



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 3rd March, 2016

7.00 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 24 February 2016

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Sandra Hancock in Democracy and Governance on 01923 278377 or by email to legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk .

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

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The Committee Rooms are on the first floor of the Town Hall and a lift is available. Induction loops are available in the Committee Rooms and the Council Chamber.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor K Collett (Chair)

Councillor J Dhindsa (Vice-Chair)

Councillors K Crout, K Hastrick, A Joynes, A Khan, A Rindl, L Topping and D Walford

AGENDA

PART A - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2016 to be submitted and signed.

Copies of the minutes of this meeting are usually available seven working days following the meeting.

(All minutes are available on the Council's [website](#).)

4. CALL-IN

To consider any Executive decisions which have been called in by the requisite number of Members.

5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (Pages 7 - 12)

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the outstanding actions and questions from previous meetings.

6. UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND MEASURES (IN-HOUSE SERVICES) - QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER) 2015/16 (Pages 13 - 22)

Report of the Partnerships and Performance Section Head

This report provides the results of the performance measures identified for Watford Borough Council's in house services for Quarter 3 2015/16.

7. EXECUTIVE DECISION PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 23 - 36)

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the latest edition of the Executive Decision Progress Report and consider whether any further information is required.

8. HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Hastrick, the Council's appointed representative to the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee to provide an update.

Councillor Joynes, a member of the County Council's 'Care Quality Commission Report Monitoring of West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust Scrutiny Topic Group', to provide an update on the Topic Group's work.

Scrutiny Panels and Task Groups

9. SCRUTINY PROPOSAL - NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS (Pages 37 - 46)

Report of the Committee and Scrutiny Officer

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider a scrutiny proposal from the Head of Democracy and Governance and whether to establish a Task Group.

10. MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT
(Pages 47 - 114)

Report of the Committee and Scrutiny Officer

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the Task Group's final report and consider when it wishes to review the progress of the recommendations.

11. BUDGET PANEL

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Budget Panel has met on the following occasion –

- 23 February 2016

The minutes are available on the Council's website –
www.watford.gov.uk/budgetscrutiny

The Chair of Budget Panel to provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee.

12. OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel met on the following occasion –

- 24 February 2016

The minutes are available on the Council's website -

<http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=223>

The Chair of Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel to provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee.

13. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Community Safety Task Group has not met. Its next meeting will be on –

- Tuesday 22 March 2016

The Task Group's minutes are available on the Council's website -

<http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=209>

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Wednesday 23 March 2016 (For call-in only)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Outstanding Actions and questions

Action to be carried out	Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer	
Performance Report					
PI 51	<p><u>CS4 No. of households in temporary accommodation</u></p> <p>Are the people placed in temporary accommodation only from Watford or also from other areas?</p>	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Interim Housing Section Head	18 November 2015	8 January 2016	<p>According to legislation, there is a test of local connection for homeless households. Households we place in temporary accommodation will usually meet that test, there are a small number of exemptions to this e.g. families fleeing domestic violence.</p> <p>The reported figures relate to the local authorities responsibilities and not to where they are accommodated. Most Councils, including our own, will have families placed within and outside their borough boundaries.</p>

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
PI 52	<p><u>CS4 No. of households in temporary accommodation</u></p> <p>How does Watford compare to similar size authorities?</p>	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Interim Housing Section Head	18 November 2015	8 January 2016	<p>The size of a local authority is just one factor that will impact on the levels of homelessness in a local authority. Other factors include: (i) the population density and whether the local authority is rural or urban (ii) levels of deprivation (iii) tenure mix in terms of proportions of owner occupation, social housing and private renting (iv) house prices and rents (v) linked with deprivation the impact of welfare reform, particularly with regard to the affordability of the private rented sector for those dependent on housing benefit.</p> <p>In terms of the county Broxbourne has similar levels of temporary accommodation usage as Watford, although less densely populated, less deprived and a significantly smaller private rented sector. When compared to other districts that share similar characteristics to Watford our temporary accommodation usage is comparable.</p>

