we need to work on some specific online training this year.
Members 3310	14587	1,100	Subsistence Claims, due to Covid, we have had less training and conferences with Councillors this year	N	Y		This goes hand in hand with both Training and conferences
Members 3310	14471	1,500	Conference Expenses, due to Covid, Councillors have not been attending as many conferences this year	N	Y		I would like to have a greater budget for councillors to attend conferences this year to help them deal with post pandemic issues.
05 Elections 3318	14350	7,100	Canvasser	N	Y		Due to a change in the electoral canvassing process, we need to purchase new software and equipment to make the process of canvassing more effective.
Elections 3318	14510	1,000	Publicity	N	Y		Due to a change in the electoral canvassing process, we need to carry over the costs to ensure that we are able to publicise the ongoing changes to ensure that the canvassing is more effective.
Elections 3318	14351	1,800	PI Refresh	N	Y		Due to a change in the electoral canvassing process, we need to carry over the costs to ensure that we are able to publicise the ongoing changes to ensure that the canvassing is more effective.
Elections 3318	14401	700	Postage	N	Y		Higher than normal postage costs as the Canvassing process has changed so this money will be vital for helping with the potential costs for the 2021/22 canvass

**REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21**

SERVICE/COST CENTRE	EXPENDITURE CODE	AMOUNT £	Description and reason for underspend	Contractually Committed (Y/N)	Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)	If different - Justification	Consequence if carry over not approved.
Elections 3318	14577	22,000	Development Work. However much is left in this income pot MUST be taken forward as it is government funded monies for the purpose of IER and has been allocated for purchase of hardware and all costs associated with IER	N	Y		Pressure on HDC to fund the statutory requirement to carry out the full IER function
Land Charges 3160	14438 3160	16,300	Work in progress for data cleansing of the Land Charges Register in readiness for the Land Registry transfer.	Y	Y		Data cleansing not completed therefore will not be ready for migration.
Legal Services 3164	14577 3164	6,000	Continued requirements for VF development (Carried over from 19/20)	Y	Y		Ongoing client demands being reviewed - GDPR requirements also reflected in revised brief
Legal Services 3164	14431 3164	35,000	VF Software Upgrade and development works. Required in readiness for Office 365 and to support continued agile working for both legal and procurement processes	Y (in part)	Y		Reports functionality and GDPR cleansing processes all require upgrading to meet statutory requirements and best practice for Lexcel accreditation
Legal Services 3164	11000-11250 3164 virement to 14310 3164	5,000	Agency fees - talent search/grad searches	N	Y		Vacancies may not be filled as quickly or by appropriately skilled personnel
Legal Services 3164	11000-11250 3164 virement to 11460 3164	2,000	Corporate Training for Equalities and GDPR	N	Y		Ongoing demand for training following audit reports and review of services via CGG and IGG will not be met - i-learn to be implemented
Legal Services 2790	11000-11250 2790 virement to 14313 2790	500	GDPR cleansing/data destruction	N	Y		Need for paper data cleanse for historical files at Civic and Mead Park depot may not be completed
Legal Services 2790	11000-11250 2790 virement to 11460 2790	1,500	Corporate training for CSO's and Procurement	N	Y		Ongoing demand for training following audit reports and review of services via CGG and IGG will not be met - use of i-learn to support requirement

**REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21**

SERVICE/COST CENTRE	EXPENDITURE CODE	AMOUNT £	Description and reason for underspend	Contractually Committed (Y/N)	Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)	If different - Justification	Consequence if carry over not approved.
Relationship & Commissioning (Policy & Performance) / 2797	19006	8,100	Further Payment from the DCLG for the Transparency Code new burdens. The Council received this payment on 26 March 2021	Y	Y		The payment to be ring-fenced for the new burdens to the Transparency Code in 2021/22. If not, the Council will have to cover the costs of these changes.
Relationship & Commissioning (Policy & Performance) / 2797	14577	16,100	Payments from DCLG for the Transparency Code new burdens carried over from 2019/20. Due to the Covid 19 and the national lockdown requirements.	Y	Y		The payments to be ring-fenced in order to further implement the new burdens of the Transparency Code. If not, the Council will have to cover the costs of these changes.
Relationship & Commissioning (Policy & Performance) / 2797	19006	8,000	IDEA Grant (2020/21) for Strategic Lead in the LGA Procurement Programme: Strategic Supplier Management Project. Due to the Covid 19 and the national lockdown requirements.	Y	Y		The Grant to be ring-fenced and used in accordance with contract agreement
Human Resources	11000-11250 2820 (2020/21) to 14310 2820 (2021/22)	12,900	Revenue underspend required as a carryover to support addressing skills shortage in HR following turnover and Covid-19 impacts on ability to recruit in the pandemic.	Y	Y		It was not possible to book the training in light of the pandemic with so many variables that were unknown including when it would be possible to run face to face training/ if this would need to change in light of the necessity to socially distance/and if it would be entirely possible (although it was hoped it could be undertaken in 20/21) to risk this expiring with MHR, therefore the request has been made to carry over.

**REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21**

SERVICE/COST CENTRE	EXPENDITURE CODE	AMOUNT £	Description and reason for underspend	Contractually Committed (Y/N)	Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)	If different - Justification	Consequence if carry over not approved.
Human Resources	14310 2820	10,200	Revenue underspend required as a carryover to provide specialist knowledge/advice/training on iTrent HR and Payroll system.	Y	Y		It was not possible to book the training in light of the pandemic with so many variables that were unknown including when it would be possible to run face to face training/ if this would need to change in light of the necessity to socially distance/and if it would be entirely possible (although it was hoped it could be undertaken in 20/21) to risk this expiring with MHR, therefore the request has been made to carry over.
59 Human Resources Training	11458/1146 2824	20,800	Revenue underspend required as a carryover to provide increased training opportunities for staff post Covid-19 pandemic impact and to provide further corporate training to staff as changing/ evolving systems identify this.	N	Y		It was not possible to book a number of training courses in light of the pandemic with so many variables that were unknown including when it would be possible to run face to face training/ if this would need to change in light of the necessity to socially distance/and if it would be entirely possible (although it was hoped it could be undertaken in 20/21). To meet possible additional demand in 2021/22 the request has been made for this carry over.
12091	2187	2,336	25 Archers. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.
12091	2187	828	7 Rectory Field. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.
12091	2187	1,740	110 Purcford Green road and footpath works. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.

**REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21**

<b>SERVICE/COST CENTRE</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE CODE</b>	<b>AMOUNT £</b>	<b>Description and reason for underspend</b>	<b>Contractually Committed (Y/N)</b>	<b>Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)</b>	<b>If different - Justification</b>	<b>Consequence if carry over not approved.</b>
2026	12300	1,706	Bus Station. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.
12306	2187	559	265 Millwards. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.
12306	2187	668	271 Millwards. Contractor was unable to get the works completed and invoiced before deadline due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present.
12091	2187	4,884	Church Langley playing field. Knee rail fencing to be replaced, deadline missed due to staffing issues.	N	Y		Highways Strategy would not be actioned and the defective area will still be present. Contractor to complete works for payment.

**REVENUE CARRYOVER REQUEST FORM 2020/21**

SERVICE/COST CENTRE	EXPENDITURE CODE	AMOUNT £	Description and reason for underspend	Contractually Committed (Y/N)	Will the carry-over be spent for its original purpose (Y/N)	If different - Justification	Consequence if carry over not approved.
61  1592 - Harlow Museum Revenue Budget	N/A	50,000	The Covid19 Pandemic has resulted in the closure of the museum for the past 12 months. This has resulted in delays to progression of projects and planned upgrades to the museum, that had been planned for the 2020/21 financial year.	N	Y	N/A	<p>Projects and upgrades to the museum will need to be funded through the 2021/22 budget. This will result in some planned works and projects being reviewed and decisions taken as to the sequencing of any works. There may also be budget overspends in 2021/22 if works from the last financial year are required to be funded from the new year's budget.</p> <p>Planned upgrades/projects funding will assist with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist preparations for submission of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding to reconstruct the front yard stepped access, to ensure it enables DDA compliance or to purchase a new ramp system</li> <li>2. Replacement of the front gates</li> <li>3. Installation of CCTV to address external security surveillance of gardens to ensure safety and meet with Listed building compliance</li> <li>4. Development and delivery of a new museum website</li> <li>5. Purchase of outside structures to enable more space for school visits, carried out in Covid secure way</li> <li>6. Feasibility and drawing proposals for potential extension to the building, meeting listed building compliance</li> <li>7. Feasibility and drawing proposals for refurbishment of the 'Scout Hut' at the rear of the site to enable space for a cafe</li> </ol>
<b>Total</b>		<b>242,321</b>					

## Appendix 3C - 2020/21 General Fund Transfer to Reserves

Earmarked Reserves	2020/21			Comments
	Transfers Out £000's	Transfers In £000's	NET £000's	
<b>GENERAL FUND RESERVES</b>				
Perpetuity Reserves	(6)	4	(2)	Routine property maintenance funding obligations. Interest is added each year to prolong balances.
Covid 19 Reserve	(41)	300	259	Set up to enable the Council to have direct access to financial resources to aid and support the work associated with Covid 19
Debt Financing Reserve		238	238	Set aside for debt financing costs and to support anticipated non-housing capital programme needs.
Discretionary Services Fund	(438)	1,066	628	Drawn down to cover cost of discretionary services, net of NHB grant.
Environment Reserve (previously Energy Fund)	(73)		(73)	Reserve replenishment programme and interest allocation.
Enterprise Zone Disregard Reserve	(1,176)		(1,176)	Retained business rates to offset capital investment costs
Environmental Urgent Works & Improvement Reserve	(36)		(36)	To facilitate urgent works and improvements across the whole town and targeted at initiatives and issues that will make Harlow look and feel like a better place to live, work and play.
The Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Funding Reserve	(66)		(66)	To support the delivery and achievement of the best outcomes from this significant development for the Town.
Insurance claims - GF	(43)	102	59	To meet any future costs resulting from the insolvency of the Council's previous insurer
Insurance Fund - GF	(36)	121	85	A self-insurance reserve to meet excess charges of various insurance policies.
Invest To Save & Improve Reserve		1	1	Utilised for JVCO demobilisation.
Planning Reserve	(36)		(36)	Applied for Local Development Framework
Regeneration Reserve	(304)	23	(281)	Financing of fixed-term brand and marketing budget.
Regeneration & Enterprise Reserve	(84)	2,616	2,532	Indicative NHB balances set aside for town development.
Risk Management Reserve		25	25	To finance future initiatives that mitigate risks and potential insurance claims against the Council
Splash Parks Reserve	(12)		(12)	To support project to replace the Town's remaining five paddling pools with new splash park facilities.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>(2,352)</b>	<b>4,495</b>	<b>2,144</b>	

## Section Four: Performance of Key Contracts

### HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd

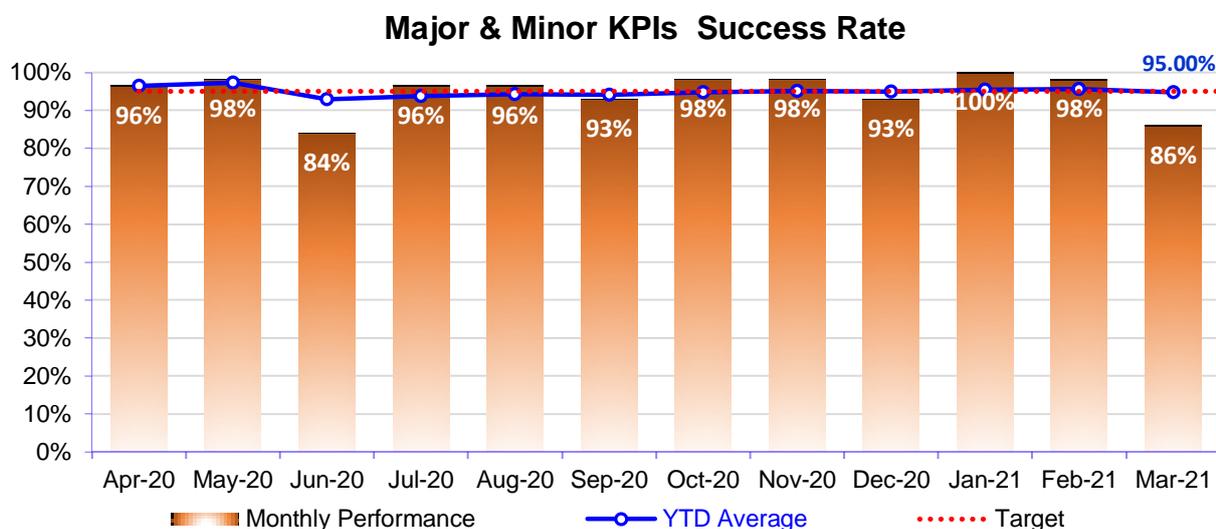


HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd. has been delivering housing repairs, maintenance, facilities management, environmental services, compliance, capital and planned works to residents, leaseholders, and organisations in the community since 2017.

HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd. provides:

- Council housing repairs and maintenance including garage repairs
- Council building repairs and maintenance
- Street cleaning, dumped rubbish collection and graffiti removal
- Grass cutting and landscape maintenance
- Cleaning and caretaking of communal areas.
- Pest control
- Stray dog collection
- Drainage, gully, and highways repairs on Harlow Council land.

HTS successfully completed its fourth year (2020/21) of operation with an average performance of 95% against full suite of Major and Minor KPIs that govern the contract across all work streams.



### Covid Impact on services:

HTS initially normalised services with some restrictions and revised working practices following the 1st lockdown in Q1 and made significant progress in working through the backlog. However, following the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown in November and December 2020, HTS had to once again reduce services to comply with Government guidelines and to protect its staff and the residents. This had an impact on HTS performance as illustrated in chart above.

Notable highlights in performance include:

### Housing:

- 100% compliance for Gas Compliance (annual servicing completed).

- 99% of emergencies attended within 2 hours and completed within 24 hours.
- 99% of appointments attended to within time allocated.
- 100% performance against target for tenants' satisfaction from questionnaires feedback.

### Street Scene:

- Achieving an average time of 1 hour and 52 minutes to remove dumped rubbish.
- 99% of offensive and non-offensive graffiti removed within 24 hours.
- 100% of damaged bins repaired or replaced within 2 working days.
- 100% performance against target for Customer Satisfaction with Street Cleaning service

### Grounds Maintenance:

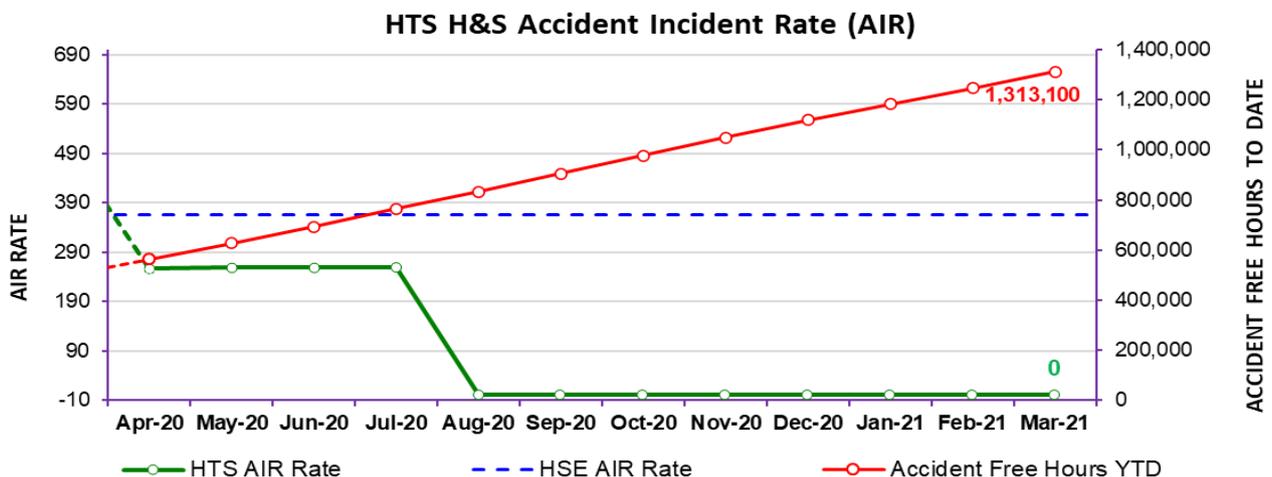
- 100% compliance with Prevention of dangerous trees reported, inspected, and made temporarily safe within 24 hours
- 100% performance against target for Maintenance of existing playgrounds and hard standing areas.
- 100% performance against target for Customer Satisfaction with Grounds Maintenance service.

### Non-Housing:

- 100% compliance with carrying out cleaning requests.
- 100% performance against target for Customer Satisfaction with Non-Housing Repairs service.

### Safety Health Environment & Compliance (SHEC)

- Continued Zero Accident Incident Rate and over 1.3 million RIDDOR free hours working
- British Safety Council award notification showing HTS attained a Distinction, with a high grading!
- Rapid testing continuing and working alongside operational teams to support return to full working hours and activities, plus preparing for the return of those shielding.



**Veolia:  
Waste and Recycling Services**



Veolia Environmental Services collect domestic recycling, food waste and residual (black bag) waste town-wide; and provide ancillary services including collection of bulky, green, and nappy/incontinence waste.