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
PI 53	<p><u>CS4 No. of households in temporary accommodation</u></p> <p>Considering the decrease in usage by Dacorum, are there any lessons Watford can learn?</p>	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Interim Housing Section Head	18 November 2015	8 January 2016	<p>Officers remain outwardly focussed in terms of good practice being operated by other local authorities.</p> <p>In terms of Dacorum the most recent statistics indicate that temporary accommodation numbers have risen quite steeply increasing from 44 in June 2015 to 79 in September 2015. Many other Councils have experienced an increase over the previous quarter.</p> <p>Dacorum and Watford are dissimilar across a number of key factors. Dacorum is semi-rural in nature with a population density of 1,676 per sq. mile compared to 10,084 per sq mile in Watford. Dacorum has 13,045 units of social housing compared to 5,987 in Watford. Dacorum has a smaller private rented sector than Watford, much of which remains affordable within housing benefit levels.</p>
Executive Decision Progress Report					
ED 6	Officers to be asked if they monitored the cumulative effect of agreed schemes on Watford.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	17 September 2014	31 October 2014	<p>The Managing Director and Head of Regeneration and Development have been contacted regarding this enquiry.</p> <p>The Committee and Scrutiny Officer to make further enquiries.</p>

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
ED 8	Forward the report for the Portfolio Holder about the release of covenant for land at Leggatts Campus be forwarded to Councillor Khan.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	21 January 2016	29 February 2016	<p>The decision was in fact made by the Programme Manager on 30 November 2015. All Councillors were informed of the decision and provided with the reasons. The deadline for call-in was 8 December 2015. The decision was not called in.</p> <p>Following a discussion with the Head of Democracy and Governance, the Committee and Scrutiny Officer emailed Councillor Khan asking him to provide the reasons he wishes to see the report, 'need to know'. Councillor Khan has responded and his request has been forwarded to the Legal and Democracy Section Head for approval.</p>
Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee					
HSC 6	Report on transportation of people to hospital in West Herts to be circulated to the Scrutiny Committee.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Councillor Hastrick	21 January 2016	29 February 2016	Awaiting report.
HSC 7	Report on the East of England Ambulance Service to be circulated to the Scrutiny Committee.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Councillor Hastrick	21 January 2016	29 February 2016	Email sent to the Scrutiny Committee with the link to the County Council's website.

Action to be carried out	Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer	
Big Events					
BE 1	Information to be circulated to the Scrutiny Committee on the Big Skate once it is available.	Culture and Play Section Head	21 January 2016	29 February 2016	Email sent to the Culture and Play Section Head for clarification when the information will be available.
Management of Conservation Areas Task Group					
MCA 2	Publicity posters to be provided to those councillors who had not yet received a copy.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	21 January 2016	23 January 2016	On 23 January 2016 copies of the poster were produced and distributed to all those councillors who had not previously been given a copy.

*PART A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 3 March 2016
Report of: Partnerships and Performance Section Head
Title: Update on the council's performance indicators and measures (in-house services) – quarter 3: (October to December) 2015/16

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides the results for the performance measures identified for Watford Borough Council's in-house services for Quarter 3 2015/16.

1.2 These performance measures play a critical role in ensuring that the council's in-house services are well managed and delivering the quality of service expected by residents and customers. Analysis of the results highlights areas of strong performance and, more importantly, which areas might require some additional focus to improve performance. In these latter cases, consideration needs to be given to the reasons for under-performance and to steps that might support improvement

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To note and comment on the performance of the council's performance measures for those areas where the council directly delivers the service / area of work at the end of Quarter 3 2015/16.

2.2 To advise of any indicators where additional trend information or benchmarking would be helpful for members' understanding of the council's performance.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact:

Kathryn Robson, Partnerships and Performance Section Head

telephone extension: 8077 email: kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

3.0 **Background**

Watford BC regularly collects and monitors performance data for a wide range of its service areas. This is to ensure that services are performing at an acceptable standard. It helps highlight areas of good performance as well as those areas which might require some additional focus to improve performance. This performance data and information is reported to the council's Leadership Team on a regular basis and to Cabinet and either Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel on a quarterly basis. Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinise those service areas that are delivered directly by Watford BC.

3.1 **Performance of 'in-house' service performance measures as of Quarter 3 2015-16**

3.1.1 Set out in Appendix A is an update on performance to the end of Quarter 3 2015-16 of performance measures for the council's in-house services. Within this, there are three main areas of council activity:

- Housing
- Customer Services
- Planning

3.2 **Analysing results to assess performance**

3.2.1 The performance report in Appendix A as well as showing the results for the quarter also shows some relevant analysis to provide context for these results. This analysis relates to how well the measure or indicator has performed in relation to the target set for the quarter and how performance for this quarter compares to previous periods (trend information).

It is important to note that a low result is good / better performance for some measures (such as households in temporary accommodation). For others, a high result is good / better (such as time planning applications, calls answered within agreed service levels).

3.2.2 **Performance against target**

Targets are set for the majority of the indicators at the start of the financial year. These are usually based on previous performance, however, services are expected to set targets that are challenging and help drive improved performance. Targets have not been set for all measures and so it is not possible in every case to show this analysis.

In the report, those performance measures that are not performing against target are indicated either by:

- a 😞 (under-performing by a variance from target of up to 10%) or
- a ! (under-performing by a variance from target over 10%).

Where a measure is performing well (on or above target) it is highlighted with:

- a 😊 (any positive variance)

3.2.3 **Performance against previous periods (trend information)**

In addition, the report provides trend information. Where possible current performance has been compared with the performance for the same quarter last year (Q3 2014/15) and with the previous quarter (Q2 2015/16). This information can help provide context on the relative performance of an indicator and help assess whether there are any trends emerging, which might be of concern. Trend analysis shows whether performance has:

- Improved since the previous period – shown by a ‘↑’ and with the relevant previous period result as an indication of the extent of improvement
- Declined since the previous period – shown by a ‘↓’ and with the relevant previous period result as an indication of the extent of decline.
- Stayed the same since the previous period – shown by a ‘↔’

In the report the periods shown are, as detailed above, the previous year or previous quarter unless indicated otherwise.

The actual result for the previous period is also shown (in square brackets [*result*]) so the extent of the trend can be assessed.

3.3 **Overview of performance**

Committee will note that results for complaint handling are available for this quarter following a number of previous periods where results were not available.

Planning performance remains strong and the work undertaken by the housing service to address issues around homelessness is showing signs of impacting on numbers albeit that the pressures on the service remain very high and challenging.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS.**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Head of Finance) comments that there are no financial implications within this report.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications within this report.


Appendices

Appendix A – Watford BC - Measures of Performance – Progress report as of
end of quarter 3 2015/16 (in-house services)


Background papers: Corporate Plan 2015-19

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE (in-house services)






October to December (Quarter 3) 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	 % variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES									
CS1	Per capita reduction in CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations (over 5 yr period) (Annual indicator)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Annual indicator – final result for 2014/15 not yet available.
CS2	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly tipping)	Effective [Result for 2014/15 = effective]	-	-	-	-	-	-	Annual indicator. Whilst this indicator is only measured annually, the council and Veolia work together to tackle this issue both in terms of clearing flytips and taking forward any prosecutions where necessary.
CS3	Affordable homes on identified sites (Biannual indicator)	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	Not reported in Q3. Homes identified for 2015/16 are: Tolpits Lane (WCHT): 10





Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance (in-house services) – Progress report as of quarter 3 – 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	 % variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
									Thorpe Cres (WCHT): 2 Dodd Green and North Western Ave - Leggatts Site (Aldwyck): 15 52-56 High Street (Home Group): 17
CS4	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	200	200	227	N/A	! [13.5%]	↓ [Q3 : 14/15] [176]	↓ [Q2 : 15/16] [218]	The target was exceeded due to increased demand and a reduced level of permanent supply. However some positive signs in that the rate of growth has slowed considerably.
CS5	Number of private sector units secured for use under HomeLet	20 for Apr/Sept 50 for Oct /Mar	-	6	9	-	↑ [Q3 : 14/15] [4]	↑ [Q2 : 15/16] [3]	A revised Landlord incentive package has been agreed and was launched in December 2015. A greater number of properties have been identified as a result.






Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance (in-house services) – Progress report as of quarter 3 – 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	 % variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
CS6	Total number of households shared bed and breakfast accommodation and nightly lets.	40	40	37	N/A	 [7.5%]	Revised definition for this indicator for 2015/15	↑ [Q2 : 15/16] [40]	
	The number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation and nightly paid lets who are pregnant/with dependent children	25	25	8	N/A	 [40.0%]	Revised definition for this indicator for 2015/15	↑ [Q2 : 15/16] [15]	5 of which are review cases and not subject to the 6 week rule
CS7	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	15	15	12	-	 [20.0%]	↑ [Q3 : 14/15] [22]	-	This indicator is reported in Q3. New Hope regularly updates the council on the number of rough sleepers, however, so there is continual mangement of this area of housing activity. This is a 'snapshot' recorded on one night in November 2015.
CS8	CSC service levels 95% calls answered in 20 secs	95%	95%	99% [Dec-15]	N/A	 [2.1%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	↑ [Q2 : 15/16] [82.0%]	

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance (in-house services) – Progress report as of quarter 3 – 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	 % variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
CS9	Long Waits' for calls received to CSC Long wait = calls not answered within 2 minutes	CSC 3% or less	CSC 3% or less	1% [Dec-15]	N/A	 [66.7%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	↓ [Q2 : 15/16] [6%]	
CS10	CSC service levels 95% all calls answered	95%	95%	99% [Dec-15]	N/A	 [2.1%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	↑ [Q2 : 15/16] [97.0%]	
CS11	Calls resolved at first point of contact	90%	90%	97% inc transfers 60% exc transfers	N/A	 [7.8%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	↔ [Q2 : 15/16] [97.0%]	

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance (in-house services) – Progress report as of quarter 3 – 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	   % variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
CS12	Average waiting times in the CSC for Revenues and Benefits enquiries	-	=	Revenues Result to follow Revenues team: Result to follow Benefits CSC team: Result to follow Benefits Team:- Result to follow	-	=	-		Results to follow.
CS13	Complaints resolved at stage one	90%	90%	100%	-	 [11.1%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	.
CS14	% of stage 1 complaints resolved within 10 days	80%	80%	50%	-	 [37.5%]	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	Not reported due to issues with Lagan	

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance (in-house services) – Progress report as of quarter 3 – 2015/16

Ref	Indicator	Target for year	Profile for period (Q3)	Results for period (Q3)	Cumulative result (Q3)	% variance	Trend since last year (Q3 2014/15)	Trend since last period (Q2 2015/16)	Comment
REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT									
RD1	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' applications (% determined within 13 weeks)	85%	85%	100.0%	-	[17.6%]	↑ [Q3 : 14/15] [66.67%]	↔ [Q2 : 15/16] [100%]	
RD2	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications (% determined within 8 weeks)	90%	90%	93.7%	-	[5.5%]	↓ Q3 : 14/15 [100.0%]	↔ [Q2 : 15/16] [93.7%]	
RD3	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' applications (% determined within 8 weeks)	90%	90%	97.0%	-	[9.4%]	↓ Q3 : 14/15 [100.0%]	↓ [Q2 : 15/16] [98.5%]	

on target/in budget **or** above target

not on target/ over budget but there is no cause for concern at this stage.

not on target/ more than 10% variance or £50k over budget and is a cause for concern.