The Veolia Team has worked closely with the Council's Client and Communications Teams to maintain priority services safely through necessary restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic to minimise service disruption due to staff shortages, adverse weather, bank holidays and similar events.

The residual household waste per head of population remains low, and customer numbers for the recently introduced revised green waste collection service have continued to build.

Veolia has proposed revised collection rounds to address an imbalance that has recently emerged with growing numbers of new build properties allocated to rounds early in the week, leading to some rounds not completing on time and a knock-on effect through the rest of the week. Pending approval and implementation of round changes, Veolia has provided additional collection resources to clear backlogs at its own expense.

**Westerleigh:  
Crematorium**



Westerleigh Group leases the Cemetery and Crematorium site from the Council and takes responsibility for all operations and maintenance.

There is access to industry expertise and a wider pool of equipment and staff resources within the Group; this together with the capital resources has enabled much needed investment into the site infrastructure with a wide ranging upgrade to the customer experience.

The business continued to perform well in 2020/21 rising to the challenges imposed by COVID-19 restrictions with minimum avoidable business disruption.

## Section Five: Performance

For Q4 2020/21, the Council performed on or above target for 46 out of 49 (94%) of its revised Covid-19 monthly, quarterly, and annual Key Performance Indicators. Three (6%) performance indicators performed below target, which resulted in Improvement Action Plans (IAPs).

### Percentage of indicators within or better than target

Qtr. ended 31/03/20	Qtr. ended 30/06/20	Qtr. ended 30/09/20	Qtr. ended 31/12/20	Qtr. ended 31/03/21
94%	N/A	84%	87%	94%

**Good Performance:** Thirty three (67%) of the KPIs performed significantly better than their targets. Listed below are some of the KPIs that achieved better than their targets for Q4 2020/21 and have also improved on their performance in Q4 2019/20.

Key Performance Indicator	31/03/21 Actual	31/03/21 Target	31/03/20 Actual	31/03/20 Target
BV082aii Household Waste Recycled (Tonnes)	8626.14	7200.00	7642.46	7200.00
BV082bii Household Waste Composted (Tonnes)	3878.29	3200.00	3410.17	3200.00
CS02b Percentage Lost Calls for Contact Harlow	6.54	14.00	10.11	14.00
NI157a Processing of major applications within 13 weeks or agreed timescale (%)	100.00	60.00	100.00	60.00
NI185 CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations	39.48	25.00	38.55	20.00
HTS2.4 Average time (in hours) to remove fly tips	1.52	3.50	1.35	3.50
HTS2.10c The proportion of relevant public land and highways which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible	0.22	1.00	0.44	1.00
HTS3.1a Ground Maintenance (Grass Cutting)	97.60	93.50	90.90	93.50
HTS3.1b Grounds Maintenance (Shrub Maintenance)	97.60	93.50	90.90	93.50
HTS4.11 Attending site to make safe within 2 hours following a report by a tenant or other stakeholders	99.61	99.50	98.90	99.50
HTS4.24 Gas compliance (Contractor Activity only)	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
HTS4.15 Appointments Response Repairs for which appointments made and kept	99.66	99.00	98.50	99.00
HTS2.7 Routine Maintenance and Dual Use Bins	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
HTS2.11 Removal of all reported graffiti or fly posting of a racist or obscene nature removed within 24 hours	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

## Section Six: Improvement Actions Plans

The performance of the Council's and HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd Key Performance Indicators for the quarter ending 31 March 2021 were significantly impacted by the Covid 19 Alert 4 restrictions and National Lockdown(s). This has resulted in KPIs being paused and the refocusing of resources to keep essential services running.

All Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which have been subject to an Improvement Action Plan (IAP) during the past 12 months are monitored. All KPIs are reported using the following symbols in line with the corporate performance monitoring framework.

Below Target: e.g. more than 5% worse than target	On Target: e.g. within 5% of target	Above Target: e.g. more than 5% above target
▲	●	★

The table below illustrates how the Key Performance Indicators subject to an IAP have performed over time.

Quarterly Performance Indicator	QTR ended 31/03/2020	QTR ended 30/06/2020	QTR ended 30/09/2020	QTR ended 31/12/2020	QTR ended 31/03/2021
BV008 Invoices paid within 30 days (%)	▲	N/A	▲	▲	N/A
BV009 Council Tax collected (%)	●	N/A	▲	▲	●
BV010 NNDR collected (%)	●	N/A	▲	▲	▲
CS50 Average waiting time of calls received by Contact Harlow	▲	N/A	●	★	●
CS25Q Percentage of Customer Complaints responded to within target time	★	N/A	●	▲	▲
HTS3.11d Tree works carried out within 80 working days	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲

Number of Red Quarterly Indicators	3	1	4	5	3
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*NB: It was not feasible to continue to report the KPI 'BV008' due to the current national lockdown and the '4 step' road map. The KPI will be reviewed again in the new financial year 2021/22 as part of the Finance Service process review. All staff involved in the procurement and invoice payment process will be reminded of their financial responsibilities. The service will continue to collect and publish the data required for the Transparency agenda.*

Details of the Improvement Action Plans (IAPs) for the quarter ending 31 March 2021 are set out below.

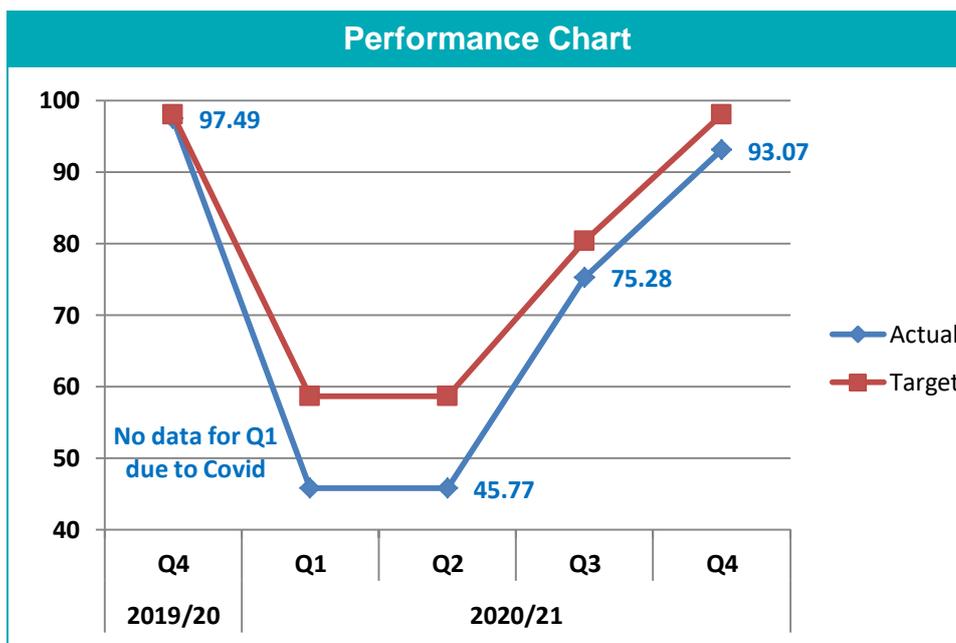
## Improvement Action Plan

Reporting Period Ended: 31/03/2021

KPI
BV010 NNDR Collected (%)

Performance					
Harlow	to 31/03/20	to 30/06/20	to 30/09/20	to 31/12/20	to 31/03/21
Actual	97.49	N/A	45.77	75.28	93.07
Target	98.00	N/A	58.66	80.32	98.00

Description
The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority



Direction of Travel

### What is the performance situation?

Formal recovery procedures and enforcement action for unpaid rates was halted during 20-21 to Covid and the unavailability of court dates.

### What practical steps are being taken to improve?

Action will now be taken to take formal recovery & enforcement action to collect outstanding debt for 20-21, and action will then commence for the current financial year (21-22) but will also be delayed due to Covid.

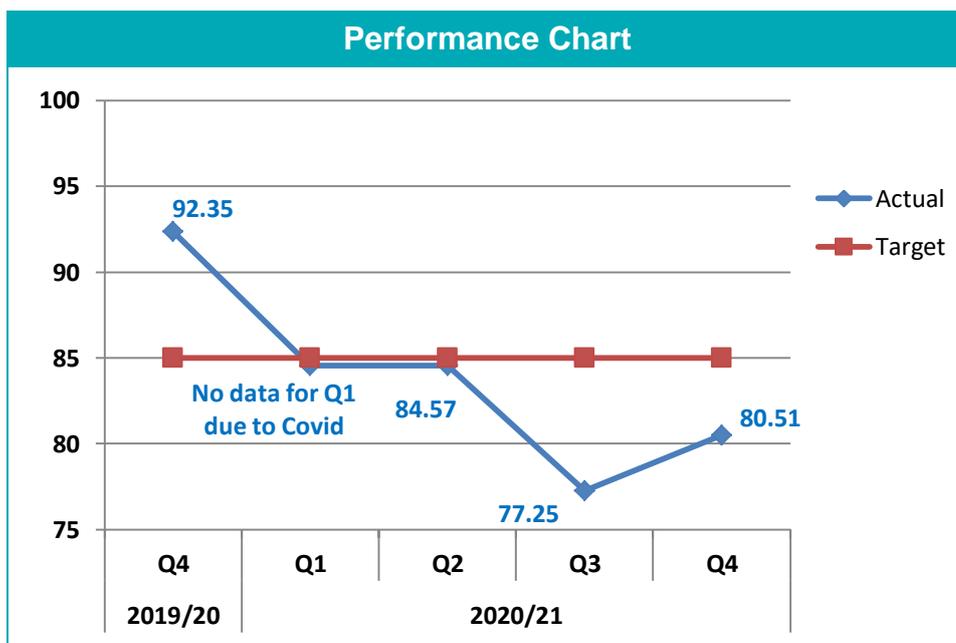
## Improvement Action Plan

Reporting Period Ended: 31/03/2021

KPI
CS25Q % of customer complaints responded to within target time

Performance					
Harlow	to 31/03/20	to 30/06/20	to 30/09/20	to 31/12/20	to 31/03/21
Actual	92.35	N/A	84.57	77.25	80.51
Target	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00

Description
The quarterly percentage of total customer complaints (posted, emailed, or telephoned) that were responded to within the Council's target time.



Direction of Travel

### What is the performance situation?

Disruption to service provision as a result of Covid-19 as well as increased demand has led to an increase in complaints. Has been improving month on month but increase in amount of complaints has led to delays during pandemic.

### What practical steps are being taken to improve?

All complaint levels are being closely monitored with weekly reports being sent to Heads of Service outlining any issues so action can be taken as required. As we recover from the pandemic, it is anticipated that overall response rates will improve.

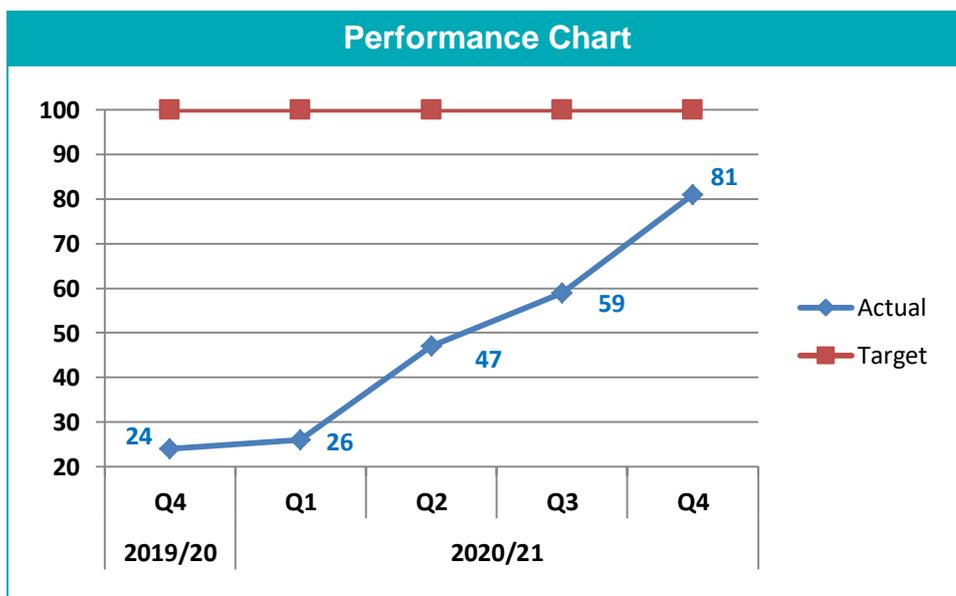
## Improvement Action Plan

Reporting Period Ended: 31/03/2021

KPI
HTS3.11d Tree Works carried out within 80 working days (%)

Performance					
Harlow	to 31/03/20	to 30/06/20	to 30/09/20	to 31/12/20	to 31/03/21
Actual	24%	26%	47%	59%	81%
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Description
Inspection of trees (not dangerous) reported requiring attention /maintenance within 20 working days and work carried out within 4 months.



Direction of Travel

### What is the performance situation?

HTS continues to work through its Tree Improvement Action Plan. The performance has experienced further recovery in Quarter 4 from 59% to 81%. This KPI is reported quarterly however the HTS Improvement Action Plan is reviewed and updated monthly until complete recovery of performance. HTS response to Tree emergencies has remained at 100% performance since the implementation of the Action Plan.

#### **Backlog of Arb Works:**

HTS has been completing on average of 16 trees from the backlog every month in order of priority. At present the backlog accounts for 65 trees in addition to the current work in progress as at end of March 2021 (Q4). Please see below a summary:

Planned Activity	Jobs Outstanding	No. completed Enquiries.	% Completed	Remaining Jobs	COMMENTS
Completed in Jan-Mar 2021:	114	49	43%	65	<i>out of priority target</i>
YTD Progress	518	453	87%	65	

### What practical steps are being taken to improve?

#### **Covid Impact:**

The Arborists team initially increased activity as the restrictions were eased and working practices were revised to mitigate against Covid-19, resulting in an increase in performance throughout Quarter 2. This progress was however, reduced with the loss of HTS Arborist Manager as the tree works pipeline increased further.

The additional imposition of 2<sup>nd</sup> National Lockdown in November 2020 lasting until December 2020 and then 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown in January 2021 which is still in effect albeit with some ease of restrictions has slowed performance recovery but not to the same extent as the initial lockdown in March 2020.

**Remedial Action taken:**

HTS recognises the gravity of shortfall in performance and is therefore continually reviewing the tree works pipeline and looking at ways to increase productivity. This has resulted in HTS increasing its resources to include an additional sub-contractor to clear the outstanding orders.

There has also been an increase in budget allocation by HTS to authorise works for completion. The resultant progress is evident in this quarter's performance with further recovery projected in Q1 of 2021.

HTS expects continued increase in productivity as lockdown restrictions are removed during the next quarter. The current pace of tree works completion against the pipeline is expected to result in performance improvement to achieve target by end of Q2 of 2021.

In addition, HTS Environment team is in regular dialogue with Harlow Council Environment team to assess effectiveness of the current processes and identify areas of improvement to tackle this increase in demand for tree works.

HTS is also in the process of recruiting a qualified Arborist Manager, so any progress made is sustained going forward.

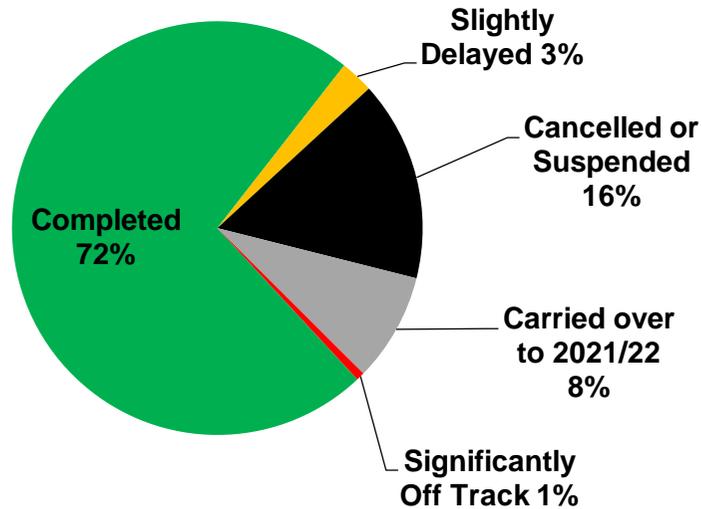
# Section Seven: Key Corporate and Financial Risk

Risk Name	Risk Owner	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Impact	Controls Already in Place	Residual Likelihood	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score	Residual Risk Indicator	DoT	Foreseeable Likelihood	Foreseeable Impact	Foreseeable Risk Score	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Last Reviewed
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There are no exceptional strategic risks (rated 20 or higher – high likelihood, high impact) recorded on the Council’s Risk Register.

## Section Eight: Progress in delivering the Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out the goals the Council needs to complete in order to deliver its corporate priorities and principles. Below is an update of how well the Council performed in Q4 (2020/21) in delivering its Corporate Plan.



The position of the Corporate Milestones as at 31 March 2021 is broken down as follows:

- 72% (111 out of 153) were successfully completed.
- 1% (1 out of 153) was significantly off track.
- 3% (4 out of 153) were slightly delayed due to Covid 19.
- 16% (24 out of 153) were cancelled due to Covid 19 or suspended and moved to the new financial year 2021/22.
- 8% (13 out of 153) were carried over to the new financial year 2021/22 as ongoing milestones.