Watford Borough Council

Executive Decision Progress Report

May 2015 – May 2016

Contact Officer: Sandra Hancock
Committee and Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01923 278377

Email: legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk

All officer decisions are available on the [Officer Decision Register](#) or on the full [Decision Register](#). Only officer key decisions are shown below. Further information about [forthcoming decisions](#) are available online.

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Award contract for provision of CMS technology to support delivery of a new website	Community and Customer Services	Head of Community and Customer Services	1 July 2015	Key decision In accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rule 15 the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was notified that the decision was to be taken by Head of Community and Customer Services on 1 July. Agreed by Head of Community and Customer Services on 1 July 2015 Not Called-in
Croxley Rail Link	Managing Director	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Not called in
Sutton, Gade and Church car park variation	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Approval of strategy for Watford Business Park	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision and Part B This report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it included commercially sensitive information. Considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Not called in
Financial Outturn for 2014/15	Director of Finance	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 (following consideration by Budget Panel on 7 July) Not called in
Watford Health Campus – to approve the revised business plan for the LABV	Managing Director	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Approval to extend lease at Ascot Road	Regeneration and Development	Portfolio Holder	August 2015	<p>Key Decision</p> <p>The Chairman of the Council, in the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, agreed that the decision could be dealt with in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 of the Constitution, "Special Urgency".</p> <p>The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contained commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>Approved by Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development on 29 September 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Approval of Economic Development Strategy	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	July 2015	<p>Key decision</p> <p>Originally due to be considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015</p> <p>Considered by Cabinet on 7 September 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Approval of Commissioning Framework	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	September 2015	<p>Key decision</p> <p>Considered by Cabinet on 7 September 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Cemetery Review	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	September 2015	Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 7 September 2015 Not called in
Award of contract to provide the Rough Sleeper Outreach Contract	Community and Customer Services	Head of Community and Customer Services	September 2015	Key decision and Part B (in part) Some of the documents are covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as they contain commercially sensitive information. Agreed by Head of Community and Customer Services on 17 September 2015 Not called in
Update on the progress of the Cassiobury Park Heritage Lottery Fund Project and to sign off and approve contract for construction work.	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet Mayor	October 2015	Key decision and Part B (in part) The appendix to the report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercial information relating to tender. This decision was originally due to be taken by Cabinet on 5 October, due to the cancellation of Cabinet the decision was made by the Mayor. Agreed by Mayor on 6 October 2015 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Addition to Capital Programme – Watford Business Park	Managing Director	Council	October 2015	Agreed by Council on 14 October 2015 Call-in not applicable
Boundary Review Report	Democracy and Governance	Council	October 2015	Agreed by Council on 14 October 2015 Call-in not applicable
Agree response to Government's Local Plan Expert Panel	Regeneration and Development	Portfolio Holder	October 2015	Non-key decision Agreed by Portfolio Holder on 20 October 2015 Call-in not applicable
Council modernising its branding	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services	October 2015	Non-key decision Considered by Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services on 21 October 2015 Call-in not applicable
Local Plan Part 2 – additional policy on tall buildings	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2015	Non-key decision Considered by Cabinet on 2 November 2015 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Release of covenant for land at Leggatts Campus	Regeneration and Development	Portfolio Holder	November 2015	<p>Amended</p> <p>Key decision and Part B</p> <p>The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>Considered by Portfolio Holder the Regeneration and Property Section Head on 30 November 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Disposal of the freehold interest in 73-83 and 83b Tolpits Lane, Watford	Regeneration and Development	Portfolio Holder	November 2015	<p>Amended</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Originally due to be considered by Portfolio Holder in November 2015</p> <p>Considered by the Regeneration and Property Section Head on 26 January 2016</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Capita Progress report: to set out the provisional exit plan and approve a procurement exemption	Managing Director	Cabinet	November 2015	<p>Key decision</p> <p>Considered by Cabinet on 30 November 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Business Park Development	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2015	<p>Key decision and Part B</p> <p>The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>Considered by Cabinet on 30 November 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>
29-35 High Street Poundland-Choice Unit New Lease	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2015	<p>Key decision and Part B</p> <p>The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>In accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rule 15 the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was notified that the decision was to be taken by Cabinet in November.</p> <p>Considered by Cabinet on 30 November 2015</p> <p>Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Draft Revenue and Capital Estimates 2016/2019 and Treasury Management Strategy	Finance	Cabinet / Council	January 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January and then Council on 27 January 2016 Call-in not applicable
Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Framework	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	January 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in
Write off National Non-Domestic Rates	Revenues and Benefits	Cabinet	January 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in
Write offs for Housing Benefit overpayments and sundry debtors	Revenues and Benefits	Cabinet		Amended Non-key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Property Investment Strategy	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet / Council	January 2016	<p>Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January and then Council on 27 January 2016 Call-in not applicable</p>
Joint Venture Housing Company	Regeneration and Development and Community and Customer Services	Cabinet	January 2016	<p>Amended Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in</p>
Heritage Buildings in Watford	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	January 2016	<p>Amended Key decision and Part B The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercially sensitive information. Considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Watford's Monitoring Report	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet		Amended Non-key decision Considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Not called in
Procurement of an electric powered staff pool vehicle – Exemption to contract procedure rules	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet		Amended Non-key decision Reported to Cabinet on 18 January 2016 Call-in not applicable
Progress on the Green Spaces Strategy Action Plan	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	February 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2016 Not called in
Skillmakers – start up loan and board membership	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	February 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2016 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Cemetery Strategy	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	February 2016	Amended Key decision Considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2016 Not called in
Procurement of the e-procurement portal – exemption to contract procedure rules	Democracy and Governance	Cabinet		New Non-key decision Considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2016 Call-in not applicable
Lease of the first floor annexe Town Hall complex to Hertfordshire County Council	Regeneration and Development	Portfolio Holder	February 2016	Amended Key decision and Part B The report is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it contains commercially sensitive information. Due to be considered by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development in February 2016.
Local Development Scheme	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet / Council	March 2016	Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March and then Council on 16 March 2016. Call-in will not be applicable