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Service Actions	Service Milestones requiring Further Action	Due Date	Status	What is the performance situation?
FA01.3 Ensure the Council's Accounts are closed/audited/reported as per current guidance and regulations	FM01.3.2 Sign off and completion of the 2019/2020 audit process	31/12/20	▲	Audit due to commence 5 July 2021 and audit report presented to November Audit and Standards Committee, 2018/19 issues and audit resourcing have impacted the process.
FA01.8 Develop Risk Management within the Council	FM01.8.1 Undertake a Corporate Risk Maturity Assessment	31/03/21	■	Resourcing issues have prevented the work being developed in 2020/2021. This will now be taken forward to 2021/2022.

Service Actions	Service Milestones requiring Further Action	Due Date	Status	What is the performance situation?
EA03.1 Adopted the Town Centre Action Plan (TCAPP)	EM03.1.1 Ensure Regulation 19 (Consultation) is published	31/03/21		A supplementary planning document to be created via the production of a Town Centre Masterplan (currently underway), rather than an Area Action Plan. A new milestone (s) will be created for this work in 2021/22.
EA05.1 Working with Essex County Council and Residents to improve the Town Street Scene	EM05.1.1 Continue to promote and support the Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean Campaign 2020/2021	31/03/21		The Council was unable to participate in the annual Keep Britain Tidy Group's Spring Clean campaign due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The Great British Spring Clean has been revised to the late Spring/early Summer 2021, which the Council aims to support. The milestone will be carried over into the new financial year 2021/22.
EA06.1 Working with Veolia to ensure a smooth roll-out of a new contract with enhancement to the domestic waste collection service	EM06.1.1 Review roll out to ensure contract compliance	31/03/21		Progress has been slightly delayed due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 emergency. The Council continues to work with Veolia to ensure that available resources are directed to priority tasks and strengthen aspects of the shared information management system to enhance communication and ensure speedy resolution of any collection issues that may arise.
EA06.2 Continuing to promote and enhance residents' participation in the wider waste minimisation and recycling issues	EM06.2.1 Work with Essex Waste Management Partnership to deliver a communications campaign emphasising the importance of proper use of the full range of waste and recycling services available	31/03/21		The Council has supported the agreed communications initiatives to further the aims of the Partnership, however the communication work of Partnership has been restricted by the need to divert resources across Essex to combat the COVID-19 emergency. The milestone will be carried over into the new financial year 2021/22.
CA08.1 Continue to roll out the J9 domestic abuse initiative Town wide	CM08.1.1 Deliver two J9 Training Sessions	31/03/21		Suspended until 21/22 due to Covid 19. Alternative Domestic Abuse training has been delivered via the Safer Harlow Partnership to over 100 Harlow professionals.

Service Actions	Service Milestones requiring Further Action	Due Date	Status	What is the performance situation?
CA08.1 Continue to roll out the J9 domestic abuse initiative Town wide	CM08.1.2 Establish two further J9 Venues	31/03/21	■	Suspended until 21/22 due to Covid 19.
CA20.2 Ensure that our facilities are accessible and inclusive to all sections of the community.	CM20.2.1 Develop the Day Care Opportunities at the Leah Manning Centre	31/03/21	■	Development of the service is on hold due to COVID-19. The Centre is currently closed until further notice.
CA22.1 Develop and facilitate Harlow's Cultural Leaders Group	CM22.1.2 Recruit a Cultural Partnerships Officer	31/03/21	■	The post is currently being evaluated. It is expected that the post will be filled in the summer 2021. The milestone will be carried over to the new financial year (2021/22).
75 GA02.4 Undertake a full printing review covering the whole council	GM02.4.1 Review current printing arrangements and establish baseline data	31/08/20	■	Some baseline data has been collated. However, due to the current Covid restrictions on staff using the Civic Centre has meant that undertaking an accurate review of requirements has not been possible. A review will be undertaken when it is practical to do so.
	GM02.4.2 Ascertain corporate requirements	30/09/20		
	GM02.4.3 Full report with options and recommendations to SMB	31/10/20		
	GM02.4.4 Implement review	31/03/21		

Service Actions	Service Milestones requiring Further Action	Due Date	Status	What is the performance situation?
GA02.5 Review face to face service delivery in Civic Centre including cash office facilities	GM02.5.1 Review current arrangements and establish baseline data	31/10/20		The current Covid restrictions have resulted in the Civic Centre being closed to the general public. Whilst some baseline data has been collated between lockdowns, it is not possible to do a review at this time. A review will be undertaken when it is practical to do so.
	GM02.5.2 Ascertain corporate requirements	30/11/20		
	GM02.5.3 Full report with options and recommendations to SMB	31/12/20		
	GM02.5.4 Implement review	31/03/21		
GA04.3 Continue to encourage staff to participate in the Council's volunteering scheme	GM04.3.1 Continue to raise awareness of the benefits of the Council volunteering scheme	31/03/21		Volunteering was limited in 2020/21 due to the pandemic and the lockdown requirements. However, part of the Council's pandemic response was coordinated centrally with some officers being seconded to this service directly. Some Council employees may have provided services directly in their own time but data was not forthcoming during the pandemic.
GA05.2 Publish information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are employees and people affected by the Council's policies and procedures	GM05.2.1 Review the Legislative requirements for publishing information related to protected characteristics	31/03/21		Data not available to publish - access provided to all staff to ensure they can update their employee profiles in the new iTrent HR/Payroll system however this information is voluntary and employees cannot be required to provide these details.
GA08.3 Supporting Apprenticeships	GM08.3.1 Facilitate an Increase the number of apprentices the Council employs	31/03/21		Apprenticeships that were already in place continued in 2020/21 - however where participant employees found study requirements were too onerous against their work requirements due to Covid, support was provided to allow these employees to place their apprenticeships on hold. This occurred in 3 cases. More generally recruitment generally across the Authority was impacted by COVID in 2020/21, more apprenticeships are planned for 2021/22.

Service Actions	Service Milestones requiring Further Action	Due Date	Status	What is the performance situation?
GA10.1 Obtain Member Support and Implement Business Plan	GM10.1.1 Produce final version of Business Plan for Presentation	30/09/20	■	Suspended until the New Municipal Year.
GA11.1 Review previous Theatre Redevelopment studies to account for Harlow's future and growth	GM11.1.3 Produce and Present Options Appraisal based on findings from above studies	30/09/20	■	Suspended until the New Financial Year 2021/22.
GA12.1 Review of Harlow Times	GM12.1.1 Review current arrangements and establish baseline data	31/10/20	■	Covid-19 pressures have meant that reactive communications had to be prioritised. At this time, the review has been put on hold until there is a more stable environment.
	GM12.1.2 Ascertain corporate requirements	30/11/20		
	GM12.1.3 Full report with options and recommendations to SMB	31/12/20		
	GM12.1.4 Implement review	31/03/21		
GA14.1 Work with Harlow residents and partner organisations to improve the Town Street Scene	GM14.1.1 Maintain the 'Town's' Spring Clean	31/03/21	■	The Great British Spring Clean 2021 new date is 28 May - 13 June 2021

**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 12 JULY 2021

**TITLE:** CAPITAL PROGRAMMES OUTTURN REPORT 2020/21

**LEAD OFFICERS:** SIMON FREEMAN, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY AND DEPUTY TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (01279) 446228

ANDREW MURRAY, HEAD OF HOUSING (01279) 446676

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS:** SENIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD

**This is not a Key Decision**

**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012607**

**The decision is not subject to Call-in Procedures for the following reason:**

It is within the scope of the budget agreed by Full Council in January 2020

**This decision will affect no ward specifically.**

**RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:**

- A** Notes that the Housing Capital Programme (HCP) final outturn for 2020/21 is £21.556 million as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- B** Approves the £1.250 million carry forward request for capital schemes from 2020/21 HCP into 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
- C** Note that the Non-Housing Capital Programme (NHCP) final outturn for 2020/21 is £11.504 million as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
- D** Approves the £3.984 million carry forward request for capital schemes from 2020/21 NHCP into 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** To enable Cabinet to compare the final outturn with the Quarter 3 current budget and amend the capital programme in the light of the latest operational developments, profiling and funding changes

## **BACKGROUND**

1. Cabinet approved the Quarter 2 HCP 2020/21 and NHCP 2020//21 current budgets in January 2021. The approved HCP current budget was £33.768 million and the approved NHCP current budget was £16.725 million
2. In the March, Cabinet approved the £11.354 million re-profiling of the 2020/21 HCP into 2021/22 and the £1.524 million re-profiling of the 2020/21 NHCP into 2021/22. In addition Cabinet approved the £670,000 loan to HTS.
3. As a consequence of these approvals the 2020/21 Quarter 3 HCP current budget is £22.414 million and NHCP current budget is £15.871 million.
4. The report compares the final outturn with the Quarter 3 current budget and following consultation with budget managers provides explanations for the variations.

## **ISSUES/PROPOSALS**

### **2020/21 HCP - Outturn**

#### **Core Programme**

5. Set out in Appendix 1 is the 2020/21 HCP final outturn statement which compares the Quarter 3 current budget with the actual expenditure as at 31 March 2021. The statement shows all the variances between the budget and actual and set out in the following paragraphs are the explanation for those variances

#### **Internal Works**

6. Due to current Covid-19 restrictions internal works were suspended for most of the year The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 but there is still a £58,000 underspend which is subject to a carry forward request.

#### **Aids and Adaptations**

7. Similar to other internal works the provision of aids and adaptations to tenants has also been suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions. Consequently, a large part of the budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 and now the budget is only £7,000 underspent indicating that the planned programme was achieved.

#### **Compliance/Electrical Testing**

8. Electrical testing and inspection programmes were reviewed following latest Government guidance and HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd now carries out its programme of testing in accordance with Covid-19 restrictions. The compliance testing programme was up to date up to March 2021 but under the current lock down restrictions there may be some cases where the programme

has to be re-scheduled to a later date. The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 but is still £55,000 underspent which is the subject of a carry forward request.

### **Externals Programme**

9. The externals programme is a planned schedule of work to renew, improve, and maintain the housing stock at decent homes standard. As with all other programmes the external programme has been delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions. However works were completed on sites where it was possible to adhere to the current regulations and associated working restrictions, these sites include Mill House, The Risdens, Little Brays and Great Brays and Carters Mead. The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 but even that did not prevent it being £322,000 underspent due to the pandemic.

### **Fire Safety - Compartmentation**

10. The budget allocation for fire safety compartmentation, generally, has been established following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London. Outcomes from the public enquiry are on-going and landlord responsibilities are increasing work from updated risk assessments were prioritised during the lockdowns, aligned to the three year planned programme. Works, however, of an intrusive nature were delayed. The re-profiled budget was fully spent indicating that the planned programme has been delivered. .

### **Fire Safety – SE Ducts**

11. Works to fire safety SE Ducts has been more complex than anticipated following Government guidance and redesign of warm air systems. The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 but even that did not prevent it being £305,000 underspent and this will be subject of a carry forward request.

### **Housing IT Development**

12. Housing Services has a three year ICT programme aligned to the Council's Corporate and Access Strategy. This has included the provision of digital platforms for tenants and leaseholders to access their rent and service charge accounts, report repairs, make payments and apply for council garages online. This is also open to non-council tenants. Projects have had to be re-aligned further due to Covid-19 restrictions and the availability of external suppliers on site. .
13. The Council has also had to accommodate the purchase of Orchard Housing Systems by MRI Solutions Ltd requiring legal details having to be updated .This has led to delayed start dates in the programmes.
14. Work has now commenced on new projects such as the Estate Case Management model which is progressing, but will be required to partly roll over into the new financial year. New asset management software which will manage strategic planning and provide full asset management functionality. This will ensure effective day-to-day management and maintenance, including current

and predicted performance. The software will also provide trigger events such as fire risk assessments and upcoming service/inspection or asbestos surveys. This will result in customers experiencing less compliance issues. Budgets will still need to be re-profiled into 2021/22 budget due to the size of the project.

### Prentice Place

15. The Prentice Place regeneration project has been completed and the 15 properties are about to be let to new tenants. The properties are being let at social rent and accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Previously, this redevelopment has been included in the NHCP but now it is shown in the HCP.

### House Purchase Programme

16. The house purchase programme was completed in 2020/21 and the Council has acquired 1 four bed house, 27 three bed houses, 7 two bed houses, 5 two bed flats and 5 one bed flats. There have been increased refurbishment costs required for some properties in order to bring the properties up to the Council's "lettable standard". These additional costs were included in the overall scheme funding, with some work requiring carry over to into 2021/22. To date 15 properties have been allocated with a further 5 properties currently with outstanding offers awaiting viewing

### New Build Programme

17. Set out in Table 1 the cumulative expenditure on all new build schemes up to 31 March 2021, together with the budgets for subsequent years.

		<b>Approved</b>	<b>Actual</b>			
<b>Name of Scheme</b>	<b>No of Units</b>	<b>Scheme Cost</b>	<b>to 31/03/2021</b>	<b>2021/22 Budget</b>	<b>2022/23 Budget</b>	<b>Later Years</b>
		<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>£,000</b>
Bushey Croft	16	4,140	404	2,764	972	
Lister House	59	14,000	600	2,419	3,000	7,981
The Yorkes	6	3,015	36	1,494	1,485	
Brenthall Towers	14	2,585	42	841	1,702	
Stackfield	5	550	28	171	351	
The Hill	2	500	14	206	280	
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>24,790</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>7,895</b>	<b>7,790</b>	<b>7,981</b>

18. In March 2021 Cabinet approved further re-profiling of the new build programme in the HCP. Further re-profiling is required and the explanations are as follows:

a) Bushey Croft

- i) This is a project to build 16 social/affordable dwellings on a former garage site. Tenders were approved at the December 2020 Cabinet meeting. The contractors are on site and the scheme is progressing well.

b) Lister House, Perry Road

- i) This is a development to construct a residential block of 59 social and affordable flats. There are still some planning issues to be resolved regarding the reinstatement of the podium and site meetings are taking place. Once these issues have been resolved the procurement process can commence.

c) The Yorkes

- i) This is a development to construct 7/8 social/affordable dwellings. Site clearance work has recently taken place and the design team are currently reviewing the design. Legal have confirmed that the existing covenants have been extinguished and planning have advised that development should be a terrace of 6 three bed houses.

d) Land at Brenthall Towers

- i) This is a development to construct 14 social/affordable dwellings. Ground surveys have taken place and architects are currently drawing up designs using a timber framed modern method of construction (MMC) The plans will be submitted for planning approval in July.

e) The Hill

- i) This is a development to demolish an existing derelict property and construct 2 new properties to be let at social rent. Planning permission was granted in June 2020. Planning conditions have been discharged and the building control application has been approved. HTS have submitted the business case and the estimated cost is £620,000. Currently the approved budget is £500,000.

## **2020/21 NHCP – Outturn**

### **Core Programme**

19. Set out in Appendix 3 is the 2020/21 NHCP final outturn statement which compares the Quarter 3 current budget with the actual expenditure as at 31 March 2021 The statement shows all the variances between the budget and

actual and set out in the following paragraphs are the explanation for those variances.

### **Environmental Health and Strategic Housing**

20. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the installation of disability facilities in private homes was been suspended for most of the year. Consequently the budget is underspent by £217,000 and will be the subject of a carry forward request. The expenditure on these disabled facilities is grant funded and this will be carried forward also.
21. There were also delays in the refurbishment of the playgrounds programme and the Church Langley and the Potter Street ponds biodiversity projects due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

### **Latton Bush Centre**

22. There are several on-going capital schemes at the Latton Bush Centre, but there have been delays in the development of car parking spaces and the refurbishment of the community safety office due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Both projects will be completed in 2021/21 and will be included in the list of carry forward requests.

### **Drainage Work**

23. In January 2019 Cabinet approved the five year capital programme to address drainage defects and introduce flood alleviation measures in Harlow. Work has commenced on Oxley's drainage programme which is now anticipated to be completed in 2021/22 due to the size of the project. The budget was re-profiled in the Quarter 3 report and the final outturn is in line with the budget.

### **Community Buildings**

24. Work to improve the Bush Fair shopping precinct has been delayed due to the over-run of the Moot House frontage scheme. However, the scheme to improve the shopping precinct needs to be re-designed and it is unlikely to commence in 2020/21. The budget was re-profiled in the Quarter 3 report and the final outturn is as projected.
25. In January 2019 Cabinet approved the business case to replace the commercial kitchen at the Leah Manning Centre and a provision was made in the 2019/20 NHCP. The provision was re-profiled into 2020/21 and at the end of Quarter 3 it is estimated that only 30 percent of the work has been completed. The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 and the final outturn shows an underspend of £10,000. The work will continue into 2021/22 and will be included in the list of carry forward requests.

## **Contingency and Other Public Schemes**

26. In order to reduce its net carbon emissions Members agreed to look at the feasibility of installing photovoltaic panels on all public council buildings, of which eight have been identified, within the next two years where possible. In February 2021 the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy awarded the Council a grant of £334,600 for solar PV installations. The budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3 and the grant will be carried forward into 2021/22.