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Skyline – Taller building Supplementary Planning Guidance	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	March 2016	Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March and then Council on 16 March 2016.
Right to Build Register – change to the Executive scheme of delegation	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	March 2016	New Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2016.
Management of Conservation Areas Task Group – Final report	Democracy and Governance	Cabinet	March 2016	New Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2016. It will also be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 March 2016.
Recyclable Material Consortium Contract	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	March 2016	New Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2016.

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy	Community and Customer Services	Cabinet	March 2016	New Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2016.
Council's vision, priorities, values and Corporate Plan for 2016-2020	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	March 2016	New Key decision Due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2016.
Renegotiation of bowls club lease	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	July 2015	Key decision and Part B (commercially sensitive information) Originally due to be considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Report deferred to a later date.
Revenues and Benefits write-offs	Revenues and Benefits	Cabinet	July 2015	Non-key decision Originally due to be considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2015 Withdrawn

PART A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 3 March 2016

Report of: Committee and Scrutiny Officer

Title: Scrutiny Proposal – Review of the Neighbourhood Forums

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with details of a suggestion for a Scrutiny Task Group.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the scrutiny proposal, submitted by the Head of Democracy and Governance, attached at Appendix 1 and whether to establish a Task Group.

2.2 That, if the scrutiny suggestion is agreed, the Task Group commences in the new Municipal Year, 2016/17.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Sandra Hancock,
Committee and Scrutiny Officer
telephone extension: 8377 email: legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Carol Chen, Head of Democracy and Governance

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance has submitted a scrutiny proposal form requesting the review of Neighbourhood Forums including the funding criteria. The proposal is attached at Appendix 1.

3.2 The Mayor has been in discussion with the Head of Democracy and Governance about the funding criteria for Neighbourhood Forums, which are an Executive function.

3.3 The current guidelines were agreed in 2011, with some amendments in 2014.

3.4 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the attached proposal and decide whether to establish a Task Group.