## **Civic Centre**

27. In October 2020 a fire safety survey was completed for the Civic Centre. The survey recommended the replacement of fire doors, cavity barriers and dampers. The procurement process has commenced but it is anticipated that most of the safety work will now take place in 2021/22. Preliminary work began in 2020, and the budget was re-profiled at Quarter 3. The final outturn is in line with the budget and the project will be completed in 2021/22

## **Garages**

28. The refurbishment of garages is an ongoing programme and delays have occurred due to the availability of sites and the pandemic. The final underspend will be included in the list of carry forward requests.

## **Community Wellbeing**

29. There have been delays to the improvements of the Pets Corner yard due to the pandemic. The work is scheduled to be completed in 2021/22 and the project has been included on the carry forward list.
30. There have been delays to the refurbishment of “The Rows” due to the inter-dependency of funding streams and the need to demonstrate match funding for the Future High Streets and levelling up funds. It is anticipated that this project will start in 2021/22 and has been included on the carry forward requests.
31. In 2020/21 the Council received a £1 million grant to fund the Eastgate project. The procurement process started during the year and it is anticipated that it will commence in 2021/22. This is subject of a carry forward request when the project will be rolled forward along with the grant.
32. There have been similar delays in the Harlow Town gateway signage programme. It is anticipated that this programme will be completed in 2021/22 once the procurement process has been finalised.
33. In December 2020, Cabinet approved the Town Wide paddling pools refurbishment. The procurement process has been completed and work has just started. However, there have been delays due to the pandemic and there is a need to request a £140,000 carry forward into 2021/22.

## **Other Projects**

### **Enterprise Zone**

34. Cabinet approved the funding of £7.2 million over two years to develop Plot H of the Harlow Science Park into a range of 'mid-tech' units combining office, research and manufacturing/assembly space, to be known as Modus. The development will be retained by the Council, with it likely to comprise a mix of long leasehold disposals providing a capital receipt and shorter leases providing an ongoing revenue stream. The development will be funded through borrowing repaid by the Enterprise Zone business rate uplift retention as agreed with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership. It is anticipated that final payment in respect of the Modus project will be delayed until 2021/22 and it is for this reason that it is included on the carry forward list.

### **New Build – Elm Hatch**

35. Elm Hatch is a project to demolish a retail hatch and redevelop the site with retail and residential properties. In January 2020 Cabinet approved a total budget of £4.305 million over 3 years. The leasehold in respect of the remaining retail unit has been purchased. The scheme is to construct number new properties but difficulties still remain due to complexity, cost and planning issues

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)**

None specific.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning**

### **Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)**

As contained in the report.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive**

### **Housing**

None specific.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

### **Community Wellbeing (Includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)**

None specific.

**Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

### **Governance (Includes HR)**

None specific

**Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Housing Capital Programme – Outturn Statement 2020/21

Appendix 2 – Housing Capital Programme Carry Forward Requests

Appendix 3 – Non Housing Capital Programme Outturn Statement 2020/21

Appendix 4 – Non Housing Capital Programme Carry Forward Requests.

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

HCP – Housing Capital Programme

HRA – Housing Revenue Account

NHCP – Non Housing Capital Programme

<b>Appendix 1 HCP 2020/21 Outturn</b>				
<b>PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Current Budget 2020/21 £,000</b>	<b>Quarter 3 Current Budget 2020/21 £,000</b>	<b>Actual Outturn 2020/21 £,000</b>	<b>Variance £,000</b>
<b>HTS</b>				
HTS-ASC	1,036	1,036	1,036	0
HTS-Internal Works	3,036	600	542	58
HTS-External & Estate works	261	174	157	17
HTS-Aids and Adaptations	1,245	489	482	7
HTS-Compliance - Electrical/Fire	1,600	1,300	1,245	55
HTS Garage Refurbishment (HRA)	238	120	63	57
HTS-Property Conversions	300	25	21	4
HTS-Energy Efficiency	284	230	228	2
<b>Total HTS</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>3,974</b>	<b>3,773</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Other Works</b>				
External's Programme	3,211	1,567	1,245	322
Fire Safety - Compartmentation	3,000	1,300	1,324	(24)
Fire Safety SE Ducts	2,000	400	95	305
Energy Efficiency	100	19	18	1
Health & Safet	276	234	233	1
Asbestos Removal	400	251	285	(34)
CDM	61	68	45	23
Damp	109	50	59	(9)
Structural	1,328	1,328	1,083	245
Housing IT	223	52	59	(7)
Joyners Field Towers Cladding	1,800	-	-	0
Aids and Adaptations - Non HTS	42	82	45	37
Prentice Place	-	-	395	(395)
<b>Core Programme</b>	<b>20,550</b>	<b>9,325</b>	<b>8,659</b>	<b>666</b>
House Purchase Programme	12,600	12,600	12,216	384
New Build Programme	618	489	680	(191)
<b>TOTAL HCP</b>	<b>33,768</b>	<b>22,414</b>	<b>21,556</b>	<b>858</b>
<b>FUNDED BY:-</b>				
RTB Capital Receipts	(3,965)	(3,927)	(3,814)	(113)
Other Capital Receipts	(1,030)			0
Major Repairs Reserve	(10,470)	(9,353)	(8,842)	(511)
Direct Revenue Financing	(7,247)			0
Borrowing	(11,056)	(9,134)	(8,899)	(235)
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(33,768)</b>	<b>(22,414)</b>	<b>(21,556)</b>	<b>(858)</b>

## Appendix 2 HCP Carry Forward Requests 2020/21

PROJECT AREA	Variance £,000	Carry Forward Request £,000	Reason for the Carry Forward Requests
HTS-Internal Works	58	58	Delays due to Covid 19 restrictions no access was available to carry out work in resident homes
HTS-External & Estate works	17	17	
HTS-Aids and Adaptations	7	7	
HTS-Compliance - Electrical/Fire	55	55	The compliance testing work has been completed as per schedule but some has been re-scheduled for the following year
HTS Garage Refurbishment (HRA)	57	57	The refurbishment of garages is an on-going programme and delays occur due to the availability of sites
HTS-Property Conversions	4	4	
HTS-Energy Efficiency	2		
External's Programme	322	321	Delays due to Covid 19 restrictions no access was available to carry out work in resident homes
Fire Safety - Compartmentation	(24)	(24)	
Fire Safety SE Ducts	305	305	Replacing fire safety ducts requires access to individual dwellings and this was not possible due to Covid 19 restrictions
Energy Efficiency	1	1	
Health & Safety	1		
Asbestos Removal	(34)	(34)	
CDM	23	24	
Damp	(9)	(9)	
Structural	245	245	Delays due to Covid 19 restrictions no access was available to carry out work in resident homes
Housing IT	(7)	(7)	
Joyners Field Towers Cladding	0		
Aids and Adaptations - Non HTS	37	37	Delays due to Covid 19 restrictions no access was available to carry out work in resident homes
Prentice Place	(395)		
<b>Core Programme</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>1,057</b>	
House Purchase Programme	384	384	All the house purchases were completed in 2020/21 but in order to bring them up to lettable standard void work will need to be done in 2021/22
New Build Programme	(191)	(191)	
<b>TOTAL HCP</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>1,250</b>	

### Appendix 3 NHCP 2020/21 Outturn

PROJECT AREA	Quarter 2 Current Budget 2020/21 £,000	Quarter 3 Current Budget 2020/21 £,000	Actual Outturn 2020/21 £,000	Variance £,000
<b>Place Services</b>				
Env Health inc Strategic Housing	891	891	456	435
Latton Bush Centre	208	208	16	192
Commercial Properties	95	15	10	5
Highways & Car Parks	53	53	94	(41)
Drainage work	161	27	28	(1)
Community Buildings	408	232	191	41
Contingency - Other Public Schemes	182	56	32	24
Civic Centre	430	218	193	25
Garages	205	205	50	155
<b>Total Place Services</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>1,905</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>834</b>
<b>Other Services</b>				
Governance	86	86	103	(17)
Finance - ICT	358	358	245	113
Community & Wellbeing	2,322	2,243	815	1,428
<b>Total Other Services</b>	<b>2,766</b>	<b>2,687</b>	<b>1,163</b>	<b>1,524</b>
<b>Other Projects</b>				
Prentice Place	272	272	0	272
Enterprise Zone	8,251	7,548	7,039	509
HTS (H & R) Ltd Equity Share & Loan	1,500	2,170	2,131	39
Grant Funded = POD	4	4	38	(34)
Future High Street Project	1,250	1250	0	1,250
<b>Total Other Projects</b>	<b>11,277</b>	<b>11,244</b>	<b>9,207</b>	<b>2,037</b>
<b>SUB TOTAL NHCP</b>	<b>16,676</b>	<b>15,836</b>	<b>11,442</b>	<b>4,394</b>
<b>General Fund New Build</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>(28)</b>
<b>TOTAL NHCP</b>	<b>16,725</b>	<b>15,871</b>	<b>11,504</b>	<b>4,367</b>
<b>FUNDED BY:-</b>				
Earmarked Grant Funding	(20)	(20)	(20)	0
Capital Receipts	(1,236)	(415)	(1,018)	603
Ear Marked Capital Reserves	(152)	(152)	(80)	(72)
Direct Revenue Financing	(327)	(327)	(210)	(117)
Disabled Facilities Grant	(500)	(500)	(282)	(218)
Towns Fund -Eastgate Grant	(1,000)	(1,000)	(61)	(939)
SELEP Getting Building Fund Grant	(200)	(200)		(200)
Home Renovation Loan repayments	(5)	(5)	(12)	7
Other contributions	(35)	(35)	(208)	173
Borrowing requirement	(13,201)	(13,168)	(9,550)	(3,618)
<b>New Build</b>				0
RTB Capital Receipts	(15)	(15)		(15)
Borrowing requirement	(34)	(34)	(63)	29
<b>Total Project Funding</b>	<b>(16,725)</b>	<b>(15,871)</b>	<b>(11,504)</b>	<b>(4,367)</b>

### Appendix 4 NHCP Carry Forward 2020/21

PROJECT AREA	Variance £,000	Carry Forward Request £,000	Reason for the Carry Forward Requests
Env Health inc Strategic Housing	435	326	Delays due to Covid 19 restrictions to providing disability facilities in private properties and the refurbishment of playgrounds
Latton Bush Centre	192	192	Delay in the provision of car parking spaces at the centre and in the refurbishment of the Community Safety office
Commercial Properties	5	3	
Highways & Car Parks	(41)	1	
Drainage work	(1)	(1)	
Community Buildings	41	41	Delays to the installation of lighting and the refurbishment of the kitchen at the Leah Manning Centre along with works to Mark Hall barn
Contingency - Other Public Schemes	24	25	asbestos programme which is on going as required
Civic Centre	25	25	Lighting upgrade was stalled by bad weather and problems with existing fittings. Awaiting for third part to connect up new lanterns for completion of works.
Garages	155	154	The refurbishment of garages is an on-going programme and delays occur due to the availability of sites
Governance	(17)	5	
Finance - ICT	113	55	The contract for the replacement of the telephony system is being phase in over two financial years
Community & Wellbeing	1,428	1,427	Delays due to the improvements in the lower yard of pets corner Delays to The Rows refurbishment due to the inter-dependency of funding streams and the need to demonstrate match funding for the Future High Streets and Levelling Up funds Delays to the start of the Towns Fund Eastgate project along with delays to the Harlow Town gateway signage scheme Phasing of the Town wide refurbishment of paddling pools
Prentice Place	272	0	
Enterprise Zone	509	509	Development of the Enterprise Zone is on going and the latest phased will finish in 2021/22
HTS Ltd Equity Share & Loan	39		
Grant Funded = POD	(34)		
Future High Street Project	1,250	1250	Acquisition of Occassio House ongoing and waiting outcome following valuation and offer being presented to current freeholder, the timescales is out of our control.
General Fund New Build	(28)	(27)	
<b>TOTAL NHCP</b>	<b>4,367</b>	<b>3,984</b>	



**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 12 JULY 2021

**TITLE:** HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN REPORT 2020/21

**LEAD OFFICERS:** SIMON FREEMAN, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY AND DEPUTY TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (01279) 446228

ANDREW MURRAY, HEAD OF HOUSING (01279) 446676

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS:** SENIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD

**This is not a Key Decision**

**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012606**

**The decision is not subject to Call-in Procedures for the following reason:**

It is within the scope of the budget agreed by Full Council in January 2020

**This decision will affect no ward specifically.**

**RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:**

- A** Notes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn Report 2020/21 as set out in following paragraphs and in Appendix 1.
- B** Approves the £1.188 million in revenue carry forward requests as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
- C** Notes that the HRA general working balance as at 31 March 2021 is £16.243 million as set out in Table 1 of the report.
- D** Notes that the Major Repairs Reserve balance as at 31 March 2021 is £1.574 million as set out in Table 3 of the report.
- E** Notes the balance of £7.068 million of retained Right to Buy (RTB) receipts held as at 31 March 2021 in order to finance the new build programme as set out in Table 4 of the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** The report compares the actual outturn with the Quarter 3 projections as at 31 March 2021 and following consultation with budget managers provides explanations for these variances.

- B** The report also provides details of the retained Right to Buy (RTB) capital receipts available as at 31 March 2021. This information will be used to bring forward plans for future new build schemes in order to provide much needed affordable housing.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. In January 2021 Cabinet approved the revised 2020/21 HRA Budget together with the 2021/22 budget and capital programme. The revised budget deficit of £9.760 million was prepared following consultation with budget managers and in conjunction with the HRA 30 year business plan and the medium term financial strategy. This is due to be updated in 2021/22.
2. In March 2021 Cabinet compared the revised 2020/21 budget with the forecast outturn and due to the delays caused by Covid-19 restrictions and other operational changes it was anticipated that the budget deficit would be £2.458 million.

## **ISSUES/PROPOSALS**

### **HRA Budget 2020/21 – Outturn**

3. Set out in Appendix 1 is a comparison of Quarter 3 forecast outturn with the actual outturn. Following consultation with budget managers explanations for the variances are as follows.

### **Expenditure - Operational**

4. General Management – Underspent £895,000
  - a) There is an underspending on employee costs due to the recruitment processes to the of Housing Technical Services and Asset Management teams being suspended due to the pandemic. The underspending in respect of current vacancies has been partly offset by the cost of agency staff.
  - b) During to the Covid-19 pandemic there has been very little or no movement of tenants during the year. Consequently, budgets such as tenant’s removal expenses, and moving incentives are underspent. As Covid-19 restrictions are lifted it is anticipated the movement of tenants will increase in 2021/22 and this is the reason for the carry forward request.
5. Special Management – Underspent £775,000
  - a) When the Quarter 3 monitoring report was prepared, budget managers were anticipating the lifting of the Government ban on the eviction of tenants for the non-payment of rent. The lifting of the ban would have

inevitable resulted in increased evictions and increased pressure on the homelessness temporary accommodation budget.

- b) As part of the governments “everyone in” initiative, part funded by the Government the Council were able to source alternative accommodation without the need for the use of Temporary Accommodation along with the support and housing advice provided throughout the pandemic, That has meant that many households have remained/retained their settled accommodation.
- c) All of these factors including the impact of the pandemic has meant that there is an underspend on the Temporary Accommodation budget of £560,000. However there is an expectation that as the moratorium on evictions has recently lifted and normal services resume there will be an increase in homeless approaches which will result in the need for increased temporary accommodation. The numbers in temporary accommodation increased to 284 by the 31 March 2021 and is forecast to increase each year by 2 percent.
- d) There has been a £161,000 underspend in respect of landlords lighting budget due adjustments made to electricity invoices. Initially, invoices are based on estimated invoices and the amended when actual meter readings are provided.

#### 6. Repairs and Maintenance – Underspent £985,000

- a) Repairs and maintenance services are predominantly delivered by HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd (HTS) in accordance with the approved Service Agreement. However, due the Covid-19 restrictions there is a backlog of schemes for standard planned routine repairs totalling £502,450 which had not been completed by the 31 March 2021. An adjustment has been made which is contributing to the underspend. The work will be completed in 2021/22 and is included in the carry over requests.to support delivery of the HTS recovery plans. It is expected for backlog for routine and standard responsive repairs to be completed by October 2021.
- b) There are other external companies providing specialist maintenance services. In same way that HTS has been restricted in repairs activities, other repairs providers have also been prevented from delivering services during the pandemic. This delay in completing this work has also contributed to the budget being underspent.

#### 7. Provision for Bad Debts – Underspent £196,000

- a) Housing rent recovery procedures commenced in July 2020 and tenant rent and service charge rent arrears reduced by £114,418 in 2020/21 to £3.373 million, a reduction of 3.28 percent. This was not what was previously forecast and one reason is that due to the lockdown restriction tenants had more disposable income available.

- b) An adjustment was required, therefore, to the provision for bad debts which has meant that the bad debt budget has not fully been utilised. The annual bad debt provision was utilised in regards to the write off of historic former tenant debt of £245,000.
- c) In terms of performance the rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged exceeded the 98 percent target. The actual percentage achieved was 98.69 percent which is slightly lower in comparison to 2019/20 performance of 98.83 percent, a difference of 0.14 percent. In addition, large arrears cases between (£1,000/£2,000) increased during the pandemic by 42.
- d) The Government issued new guidance on rent collection procedures in July 2020. This meant that the Council's own process had to be re-aligned and, together with the judicial processes, means the Council is still playing catch up. This may mean that there may be ongoing delays.