3.5 Following the Borough Elections on 5 May 2016, the Committee and Scrutiny Officer will email all non-Executive Councillors advising them of the proposed Task Group and asking them to inform her if they are

interested in taking part. The names will be presented to the first Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Municipal Year for approval.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no additional budget implications contained in the attached proposals at this stage. Any changes to budgets as a result of the task group review would have to be implemented in accordance with the council's financial procedure rules.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Proposal from the Head of Democracy and Governance

Background Papers

None

File Reference

None

Selection of topics and issues for scrutiny by councillors, officers or members of the public

Anyone wishing to suggest a topic for scrutiny must complete Section 1 of this form.

1. Sources

The following are sources of ideas for the work programme:

- Performance indicators, both national and internal.
- Views of Cabinet and Leadership Team especially in relation to policy subjects.
- The Council's surveys, such as the annual residents' survey.
- The Complaints Report which is compiled annually by the Customer Service Centre.
- Service complaints more widely; although individual cases will not be taken up if a large volume of complaints is received about a single issue then it may be appropriate to pursue the topic.
- Reports of external inspections of services.
- The views of the Council's partners.
- Issues picked up by ward councillors in their locality.
- The Council's Forward Plan

2. Outcomes

Success indicators could include:

- Having identified local needs;
- Having evaluated alternative ways of working/how a service could improve and making recommendations to the Executive or the Council's partners;
- Having developed an awareness of any contractual, economic, legal or structural constraints on Council's or its partners approach.

3. Criteria

To qualify for consideration the topic must meet the following criteria:

- Affect a group or community of people. Scrutiny will not normally look at individual service complaints.
- Relate to a service, event or issue in which Watford Borough Council has a significant stake.
- Not be an issue that Scrutiny has covered during the last year.
- Not be a planning or licensing issue, or any other matter dealt with by another council committee.
- To match one or more of the Council's current priorities.
- To be feasible and able to be completed within the timescale projected for the work.
- There must be availability within the relevant department/service to support the review.
- Be a topic that members wish to scrutinise.

On completion please return to Sandra Hancock, Committee and Scrutiny Officer

By email – sandra.hancock@watford.gov.uk

By post – Legal and Property Services, Watford Borough Council, Town Hall, Watford, WD17 3EX

Suggestions for topics to be scrutinised – evaluation table

A Member, Officer or member of the public suggesting a topic for scrutiny must complete Section1 as fully as possible. Completed tables will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion		A Review of the Neighbourhood Forums including funding criteria
Proposer: Councillor/Officer/Member of public Carol Chen/Mayor Thornhill		
<p>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i> • <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i> • <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>To review the operation of Neighbourhood Forums particularly the use of Neighbourhood Forum budgets.</p> <p>A review of the Neighbourhood Forum Community Engagement Budget criteria.</p> <p>Focus on historic spend and uses of the funding for the future.</p> <p>.</p>	
Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?	The Mayor would like the Funding Guidance to be reviewed.	

What are the specific outcomes you wish to see from the review?

Examples might include:

- *To identify what is being done and what the potential barriers are;*
- *To review relevant performance indicators;*
- *To compare our policies with those of a similar authority;*
- *To assess the environmental/social impacts;*
- *To Benchmark current service provision;*
- *To find out community perceptions and experience;*
- *To identify the gap between provision and need*

Give details

A clear understanding by all members of what they can and what they cannot use the budgets for.