#### 8. Capital Charges – Underspent £139,000

- a) The house purchase and the new build capital schemes were financed by additional borrowing in 2020/21. The Quarter 3 budget monitoring report assumed the capital charges would be calculated on the full 12 months borrowing. However, as the house purchases took place in the second half of 2020/21 the capital charges have only been calculated on six months borrowing.

#### 9. Dwelling Rents – Adverse Variance £485,000

- a) The Quarter 3 monitoring report forecast a favourable variance of £676,000 based on 52 rent weeks. However, week 52 commenced on Monday 29 March and contained four days income which related to 2021/22. Following consultation with the external auditors when preparing the 2019/20 financial statements, the Council were advised to make an adjustment for the number of days rent which related to the following year, In order to be consistent a similar adjustment has been made in 2020/21, but was not included in the Quarter 3 forecast. The variance relates to the four days rent in 2021/22.
- b) The HRA 30 year business plan assumes a 1.27 percent loss of income due to properties becoming void. This equates to a loss of income of £545,000 or an average 116 properties per week. The actual loss of income due to voids in 2020/21 was £682,359 which reflects the adverse effect of the pandemic on HRA income, In addition to increased number of voids there has also been an increase in void turn round time to 40 days from 16 days in previous years.

10. Service Charges – Additional Income £330,000

- a) The Quarter 3 monitoring report forecast a £790,000 loss of service charge income as a result of services being unable to be delivered to leaseholders. However, before the actual invoices were prepared HTS confirmed that even though the work had to be re-scheduled because of the pandemic, all the services had been delivered. The invoices were prepared on this basis which resulted in the additional income.

**HRA General Balances**

11. The HRA outturn statement in Appendix 1 shows an overall surplus of £492,000. The movement in HRA balances can be summarised as set out in Table 1 below. It should be noted that the 2018/19 accounts are still to be signed off by the auditor and consequently the opening balance may be subject to amendment.

<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</b>		
<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Narrative</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
<b>£,000</b>		<b>£,000</b>
13,731	Balance as 1st April	15,751
2,020	Surplus /(Deficit) for year	492
15,751	Balance as at 31st March	16,243

**HRA Earmarked Reserves**

12. The HRA has a number of earmarked reserves and the movement and balances on these reserves can be summarised as follows:

<b>Name of Reserve</b>	<b>Balance at at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>Transfers To Reserve</b>	<b>Transfers From Reserve</b>	<b>Balance at at 31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Perpetuity Reserves	1,395,776	174,139	(433,715)	1,136,200
Insurance Fund	2,155,087	220,600	(210,430)	2,165,257
Insurance Claims Reserve	617,006	215,165	(136,665)	695,506
Risk Management Reserve	448,140	60,000		508,140
Housing Insurance Property Reserve	40,111	10,000		50,111
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>4,656,120</b>	<b>679,904</b>	<b>(780,810)</b>	<b>4,555,214</b>

**Major Repairs Reserve**

13. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 authorities are required to maintain a Major Repairs Reserve which is used to finance the core element of the Housing Capital Programme (HCP). The 2020/21 movement in the reserve can be summarised in Table 3.

	<b>Balance as at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>Contributions To Reserve</b>	<b>Transfers To Finance CAPEX</b>	<b>Balance as at 31 March 2021</b>
<b>Name of Reserve</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Major Repairs Reserve	0	10,416,392	(8,842,345)	1,574,047

### Retained Right to Buy Receipts

14. Set out in Table 4 is a summary of the retained right to buy receipts as at the 31 March 2021.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Balance Brought Forward</b>	<b>Receipts Retained</b>	<b>Receipts Used</b>	<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
2017/18	Qtr 2		1,005,654	-	1,005,654
2017/18	Qtr 3	1,005,654	1,226,277	-	2,231,932
2017/18	Qtr 4	2,231,932	1,553,847	-	3,785,779
2018/19	Qtr 1	3,785,779	-	-	3,785,779
2018/19	Qtr 2	3,785,779	-	-	3,785,779
2018/19	Qtr 3	3,785,779	-	-	3,785,779
2018/19	Qtr 4	3,785,779	-	45,741	3,740,038
2019/20	Qtr 1	3,740,038	1,900,339	33,866	5,606,510
2019/20	Qtr 2	5,606,510	553,213	62,432	6,097,291
2019/20	Qtr 3	6,097,291	1,181,154	42,028	7,236,417
2019/20	Qtr 4	7,236,417	1,844,361	68,393	9,012,385
2020/21	Qtr 1	9,012,385	533,187	50,187	9,495,384
2020/21	Qtr 2	9,495,384	365,286	23,847	9,836,823
2020/21	Qtr 3	9,836,823	308,288	2,335,028	7,810,083
2020/21	Qtr 4	7,810,083	662,671	1,404,924	7,067,831

15. It can be seen from Table 4 that in Quarter 4 £1.404 million of retained receipts were used to complete purchase programme. As a consequence of the programme the Council met its target and did not have to repay any receipts back to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and will not incur any compound interest charges.
16. It can also be seen from Table 4 that the balance of retained RTB receipts available at the 31 March 2021 is £7.068 million which is available to provide new affordable housing. In March 2021 the Government announced changes to the rules on the use of retained receipts. With effect from the 1 April 2021 local

authorities can finance 40 percent of new build projects from retained receipts (previously it was capped at 30 percent). In addition, authorities are allowed up to five years to use the receipts instead of the previous three years.

### **Significant Risks/Opportunities**

17. The current lockdown restrictions are still continuing and as we have already seen are having an impact on the delivery of Housing services. There are significant risks ahead and these will be updated as part of the ongoing review of the HRA budget and business plan. At this stage it is difficult to assess the impact of the restrictions in the long term.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)**

None specific.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning**

### **Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)**

As contained in the body of the report.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive**

### **Housing**

As contained in the body of the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

### **Community Wellbeing**

None specific.

**Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

### **Governance (Includes HR)**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Housing Revenue Account Outturn 2020/21

Appendix 2 – HRA Carry Forward Requests 2020/21

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

HCP – Housing Capital Programme

HRA – Housing Revenue Account

HTS – HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd  
RTB – Right to Buy

<b>APPENDIX 1</b>					
<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN 2020/21</b>					
	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
		<b>Revised</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>		
<b>HEADING</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projected</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>					
General Management	10,908	13,890	13,700	12,805	(895)
Special Management	7,331	8,165	8,233	7,458	(775)
Repairs	10,305	11,250	11,201	10,216	(985)
Rents, Rates & Taxes	85	120	120	121	1
Supporting People	5	5	5	3	(2)
Provision for Bad Debts	358	363	363	167	(196)
Depreciation	10,624	10,470	10,470	10,305	(165)
Direct Revenue Financing	0	7,247	-	-	0
Debt Management Exp	6	16	17	5	(12)
Capital Charges:	6,673	7,067	7,067	6,928	(139)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>46,295</b>	<b>58,593</b>	<b>51,176</b>	<b>48,008</b>	<b>(3,168)</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>					
Dwelling Rents	(42,155)	(42,796)	(43,472)	(42,987)	485
Garage Rents	(1,031)	(1,049)	(1,020)	(965)	55
Other Rents	(62)	(65)	(93)	(84)	9
Service Charges: Tenants	(1,197)	(1,053)	(820)	(1,015)	(195)
Service Charges: Leaseholders	(1,602)	(2,176)	(1,851)	(2,022)	(171)
Other Charges for Services	(1,457)	(1,003)	(752)	(716)	36
Transfers from General Fund	(616)	(609)	(628)	(602)	26
Interest on Revenue Balances	(195)	(82)	(82)	(109)	(27)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(48,315)</b>	<b>(48,834)</b>	<b>(48,718)</b>	<b>(48,499)</b>	<b>219</b>
Balance at 1 April	(13,731)	(15,751)	(15,751)	(15,751)	
(Surplus) / Deficit for year	(2,020)	9,760	2,458	(492)	(2,950)
Balance in hand at 31 March	(15,751)	(5,991)	(13,293)	(16,243)	(2,950)

## Appendix 2 HRA Carry Forward Requests 2020/21

BUDGET AREA	Variance £	Carry Forward Request £	Reason for the Carry Forward Requests
Maintenance Buildings	(8,517)	8,500	Delays in delivery of works due to national lockdown - building maintenance
Lift Repair Costs.	(45,108)	45,100	Town wide lift programme (several under warranty period)
Payments to HTS & R&M	(545,993)	502,450	HTS WIP Repairs
Cyclical Maintenance.	(26,437)	26,400	Delays in delivery of works due to national lockdown - building maintenance
Building Defects - Damp	(81,122)	81,100	Restrictions of inspections and work carried out due to national lockdown - Damp
Garage Responsive Repairs.	(12,969)	12,900	Delays in delivery of works due to national lockdown - repairs
HHRS Repairs.	(8,632)	8,600	Delays in delivery of works due to national lockdown for HHRS repairs
Water Hygiene Contract.	(246,484)	155,400	Restrictions of works due to national lockdown
Redecoration Allowance	(40,676)	30,000	Due to services being temporarily suspended due to National Lockdown
Legal Costs	(42,688)	40,000	Due to the delay and suspension of legal action due to the pandemic, we have not been able to carry out legal enforcement
Moving Incentives -	(139,974)	115,000	Due to the Allocation Scheme being temporarily suspended due to the National Lockdown, applicants have been unable to move to alternative accommodation
Tenants Removal Expenses	(8,268)	8,000	Due to the Allocation Scheme being temporarily suspended due to the National Lockdown, applicants have been unable to move to alternative accommodation
Compensation to Tenants	(18,516)	18,500	Due to the National Lockdown, normal services have been temporarily suspended, including the suspension of all home visits.
Consultancy & Consultation	(16,000)	16,000	Due to the temporary suspension of some landlord services, we could not carry out the biennial landlord survey
Maintenance Buildings	(1,574)	1,400	Projects awaiting install date due to restricted access during national lockdown
Burglar & Fire & Compliance	(21,203)	16,400	Alarm Maintenance - Burglar & Fire & Compliance work delayed. Access issues due to Pandemic/Covid 19
Maintenance Buildings	(3,950)	3,900	Maintenance Buildings - Ext Contracts. Deliveries of bins- delayed
Equipment budget	(99,017)	98,400	Underspent due to closure of communal areas due to Covid 19 and long delivery lead times
<b>TOTAL HRA</b>	<b>(1,367,128)</b>	<b>1,188,050</b>	

**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 12 JULY 2021

**TITLE:** RENEWAL OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARDWARE,  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC  
GROWTH

**LEAD OFFICER:** ANDREW BRAMIDGE, HEAD OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING  
(01279) 446410

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS:** TANUSHA WATERS, PLANNING AND  
BUILDING CONTROL MANAGER  
(01279) 446595

PAUL MACBRIDE, FORWARD PLANNING  
MANAGER (01279) 446258

**This is a Key Decision**

**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision number I012706**

**Call-in Procedures may apply**

**This decision will affect all wards.**

**RECOMMENDED that:**

- A** Approval in principle is given for new Article 4 Directions in Harlow Town Centre, Pinnacles, Templefields and Burnt Mill to limit changes from office to residential use, to take account of the new Use Classes and for this to take effect from 31 July 2022, when the existing Article 4 extensions expire.
- B** A new Article 4 Direction is put in place to limit the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 to limit of changes from Retail to Residential use in the Harlow Town Centre.
- C** Cabinet notes that further background work will be undertaken to support the confirmation of the Article 4 directions at the point of enactment and notification to the Secretary of State.

## **REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** In order to ensure that no further loss of employment land takes place which would undermine the ability of the Council to deliver and maintain a supply of employment land to meet the needs and requirements set out in the Adopted Harlow Local Development Plan 2020.
- B** In order to ensure that sufficient retail floorspace is available within Harlow town centre to aid its regeneration and to meet the needs and requirements set out in the Adopted Harlow Local Development Plan 2020.
- C** To ensure the purpose and extent Article 4 Directions can be justified having regard to the need to protect the local amenity and wellbeing of the town.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. At a meeting of Cabinet on 28 March 2019, a report was considered from the Scrutiny Committee of 13 February 2019, in respect of the impact of the revisions to the planning Permitted Development legislation that facilitated the conversion of office to residential use without the need for formal planning permission, and the wider impacts that arose from this. This included the potential creation of poor quality housing and the loss of employment floorspace and the potential this would have to undermine the economic and regeneration strategy for Harlow, as set out in the then emerging Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP).
2. The application of national permitted development rights for change of use from office to residential could lead to the loss of a further office floorspace and harm economic activity, including the loss of space for SMEs and Start-up businesses. The introduction of unplanned residential use at these locations could undermine the commercial environment and hinder both the activities of existing commercial occupiers and the ongoing commercial redevelopment needed to accommodate future economic and employment growth in Harlow.
3. Members were made aware that under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 an Article 4 Direction can be made by the Council, as local planning authority, or the Secretary of State to withdraw specified permitted development rights across a defined area. Where an Article 4 Direction is in effect, a planning application will be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development.

4. At that meeting, Cabinet agreed to seek the imposition of Article 4 Directions for the employment areas of The Pinnacles, Templefields (the area not already covered by the Templefields Enterprise Zone (EZ) site Article 4 Directions) and the Burnt Mill Industrial area/offices adjacent to Harlow Town Railway Station, as well as accepting an amendment proposed at the meeting to put in place an Article 4 Direction for Harlow Town Centre area. Cabinet also resolved to notify the Secretary of State of the Councils intention, in accordance with Paragraph 1) (6) of Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
5. Since these Article 4 Directions were put in place the Government has enacted further complex changes to the Permitted Development regime that now facilitates the change of use of retail units to residential use without the need for planning permission, subject only to Prior Approval on a number of limited matters. Both the unplanned loss of employment and retail floorspace could undermine the ability of the Council to secure the growth and regeneration of the town.

### **Harlow Local Development Plan**

6. In December 2020 the Council adopted the Harlow Local Development Plan which was informed by the development of a comprehensive evidence base that considered the social, economic and environmental conditions of the district. This was subject to public examination and scrutiny before a Government appointed Inspector, who found the Plan sound in his report of November 2020.
7. This means that the Council is in the fortunate position of having an up to date Local Plan in place which sets out a future strategy for the growth and regeneration of the town. Policy ED1 of the HDLP identifies the need for an additional 21 ha of new employment land in the district, whilst Policy RS2 identifies the need for an additional 40,200 square metres of comparison retail floorspace and 5,500 square metres of convenience floorspace over the plan period (to 2033). It is important, therefore, that the general principles and policy objectives set out in the Plan are not undermined by recent changes to the Permitted Development regime, particularly in respect of the potential loss of existing employment floorspace in Harlow's Employment areas as identified above, as well as the potential loss of further employment and retail floorspace in the town centre.
8. The Cabinet meeting of 28 March 2019 had been advised that 38,000 square metres of existing employment space had already been lost to residential conversions through permitted development which would lead to a significant

concern if the Council was unable to provide sufficient space for new jobs to match the town's housing growth.

9. The implementation of Article 4 Directions on existing employment sites helped to ensure these sites remained available for economic activities in the longer term in order to meet acknowledged regeneration objectives, as well as helping the Council to deliver its Local Plan targets. This also ensured that the unique characteristics of Harlow, as a planned new town, that sought the deliberate separation of employment land uses and residential neighbourhoods, was not undermined. Such separation of uses and activities ensured that business activities were not impeded, whilst at the same time protected residential amenity and ensured that residents, within properly planned residential areas, had access to key community facilities and places of employment.
10. In order, therefore, to enable the Council to monitor and manage such changes in a planned way, necessary to secure the wider strategic objectives in respect of growth and regeneration, as set out in the Harlow Local Development Plan, approval is sought for:
  - a) A new Article 4 Direction in Harlow Town Centre, Pinnacles, Templefields and Burnt Mill from office to residential use, to take account of the new Use Classes and for this to take effect from 31 July 2022, when the existing Article 4 extensions expires.
  - b) A new Article 4 Direction being put in place to limit the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 in respect of changes from Retail to Residential use in the Harlow Town Centre.
11. It is noted that the enactment of Article 4 Directions is not intended to prevent development but rather affords the Council an opportunity to scrutinise proposals, through the consideration of planning applications, so that the impact on its adopted policies can be reviewed and assessed, and that development takes place in a planned way.
12. Following consideration by Cabinet the Secretary of State will be given advanced notification of the Councils intention to pursue Article 4 Directions in respect of these changes of use, to take effect in July 2022.
13. Before, however, these are put in place the impact of these changes to date will be reviewed and updated evidence assembled and reported back to Cabinet in order to ensure the purpose and the extent of the Directions can

be justified, having regard to the need to protect local amenity and wellbeing of the town, as reflected in the objectives, policies and proposals of the Council as set out in the HDLP.

14. In addition the proposal to enact these Article 4 Directions will be subject to public consultation that will take place later in 2021, the outcome of which will, together with updated evidence, will be reported back to Cabinet in July 2022 for ratification and subsequent notification to the Secretary of State.

### **Next Steps**

15. Following Cabinet's consideration of the recommendation to pursue Article 4 Directions, as set out above, it is intended:
  - a) The Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government be given advanced notification of the Council's intention to pursue Article 4 Directions.
  - b) The Council will undertake a review of the impact of the changes of office to residential use to date, on the policies and proposals of the HDLP, in the areas described above, together with an assessment of the impact of changes of use from retail to residential use in the Harlow Town Centre.
  - c) Public consultation will be undertaken later in the year in respect of the Council's intention to pursue Article 4 Directions.
  - d) The findings of the review work, and the outcome of the public consultation, will be reported back to Cabinet in July 2022 to ensure the purpose and the extent of the Directions is appropriate and can be justified at the point of enactment.
  - e) Following further consideration by Cabinet, formal notification of the Directions will be given to the Secretary of State at MHCLG, as required by legislation.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Environment & Planning**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning**

### **Finance (Includes ICT)**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive**

### **Housing**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

### **Community Wellbeing**

As contained in the report.

**Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

### **Governance (includes HR)**

The Local Planning Authority can use an Article 4 direction under the General Permitted Development Order to withdraw specified permitted development rights across a defined area. Government guidance is that Article 4 directions should only be used in exceptional circumstances where the exercise of permitted development rights would harm local amenity and the proper planning of the area. Provided the Local Planning Authority can justify both its purpose and extent the direction can be made. The use should be limited to situations where it is necessary to protect the local amenity or wellbeing of the area.

The Local Planning Authority when looking to make such a direction should clearly identify the potential harm the direction is intended to address. Councillors should be aware that the direction does not prevent development but means that an application must be made for planning permission prior to any development taking place. In deciding whether or not to make an Article 4 direction the Local Planning Authority should be aware that compensation may be paid in limited circumstances.

**Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance**

### **Appendices**

None.

### **Background Papers**

None.

### **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

EZ – Enterprise Zone

HLDP – Harlow Local Development Plan

MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 12 JULY 2021

**TITLE:** HARLOW DESIGN GUIDE – APPROVAL FOR CONSULTATION

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARDWARE,  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

**LEAD OFFICER:** ANDREW BRAMIDGE, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING (01279) 446410

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS:** VICKY FORGIONE, PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER (01279) 446878  
DAVID WATTS, SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER (01279) 446577

**This is not a Key Decision**  
**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012707**  
**Call In Procedures may apply**  
**This decision will affect no ward specifically.**

**RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:**

- A** Approves the Draft Design Guide Addendum Supplementary Planning Document (as set out at Appendix A to the report), to enable it to be published for the purposes of consultation under Section 12(b) of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- B** Delegates authority to the Head of Environment and Planning, to make and approve any minor or inconsequential amendments to the Draft Design Guide Addendum Supplementary Planning Document arising from the statutory consultation.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** To approve the Draft Design Guide Addendum Supplementary Planning Document for publication for a six week consultation period under Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). To ensure greater engagement, the consultation period is two weeks longer than the legal statutory consultation period of four weeks.
- B** To meet the legal requirements of developing and adopting a Supplementary Planning Document.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP) was adopted by the Council on 10 December 2020. The Local Plan sets out a long-term vision for Harlow, identifying land where development will be acceptable and where it will be unacceptable.
2. It contains policies which ensure future development is sustainable by meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, while providing the required infrastructure and protecting environmental assets. These policies are material considerations in the determination of planning applications.
3. One of the aims of the HLDP is to enhance the quality of the built environment and natural environment and includes the following three objectives; 1) creating and enhancing high quality built environments which are well connected to revitalised green spaces; 2) delivering high quality design through new development whilst protecting and enhancing the district's historic environment; and 3) adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
4. The HLDP contains policies which ensure that there is a high standard of urban and architectural design in all development and sets out a number of design criteria to support this. It also includes policies on amenity principles and sustainable design, construction and energy use.
5. Whilst the policies in the plan themselves give significant detail of the Council's requirements, the additional guidance contained in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will expand on the adopted plan, to give additional guidance to developers when making planning applications, to officers when making recommendations, and councillors when making decisions.
6. The Council already has an adopted Design Guide SPD (2011) which is used to assist officers in examining design principles in new development, when assessing planning applications. Officers have now prepared a draft addendum which will accompany the existing Design Guide. The addendum will also be an SPD once adopted.
7. It should be noted that an SPD cannot introduce new policy over and above that contained in the adopted local plan. The Design Guide Addendum SPD can, therefore, only relate to existing policies in the HLDP.

## **PROPOSALS**

8. The existing Design Guide SPD aims to provide general guidance on the form that new development should take. It addresses a range of development types from new urban areas through to residential extensions. It also covers the design of employment areas and strategic and local green spaces.
9. The existing Design Guide SPD was adopted 10 years ago and although most of it is still relevant, it does not include guidance on a range of subject matters which are now addressed by recently-updated national planning policy and

guidance. Many of these issues are now becoming relevant to Harlow. Officers have therefore prepared an addendum to the existing Design Guide SPD which seeks to amplify and aid the effective and consistent implementation of the design, amenity and climate change policies in the HLDP, more specifically Policies PL1, PL2 and PL3.

10. The addendum, once adopted will accompany the existing Design Guide as an SPD and both should be read together. The addendum will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will also inform pre-application discussions on relevant developments. The document has been prepared in accordance with Regulations 8 & 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) regulations 2012.
11. The Design Guide Addendum SPD includes five sections. Sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 are new supplements to the Design Guide. Section 4 provides additions to the existing Householder section of the Design Guide:
  - a) Section 1: Tall Buildings – Given the increased number of planning applications submitted and the growing level of interest, particularly in the town centre, this part of the addendum provides design guidance on tall buildings. It ensures developers take into consideration appropriate height, scale, massing and materials for tall buildings, overshadowing and light requirements both for occupiers and street level pedestrians and the potential impact of tall buildings on the landscape of Harlow.
  - b) Section 2: Privacy and Overlooking – This section sets out specific calculations to ensure that the privacy of neighbouring properties is maintained; for example a minimum window to window distance. It balances the need between privacy of private gardens and spaces with the importance of natural surveillance of public areas.
  - c) Section 3: Amenity Space and Gardens – This section provides minimum garden size requirements for new dwellings. The standards have been chosen based on a comparison of other local authority requirements and Harlow’s ambitions of becoming a Garden Town based on Garden City principles. This section also includes minimum amenity space requirements for new flats and how this could be provided e.g. balconies, communal space and/or roof-top gardens which supports Section 1: Tall Buildings.
  - d) Section 4: Updated Householder Guidance – The existing Design Guide already contains detailed guidance for householder extensions and alterations and this will be retained. This section of the addendum provides additional guidance where it is currently absent including acceptable height and depth measurements for rear extensions, dormers and velux windows and acceptable roof changes.
  - e) Section 5: Climate Change - This element of the Design Guide addendum provides further information on how to implement the principles of HLDP Policy PL3: Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy Usage within new development. This includes how to design buildings and implement

landscaping which will prevent overheating and provide natural cooling, the consideration of natural lighting and ventilation in new properties and the implementation of rainwater harvesting and grey water-reuse. It should be read alongside the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Sustainability Guidance and Checklist.

## **NEXT STEPS**

12. Following Cabinet endorsement, the Design Guide Addendum SPD will follow the statutory process to adoption. The regulation cited above requires the Council to:
  - a) Produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated in to the SPD;
  - b) Publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent;
  - c) Make documents available by taking the following steps;
    - i) Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
    - ii) Publish the document on the Council's website.
13. The consultation will follow the Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Planning Services will use its consultation database to inform consultees of the SPD, allowing six weeks consultation rather than four to take into account Covid-19 restrictions and the upcoming summer holidays.
14. Following the consultation period, the Council will consider all responses received and amend the draft Addendum SPD as appropriate, to produce a final version ready for adoption. The consultation statement, mentioned above, will be produced and will detail how responses were received were taken into account.
15. The finalised Addendum SPD will then be adopted by the Council at a future Cabinet meeting, at which point it will become a material consideration in the determining of planning applications. The Addendum SPD will be hosted on the Council's website alongside the existing Design Guide SPD, with a number of hard copies also being made available.
16. It is planned that at a later date (to be determined), a full review of the Design Guide SPD will take place and a full replacement version drafted. This would be reported to the Town Plan Panel and consulted on in the same ways described in this report, prior to its adoption.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment & Planning**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment & Planning**

### **Finance (Includes ICT and Property and Facilities)**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive**

### **Housing**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

### **Community Wellbeing (includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)**

As contained in the report.

**Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

### **Governance (includes HR)**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance**

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Harlow Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

## **Background Papers**

Harlow Local Development Plan: Adopted December 2020

Harlow Design Guide: Adopted October 2011

HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

SCI – Statement of Community Involvement

HLDP – Harlow Local Development Plan

HGGT – Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

APPENDIX A

**DRAFT**

# **Harlow Design Guide Addendum Supplementary Planning Document 2021**



This addendum applies to all of Harlow district and should be read in conjunction with the existing Design Guide (adopted 2011) and the Harlow Local Development Plan (adopted 2020). Following a period of consultation it will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and will sit alongside the existing Design Guide as material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It includes the following sections:

**SECTION 1: TALL BUILDINGS**

**SECTION 2: PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING**

**SECTION 3: AMENITY SPACE AND GARDENS**

**SECTION 4: HOUSEHOLDER GUIDANCE**

**SECTION 5: CLIMATE CHANGE**

Sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 are new supplements to the Design Guide. Section 4 provides additions to the existing Householder section of the Design Guide.

## SECTION 1: TALL BUILDINGS



## 1. TALL BUILDINGS

- 1.1. Harlow is home to the first residential tower block in the UK. 'The Lawn', completed in 1951, won a Ministry of Health Housing medal for its design due to its architectural style which also allowed each flat to have a south-facing balcony. There are now several high-rise buildings in the district which accommodate both commercial and residential use. The majority of those are situated within the town centre including Terminus House which is 14 storeys high, Joseph Rank House at 12 storeys and the Holiday Inn at 5 storeys. More recently applications have been submitted and in some instances approved for 11, 12 and 15 storey high buildings. These can make a valuable contribution towards housing, activity and the wider public realm if they are designed correctly.
- 1.2. Policy PL1 of the Harlow Local Development Plan sets out the design principles for new development including the consideration of local context, urban form, green infrastructure and scale, height and massing. This Tall Buildings chapter of the addendum provides further guidance on how the criteria of Policy PL1 will be applied to tall buildings.
- 1.3. In the round, tall buildings are defined as structures that are more than *6 metres* taller in height above that of surrounding buildings or that are over *30 metres* in height ('The Lawn' for example is 35 metres in height). They usually fall into three categories:
- 1.4. **1. Townscape Buildings**, which can be arranged to form streets, squares and crescents and help define the character of a street. They are generally only slightly higher than their context and can support a greater mix of uses and services and add to the vitality, interest and viability of an area. Townscape buildings can be both long and bulky and so need to be incorporated into streetscapes in a sensitive way, connecting to the streets or spaces they line through complimentary uses and frequent access and openings.
- 1.5. **2. Tower Buildings**, which are generally buildings that are tall and thin with a slender profile, usually contrasting substantially in height from the majority of buildings within the surrounding area. They stand out and make an impact, make the best use of tight sites, add interest and drama to the skyline and have a positive impact on long range views. They can also provide a focus for regeneration, help with way finding and create vitality and interest. Due to their height, they generally make a visual impact felt over a wider area than that of a townscape building. However, they can be difficult to integrate sensitively into the landscape and their setting needs particularly careful attention and consideration.
- 1.6. **3. Slab Blocks** are more significantly broad in one direction and are typically less-often aligned along streets. Usually they are significantly taller than surrounding buildings and so are extremely prominent, often having a less successful relationship to their context and street edge, resulting in blocked views. Slab blocks generally occupy space rather than define it and often fail to provide enclosure to streets or spaces, which results in poorly defined public realm.

## Height, Scale, Massing and Materials

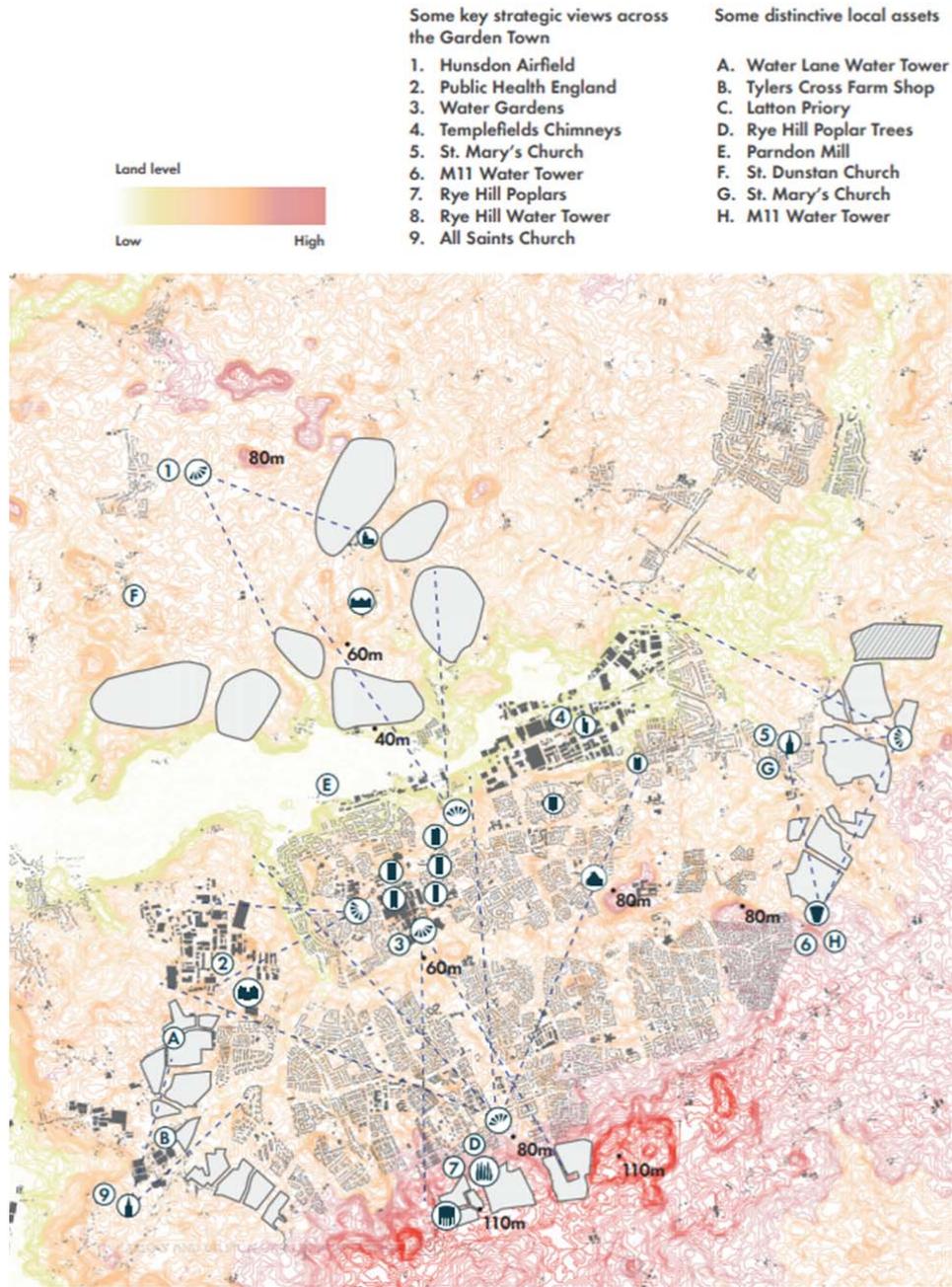
- 1.7. Proposed tall buildings should not exceed the general contextual height, unless there is evidence of strong mitigating circumstances or significant visual reasons and associated aesthetic townscape advantages. It may be appropriate to align a tall building in a manner which provides a stop to a visual axis, or frames a particular view or scene.
- 1.8. A balanced height is usually dependent on the general existing prevailing (majority) context and scale. From this an acceptable height can be defined. A taller 'point element' in a townscape of lower buildings would be considered on an individual case basis and in relation to the location, context, views and other relevant factors. For tall elements in the townscape, a more slender approach, with a vertical emphasis, is often more readily supported, as tall buildings appear better as more slender point elements in the townscape rather than just high buildings.
- 1.9. Groups of tall buildings can be less obtrusive but this will only be acceptable in areas such as the town centre where there are already a variety of building heights and where the impact on light and privacy of houses is less likely to occur. Single high rise residential buildings may be supported in existing residential neighbourhoods in Harlow but this is generally limited to 6-10 storeys and subject to other criteria set out in this addendum and existing Design Guide.
- 1.10. Relief and diversity in height and massing of developments should be provided in different localities. Existing low rise and low density areas should be preserved to enhance diversity.
- 1.11. It is essential that new tall buildings make a positive contribution to their surroundings through an appropriate form, setback, massing and architectural language. In some instances, for example the town centre, the developer may be required to produce a *Massing Study* as part of their planning application, in addition to the other required analyses.
- 1.12. New tall buildings will be expected to improve and enhance the character and appearance of the local area, by providing an aesthetically-pleasing design and creating a landmark building. It should also however celebrate the unique design heritage of Harlow and ensure design cues from the immediate area and Harlow more generally are followed through in regards to scale, massing, colours, materials and detailing of the original fabric, and the integration of public art and sculpture.
- 1.13. Development proposals should take cues from the features and typical palette of materials of Harlow's original New Town character to inform its building design. Buildings have colour accents and use is made of tile and other materials to complement brick, stone and concrete. For example, features in the town centre include vertical articulation of façades, large protrusions on façades and rhythm through the repetition of geometric shapes. Glazing on many buildings is encased by

slender window frames which give a delicate distinctiveness to the façades and is fundamental to Harlow's character.

- 1.14. The materials of a tall building would be dependent on the design but the Council would prefer colours that are harmonious with the context and prevailing townscape colours. Brash colours which do not fit in with the local character should be avoided, as this visual approach usually dates quickly and erodes the local character. If a directly contrasting visual style, or aesthetic, to the local townscape is proposed, the contrast should have demonstrable design generators that relate to the local context.
- 1.15. Developers should also consider the night-time aesthetic of proposed tall buildings. Lighting in particular is a key design consideration, as it can greatly impact on long and near views. Lighting can be manipulated to the advantage of a tall building, to accentuate particular features.
- 1.16. As well as being of a suitable height and design for the local area, new tall buildings should take into account their visibility from further away. Tall building design should pay attention to how the building will be viewed from a range of locations, both from nearby and from afar.
- 1.17. There are a number of key viewpoints across Harlow (and beyond), largely due to the 'landscape bowl' within which the town was designed and built. For example, The Water Gardens were positioned by Sir Frederick Gibberd so that the view southwards from the town centre could be enjoyed. They must, therefore, be respected and protected. The map overleaf (Fig. 1.1), from the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide, provides examples of viewpoints across the town and beyond. However applicants must undertake their own visual assessment which should consider other views where appropriate.

***Document continues overleaf...***

Fig. 1.1: Map of viewpoints



1.18. Developers should provide their own information and studies relating to viewpoints and how they would be respected, including maps, CGI images and physical models – as appropriate – to demonstrate any visual impact from the proposed development. This will also aid the understanding of Council Officers and Elected Councillors.

1.19. Where the development site is located on a gradient, the shortest elevation of the proposed development should be measured, to ensure maximum impact on the surrounding area is considered.

1.20. In order to create adequate natural ventilation, ensure sufficient daylight, create a greater choice of views and ensure flexibility in the use of rooms, it is expected that 80% of flats in a tall building will be dual aspect.

### **Street Level**

1.21. At the street-level, tall buildings should have a successful human-scale interface which should be active and engaging but with a contextual visual strength to anchor the building to the street.

1.22. Developers and designers should aim to provide high quality public realm and human scale, active frontages, user friendly and legible entrances and approaches, sunshine zones, appropriately-sized open space, legible links with transport and pedestrian routes, and appropriate landscaping and amenity space.

1.23. It is expected that tall buildings provide increased adequate open space around the building, especially in front of the building. Tall buildings should also provide good landscaping and amenity space linked, if possible, to the local green infrastructure network. Visual and spatial interaction with surrounding areas is encouraged. For more information on open space, please refer to the Amenity Space/Gardens section of this addendum.

1.24. When assessing development proposals for tall buildings, consideration should be given to the potential impact on the amenities of the surrounding area. Specifically, careful considerations should be given to the potential impacts of particular issues, as follows (but not limited to):

- outlook/aspect;
- privacy (see the Privacy and Overlooking section of this addendum);
- daylight/sunlight;
- noise;
- light glare;
- overbearing impact;
- effect of wind;
- effect on green infrastructure;
- increased sense of enclosure

1.25. Applicants must submit a *Daylight and Sunlight Assessment* in accordance with BRE guidance, including information to determine the existing and expected levels of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing on neighbouring properties, and the measures that will be taken to reduce the expected impact of the proposed development.

1.26. Consideration should be given to the negative effects of the diversion and funnelling of wind arising from the effects of a tall building. Windswept spaces must be avoided through architectural devices such as awnings and terraces, as well as through setbacks in the façade of the building.

- 1.27. The applicant will be expected to provide a *Quantitative Study Report* to fully ensure safe wind conditions in and around the building and any surrounding highway, covering impacts on all users of that space (including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists). The wind study should ensure safe conditions all year round for all users. Any wind mitigation measures should be wholly within the applicant's site boundary, should be permanent structures maintained by the applicant, and should not include trees or soft landscape.
- 1.28. The impact of shadowing throughout the day and at different times of year will need to be assessed. In all instances, consideration should be given to avoiding, minimising or mitigating through design or siting any elements of the proposal which could have a negative climatic impact on the surrounding area.
- 1.29. Shadowing can be difficult to remove completely, but it can be minimised through appropriate siting of the building and through orientation, floor space dimensions and overall building height. Access to natural light as well as privacy issues for new and existing residents should be considered during the design process. Redevelopment of an existing site could also present the opportunity to improve any existing issues of overshadowing / overlooking.
- 1.30. Tall buildings have a major impact on a skyline. It is important that this impact is positive with appropriately designed roofs and termination with the skyline.
- 1.31. All rooftop plant and machinery, service bays and air conditioning should be screened, for example with Green Infrastructure, to avoid an unsightly appearance. Designers should, therefore, incorporate a contextual and aesthetically balanced termination of the building.

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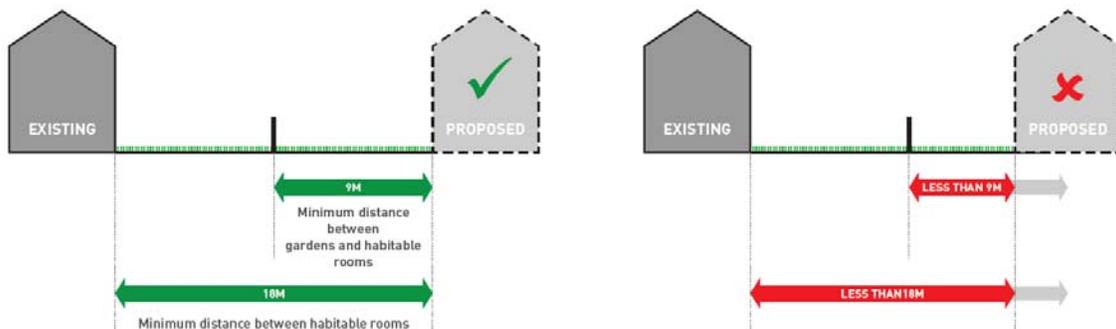
## SECTION 2: PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING



## 2. PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING

- 2.1. Development of new dwellings and additions/alterations to existing dwellings should ensure a good level of privacy inside buildings and within private outdoor space.
- 2.2. Directly facing habitable room windows will normally require a minimum separation distance of *18 metres*, except where the existing character of the area varies from this (see Fig. 2.1 below). A distance of *9 metres* should be kept between gardens and habitable rooms.

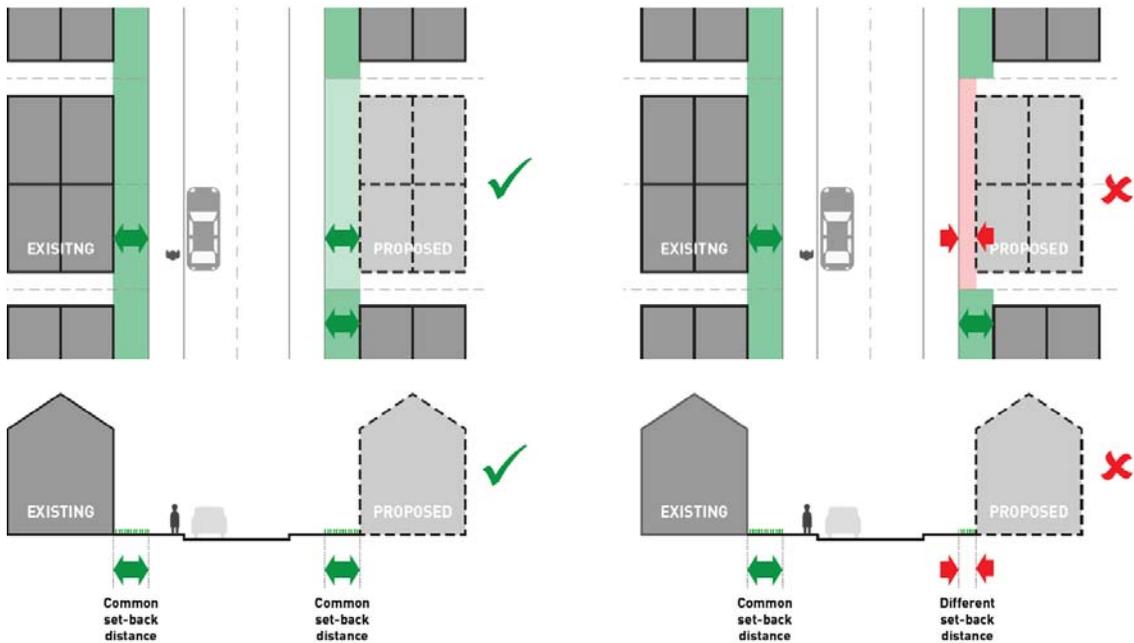
**Figure 2.1: Minimum separation distances between facing habitable room windows**



- 2.3. For frontages, a reduced distance may be acceptable if there are high quality design solutions which can mitigate impacts and allow for efficient use of land.
- 2.4. In order to manage and monitor the impact of development on privacy and overlooking, the Council may remove certain Permitted Development Rights, which relate to new extensions, from certain properties.
- 2.5. For sites within an existing street scene, the distance between front elevations should normally be determined by set-backs and stepping of the road in the area (see Fig. 2.2 overleaf). Privacy should be balanced with active frontage and overlooking of public spaces. Setbacks which are insufficient in size lead to reduced animated facades and active frontage as well as views from within the home.

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**Figure 2.2: Building lines should be set back from the footway and respond to the context**

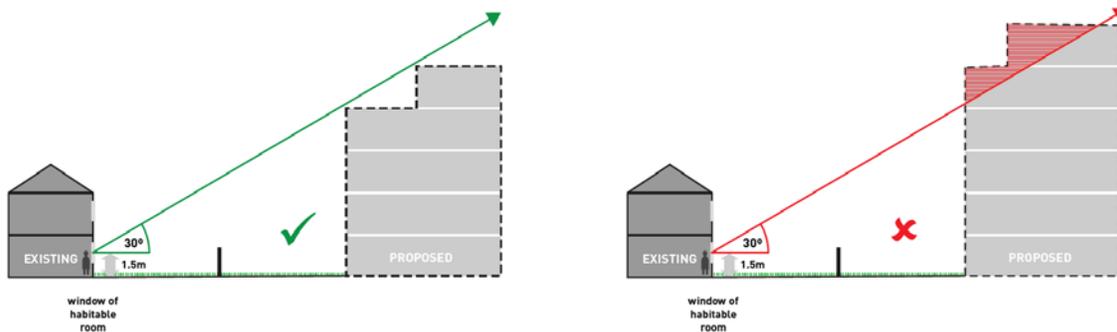


- 2.6. Windows to side elevations may be designed to direct views in certain ways or provided with obscure glazing and fixed shut to avoid overlooking in other directions.
- 2.7. Main windows should normally be positioned in the front and rear elevations (to habitable rooms) with secondary windows to the side (to non-habitable rooms and circulation spaces).
- 2.8. Windows are encouraged where they adjoin the public realm, to support passive surveillance.

**Light angle distances**

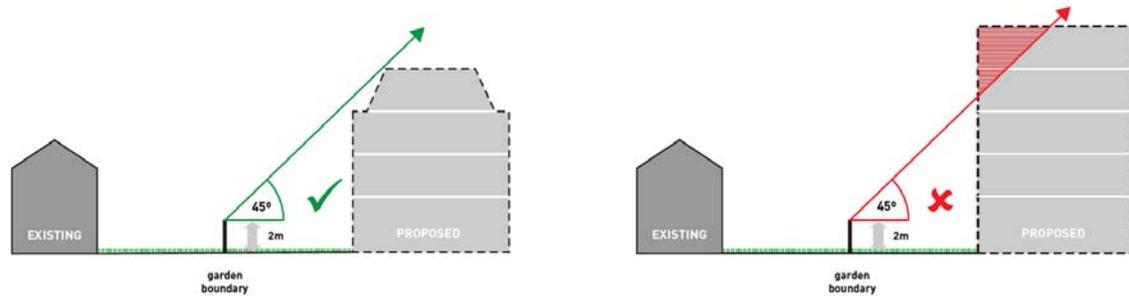
- 2.9. New development should be set below a line of 30-degrees from the nearest habitable room window of an adjoining existing property (the '30-degree rule'— see Fig. 2.3 below).

**Figure 2.3: Development above the 30-degree line will impact upon the habitable windows of adjoining properties**



2.10. Where proposed development adjoins private amenity/garden areas, the height of the development should be set below a line of 45-degrees at the garden edge, measured from a height of 2 metres above the ground (the '45-degree rule'– see Fig. 2.4 below).

Figure 2.4: Development above the 45-degree line will impact upon private amenity area of adjoining properties



2.11. Information on light angle distances for extensions to dwellings can be found in the Householder section of this addendum.

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## SECTION 3: AMENITY SPACE AND GARDENS



### 3. AMENITY SPACE AND GARDEN SPACE

The minimum acceptable standards for the size of external private amenity space (rear gardens) for new dwellings are:

Table 1: Minimum Garden/Amenity space standards for new dwellings

No of bedrooms	Garden Space Standard
<b>1 or 2 bedrooms:</b>	50 metres <sup>2</sup>
<b>3 bedrooms:</b>	70 metres <sup>2</sup>
<b>4 bedrooms:</b>	90 metres <sup>2</sup>
<b>5+ bedrooms:</b>	110 metres <sup>2</sup>
<b>Flat (any beds):</b>	20 metres <sup>2</sup> per flat

- 3.1. In order to preserve amenity spaces and gardens, no more than 50% of the original external private amenity space for a dwelling should be built on for extensions, outbuildings or parking areas.
- 3.2. The minimum standard for flats, as shown in table 1 above, could include balcony space and a proportion of informal and formal communal areas (and also public amenity areas if considered appropriate), roof-top gardens, amenity areas above ground floor and children’s play spaces. A lower standard may be considered appropriate if the site is within a 10 minute walking distance of an alternative, appropriate and accessible multi-functional (formal and in-formal) green space.
- 3.3. Flats at ground floor should be provided with a minimum *1.5 metre* deep front garden with an additional *0.5 metre strip* for planting against the public realm. Projecting balconies need to be well-spaced to avoid overshadowing of balconies below.
- 3.4. Communal amenity spaces should be designed with clear landscape proposals and will be expected to create a usable and attractive environment, including tree planting and landscaping.
- 3.5. Private amenity space should be positioned and continue to receive a minimum of 30% direct sunshine time would be received in most of the space on the shortest day of the year (e.g. if 7h45m of sunlight could be received on the shortest day, the majority of the space should receive at least 2h20m of sunlight).
- 3.6. Low decorative railings or low walls are suitable boundaries for front gardens. Higher walls and fences and high hedges are generally not suitable as they obscure visibility, cause overshadowing and deter planting. However, higher walls and fences may be allowed if they are in character with nearby boundary treatment or are along the rear or side boundaries of gardens.

## SECTION 4: HOUSEHOLDER GUIDANCE



## 4. HOUSEHOLDER

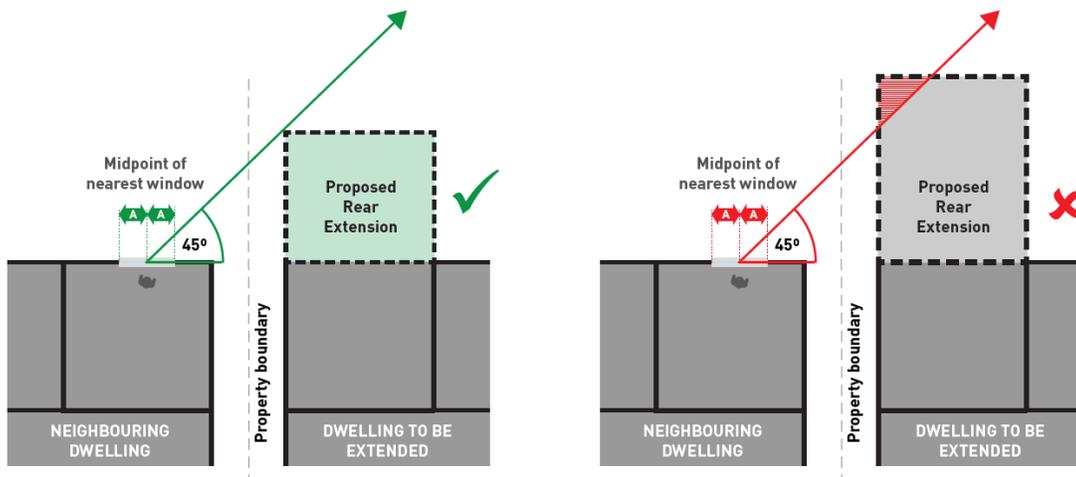
*This addendum should be read in conjunction with the existing Design Guide in respect of householder extensions and alterations. It provides guidance in addition to that already set out in Section 4.12 of the Design Guide.*

### General extension principles

- 4.1. For all householder development, dwellings should remain well-proportioned, respecting local character and using building materials which are durable and attractive.
- 4.2. In the context of this addendum, extensions also include conservatories, new garages, loft conversions and porches.
- 4.3. All planning applications for extensions and alterations will be considered on their individual merits.
- 4.4. Proposed extensions should:
  - i. be visually subservient to the original dwelling;
  - ii. be constructed with materials and features matching the original dwelling, incorporating energy efficiency measures;
  - iii. retain privacy with regards to overlooking from adjoining properties;
  - iv. retain daylight levels to ensure there is no loss of daylight or overshadowing of adjoining properties, particularly loss of light to main windows serving habitable rooms such as living or dining rooms (see para 4.5 below for light angle calculation);
  - v. ensure outlook from adjoining properties is retained;
  - vi. have a roof type(s) determined by the form of the main roof of the original dwelling, matching pitch angles and materials used on the main roof;
  - vii. ensure eaves and gutters do not overhang the boundary, to avoid possible maintenance and ownership problems;
  - viii. avoid a sense of enclosure or overbearing impact on adjoining properties;
  - ix. avoid being designed with side windows (unless facing the public realm, in which case side windows are encouraged);
  - x. ensure windows are of a similar design to that of the original dwelling and are positioned in a way which would line up with those on the original dwelling;

- xi. ensure Green Infrastructure which contributes to the local amenity is retained;
  - xii. take land levels into consideration.
- 4.5. For all extensions, the availability of daylight into an existing window on an adjoining property, which provides the only means of light for a habitable room, should be unaffected. This should be measured from a 45-degree angle from the mid-point of the horizontal sill of the relevant window – see Fig. 4.1 below.

**Figure 4.1: Development beyond the 45-degree line will impact upon the light of adjoining properties**



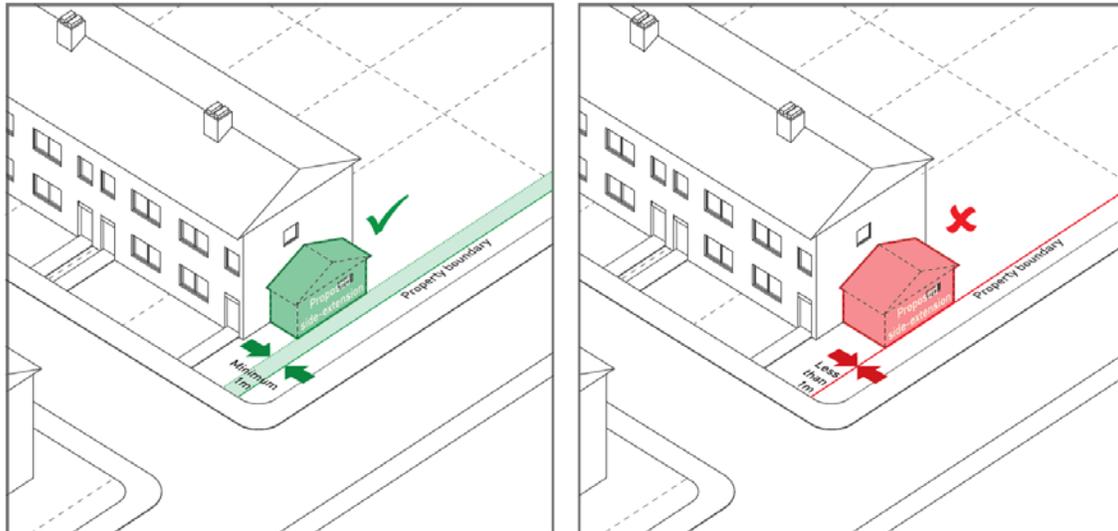
- 4.6. As set out in the amenity standards section, in order to preserve amenity spaces and gardens, no more than 50% of the original external private amenity space for a dwelling should be built on for extensions, outbuildings or parking areas.

### Side extensions

- 4.7. Proposals for side extensions should comply with the existing Design Guide requirements and paragraph 4.8 below.
- 4.8. Proposed single or double-storey side extensions to corner properties must retain a gap of at least 1 metre between the extension and the boundary which adjoins the public realm – see Fig. 4.2 overleaf.

*Document continues overleaf...*

**Figure 4.2 – Minimum 1 metre gap between single / double storey side extension and property boundary**



### **Rear extensions**

- 4.9. Proposals for rear extensions should comply with the existing Design Guide requirements and paragraphs 4.10 to 4.14 below.
- 4.10. Where a proposed rear extension would be visible from the street, for example if the house is on a corner, the scale and form of the extension should not negatively impact the street-scene.
- 4.11. Height can have a significant impact on the light into a neighbour's home. Therefore, the maximum height allowed for a flat roof is *3 metres* on the boundary including parapets. If a pitched roof is proposed, the maximum permitted height is *4 metres*.
- 4.12. In general the depth of rear extensions will not normally exceed *4 metres*. This is however subject to other considerations set out in this addendum and Design Guide including the loss of garden space and impact on privacy and light of neighbouring properties.
- 4.13. Two-storey rear extensions to flat-backed rear elevations of terraced and semi-detached properties are likely to cause unacceptable light loss to adjoining dwellings. However, subject to aspect, such proposals may be acceptable if the adjoining neighbour has a similar extension or if the rear elevations of the dwellings have different projecting elevations.
- 4.14. The roof form of rear extensions should have a roof type(s) determined by the form of the main roof of the original dwelling.

### **Dormer Windows and Velux Windows**

- 4.15. Proposals for dormer and velux windows should comply with the existing Design Guide requirements and paragraphs 4.16 to 4.18 below.
- 4.16. Velux windows may be acceptable on front elevations provided the materials are sympathetic with existing roof finishes.
- 4.17. Dormer windows ('dormers') are, as a principle, uncharacteristic of Harlow's residential areas and are not likely to be permitted where they are visible from the public realm.
- 4.18. Dormers should be set down from the ridge by at least 0.3m and must be set up from the eaves line by at least 0.5m, measured along the roof plane.
- 4.19. Additionally, where a dwelling adjoins another dwelling, the dormer must be set in by at least 0.3m from the boundary of the adjoining dwelling.
- 4.20. Where a clear rhythm of fenestration is established the position and proportion of dormer windows should respond to existing windows.

### **Roof Forms**

- 4.21. The existing Design Guide states that *'No alteration to a roof will be allowed to alter the existing ridge unless the property can be viewed in isolation. Proposed roof alterations that diverge from the prevailing roofline should not be visible from the public realm'*.
- 4.22. This is still the case, however alterations to the ridge may be considered acceptable if the proposal relates to a terrace with stepped heights and is required for insulation purposes.

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## SECTION 5: CLIMATE CHANGE



## 5. CLIMATE CHANGE

- 5.1. Effective spatial planning is an important part of a successful response to climate change as it can influence the emission of greenhouse gases. In doing so, local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment. Planning can also help increase resilience to climate change impact through the location, mix and design of development.
- 5.2. Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework and is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Policy PL3 of the Harlow Local Development Plan expects high standards of sustainable design and construction and efficient energy use in new development. This element of the Design Guide addendum provides further information on how to implement the principles of Policy PL3 within new development. It should also be read with the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) *Sustainability Guidance and Checklist*. The checklist provides practical and technical guidance on how to apply sustainability indicators and policies (environmental, social, and economic) in the HGGT Vision and partner authorities Plans to new major developments in the Garden Town.
- 5.3. A well-planned development should incorporate the production of renewable energy into the design of its buildings. This could be achieved, for example, through the installation of suitable PV/solar panels on south-facing roofs (in particular sloping roofs) or the use of solar water heating equipment on roofs.
- 5.4. To maximise solar receipts and reduce shading, tall buildings in a development should be located to the north of the site. Tall buildings, in particular, have significant opportunities for the production of renewable energy. This could be achieved through the installation of the methods mentioned above, as well as the use of vertical-axis wind turbines.
- 5.5. Some building designs have inherently different energy requirements to others. For example, flats and terraces are generally more energy efficient than detached or semi-detached dwellings because they have fewer external walls relative to living space from which heat can escape.
- 5.6. Well-placed deciduous trees can increase the shading and natural cooling of buildings and spaces during the summer months and allow more natural light and heat to be received during the winter months after the leaves have fallen and when demand for heating and lighting is highest. Tree planting can also be used to shelter buildings from the wind and minimise unwanted cooling.
- 5.7. The slope or topography of a site should be considered. Partially or fully building into a slope or setting a building into the ground will enhance thermal buffering.

- 5.8. A compact urban form is generally more energy efficient as there is less opportunity for heat to escape. However, this needs to be balanced with the need to avoid the Urban Heat Island effect (see more information on this later in this section).
- 5.9. A compact form can sometimes lead to deeper floor plans which then can lead to poor natural lighting and ventilation: where this is the case it can be offset by including central atriums or sun tunnels.
- 5.10. Planting can be used to create a more favourable microclimate and help to manage flood risk; strategically sited tree belts can provide shelter from prevailing winds and shade in the summer without blocking light in the winter. Use of native, non-invasive plant species are often most valuable to local wildlife and have the further benefit of being able to thrive and sustain the local soil and climate conditions.
- 5.11. The prevailing wind should be a consideration in site design as exposure to cold winds will increase heat loss and energy use. Conversely in the summer, gentle breezes can be used positively within design to enhance natural ventilation improving comfort levels and reducing energy use on mechanical cooling systems.
- 5.12. Shelter belts (wind breaks) may be used to protect buildings from excessive winds. Shelter belts should be set out in a convex layout against the prevailing wind direction, rather than concave, to deflect the wind instead of blocking it. They should be dense enough to reduce wind speeds by allowing some wind to pass through but not block the wind in its entirety as this can result in an airflow accelerating over the top of the trees and descending in a turbulent fashion on the building.

### **Flexibility and adaptation**

- 5.13. Buildings should be designed from the outset to be flexible to accommodate changing needs (including family size, home working, old age and disability). This will reduce the need for refurbishment and extensions and will prolong the life of the building.
- 5.14. This is particularly the case where buildings are designed to occupy a specific niche, such as student housing. Alongside this, buildings built today will need to become zero carbon in the future. Buildings should be designed to enable, and not impede, future retrofit measures that improve energy efficiency or allow the use of zero carbon energy.

### **Passive solar gain, passive cooling and overheating**

- 5.15. Passive solar gain refers to the process where a building is heated by the sun, either directly from sunlight passing through a window, or indirectly as sunlight warms the external fabric of the building and the heat travels to the interior. Passive solar gain can reduce the need for mechanical heating, which in turn reduces energy use and carbon emissions. Whilst passive solar gain can, therefore, reduce the carbon emissions associated with heating, if used incorrectly it can lead to overheating, which in turn can lead to the use of mechanical cooling equipment.

- 5.16. Mechanical cooling increases energy consumption and requires maintenance, resulting in costs and carbon emissions. Mechanical cooling units also produce heat that requires dissipation. The need for mechanical cooling can be avoided or lessened by designing-in passive ventilation and passive cooling measures. Developments should not incorporate mechanical cooling unless passive measures have been fully explored and appraised and proposals that include mechanical cooling should clearly demonstrate that passive measures would not be adequate.
- 5.17. Key factors that influence passive solar gain include the physical characteristics of the site, immediate surroundings, orientation of buildings, external design, internal layout and the construction materials used.
- 5.18. Orientation and layout of habitable rooms, and window size and orientation, should be carefully considered in relation to the path of the sun.
- 5.19. Rooms that are most frequently occupied should benefit from a southerly aspect, but with appropriate measures to avoid overheating. Rooms that include a concentration of heat generating appliances (e.g. kitchens) or are less frequently occupied (e.g. bathrooms) should be located in the cooler part of the building, generally the northern side. Zonal heating and ventilation systems and controls can be used allowing areas subject to high solar gain to occupy their own temperature control zone.
- 5.20. Conservatories and atria can be used to assist natural ventilation in the summer by drawing warm air upward to roof vents, and to collect heat during the spring and autumn.
- 5.21. Projections should be sized and angled appropriately so that they provide shading from the sun during the hottest part of the year when the sun is at its highest in the sky, but allow solar gain in the colder months when the sun is at a lower angle. Deep projections that overshadow windows should be avoided, particularly on south facing elevations.
- 5.22. Where there is a chance that overheating can occur (e.g. due to large expanses of glazing on roofs and south facing elevations), design measures such as roof overhangs, brise soleil<sup>1</sup>, external shuttering, photochromatic and thermochromic glass and a lighter colour palette can help.
- 5.23. Buildings should be designed for passive ventilation, such as cross-ventilation with windows located on opposite walls and/or roof mounted turbines or wind cowls that assist with circulation of air by drawing air through windows or top floor openings. An alternative is passive stack ventilation (PSV) which uses pressure differences to draw in fresh air from outside to replace rising warm air which is released from the top of the building. A heat exchanger can be placed where the air escapes the building to

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<sup>1</sup> This is an architectural feature of a building that reduces heat gain by deflecting sunlight. It allows low-level sun to enter a building in the mornings, evenings and during winter but cut out direct light during summer.

reduce heat loss.

### **Passive lighting**

- 5.24. Passive (or natural) lighting reduces the energy used for artificial lighting and creates a healthier internal environment. Issues to consider include how much of the sky is visible through a window, the dimensions of the interior living/working space and distance from the window, and the proportion of glazed surfaces.
- 5.25. The depth of the room is an important factor in determining the amount of natural light received. Naturally dark rooms may be lit naturally through measures such as sun tubes which 'pipe' sunlight from light areas to internal darker areas.
- 5.26. Care is needed to avoid creating spaces with excessive heat gain. This could occur if solar gain is combined with the heat associated with internal lighting and, in the case of commercial buildings, high occupancy and operating equipment such as machinery and computers. A higher proportion of glazing on north facing surfaces can increase natural lighting without significantly increasing solar gain, thereby minimising excessive heat gain.
- 5.27. Glare created by natural or artificial light can be uncomfortable for people both inside and outside a building. This can be minimised if considered early in the design process through building layout (e.g. low eaves height) or building design (e.g. blinds, brise soleil screening).

### **Rainwater harvesting**

- 5.28. Rainwater harvesting is the collection of rainwater directly from a surface it falls on (e.g. a roof). Once collected and stored it can be used for non-potable purposes such as watering gardens, supplying washing machines and flushing toilets, thereby reducing consumption of potable water.
- 5.29. Potable water is produced through a purification process and is pumped over large distances, both of which require energy and result in embodied carbon that is not present in water harvested locally.
- 5.30. In a residential development, rainwater can be captured for domestic use using water butts connected to a down pipe. Larger systems can use water stored in underground water tanks. Schemes should be designed to include space for water storage. In residential developments, down pipes should be carefully placed so that water collection and use is convenient for residents.

### **Greywater re-use**

- 5.31. Water that is recycled from bathrooms and kitchens for non-potable uses is known as greywater. Greywater systems must ensure treatment is carried out on a regular basis to prevent a build-up of bacteria, and some systems are powered, which entails an

energy cost. As a result, greywater reuse is generally less preferable than water use minimisation measures.

- 5.32. Water recycling systems are better suited to new developments rather than retrofitting in existing buildings because of the excavation required for storage tanks and changes needed to the plumbing system, and they are generally more cost effective for new developments and developments of a larger scale.
- 5.33. Recycling systems should be backed up by a mains supply or a sufficiently large reserve storage system to meet higher demands during dry spells. Storage tanks will need an overflow to allow excess water to be released which should be able to flow into a soakaway.

### **Flooding**

- 5.34. Well-designed adaptation can have additional benefits for water quality and resource management, and enhance public spaces. Impermeable surfaces can be replaced by SuDS, such as permeable pavement, gravel or grass so that water can soak away. Within parks and greenspaces, storage areas, such as infiltration ponds, can be constructed.
- 5.35. The use of green open space and green roofs in developments can reduce runoff and ameliorate pressure on drainage systems during heavy rainfall, as well as widening drains to increase drainage capacity and managing flood pathways and removing 'pinchpoints' so that heavy rainfall can drain away.
- 5.36. Within buildings, flood resilient measures can be incorporated into the design, including raising floor levels, electrical fittings and equipment; rainproofing and overhangs to prevent infiltration of heavy rain around doors and windows; and temporary free-standing barriers which hold back floodwater from properties.

### **Urban heat island effect**

- 5.37. The urban heat island effect refers to the situation where urban areas are substantially warmer than rural or less-urban areas surrounding them. It occurs due to the shape of the urban environment and the replacement of natural land cover with dense, hard, impervious and generally dark surfaces that absorb large amounts of solar energy and trap heat. The urban heat island effect increases energy costs (e.g., for air conditioning), air pollution levels, and heat-related illness and mortality.
- 5.38. Choice of materials should reflect the need to avoid overheating. Introducing natural green and blue features can both reduce heat build-up and allow ambient heat to escape, and trees can provide shading that cools surfaces and reduces ambient air temperature through evaporation of water via the leaves.
- 5.39. Urban places can be designed to provide areas of coolness through the shading of streets and public spaces. Urban schemes should demonstrate that the urban heat

island effect has been addressed and that open spaces and green and blue infrastructure will reduce the effect and provide respite during times of excessive heat.

## Cabinet Policy Development Working Group Work Plan 2021/22

Work	Thursday 5 August 2021	Thursday 7 October 2021	Thursday 25 November 2021 (New Date)	Thursday 13 January 2022	Thursday 10 March 2022
Local Council Tax Support Scheme			Report		
Treasury Management Strategy			Report		
Housing Strategy			Report		
Climate Change Strategy		Report		Report	
Transport Strategy	Report				
Town Plan	Report		Report	Report	
Carbon Management Plan	Report				
Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation		Report			
Open Space Supplementary Planning Document – Approval for Consultation		Report			
Health and Wellbeing Strategy		Report			

Local Plan – Statement of Community Involvement		Report			