<p>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Questionnaires/Surveys</i> • <i>Site visits</i> • <i>Interviewing witnesses</i> • <i>Research</i> • <i>Performance data</i> • <i>Public hearings</i> • <i>Comparisons with other local authorities</i> 	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Past examples.</p> <p>Other councils (HCC) schemes and their criteria.</p> <p>Views from members including cabinet.</p>
<p>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</p>	
<p>It must affect a group or community of people</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>The Neighbourhood Forums are designed to be a focus for each ward</p>
<p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Each Ward has a budget of £2500 to spend annually</p>

<p>It must not have been a topic of scrutiny within the last 12 months</p> <p><i>There will be exceptions to this arising from notified changing circumstances. Scrutiny will also maintain an interest in the progress of recommendations and issues arising from past reports.</i></p>	<p>Not reviewed in the last 12 months.</p>
<p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p>	<p>Again is an appropriate area for scrutiny</p>
<p>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making Watford a better place to live in 2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth 3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town 4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please confirm which ones</i></p> <p>1,3 and 4</p>

<p>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i>• <i>imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Include details</p> <p>I would suggest it is started if agreed in the next municipal year.</p>
<p>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Are there likely to be any Equality implications which will need to be considered?</p> <p><i>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Age</i> • <i>Disability</i> • <i>Gender reassignment</i> • <i>Pregnancy or maternity</i> • <i>Race</i> • <i>Religion or belief</i> • <i>Sex</i> • <i>Sexual orientation</i> • <i>Marriage or civil partnership (only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)</i> 	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>No. But will depend on any suggested new criteria</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Sign off <i>(It is expected that any Councillor proposing a topic agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee will participate in the Task Group)</i></p>	
<p>Councillor/Officer C. Chen</p>	<p>Date 17.2.16</p>

*PART A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 3 March 2016
Report of: Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Title: Management of Conservation Areas Task Group – final report and recommendations

1.0 **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the Management of Conservation Areas Task Group's final report and recommendations.
- 1.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the report and recommendations, which is attached as Appendix A, prior to its consideration by Cabinet on 7 March 2016.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Management of Conservation Areas Task Group's final report and recommendations be agreed.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Sandra Hancock,
Committee and Scrutiny Officer
telephone extension: 8377
email: legalanddemocratic@waford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Jason McKenzie, Legal and Democracy Section Head

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 In May 2015 Councillor Martins submitted a scrutiny proposal form requesting a review of the town's conservation areas.
- 3.2 In accordance with normal practice the proposal was submitted to the relevant Head of Service for their views. The Head of Regeneration and Development in turn forwarded the proposal to the Planning Policy Team for their comments.
- 3.3 The Senior Planner (Design and Conservation) responded and he suggested that many aspects of the original proposal were already in place.

- 3.4 It was then suggested that a meeting be arranged to discuss the suggestion and to consider whether there were any aspects that could be developed into a review.
- 3.5 A meeting was arranged for 29 June 2015, Councillor Martins, the Head of Regeneration and Development, Senior Planner (Design and Conservation) and Committee and Scrutiny Officer attended the meeting. An updated proposal was agreed and forwarded to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Members to consider whether a Task Group should be established.
- 3.6 Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the suggestion at its meeting on 20 July 2015. Following a discussion it was agreed that a Task Group should be set up and all non-Executive Councillors should be invited to participate. Due to the timings of the meetings it was agreed that the Task Group's membership would be delegated to the Head of Democracy and Governance in consultation with the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.7 Initially six Councillors expressed an interest in participating in the new Task Group, however Councillor Joynes agreed to remove her name from the list, as Task Group's were limited to a maximum of five Members. At Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 24 September, Members were informed that the Task Group would comprise Councillors Martins, Collett, Dhindsa, Haley and Topping. Prior to the Task Group's first meeting Councillor Dhindsa advised that he would no longer be able to participate. Councillor Joynes was informed and offered the opportunity to join the Task Group, which she accepted.
- 3.8 The Task Group has met on four occasions, the last of which was on Tuesday 2 February 2016. At that meeting the Members discussed their recommendations. Since then the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer and Committee and Scrutiny Officer have worked on putting together the final report, which is attached at Appendix A. The Task Group have been kept informed about the final report and forwarded the final draft.

Community Engagement

- 3.9 Early on the Task Group decided it wanted to gather views from local residents about conservation areas and their understanding of any implications on them. It was agreed that a drop in session would be arranged and an online survey developed.
- 3.10 The Committee and Scrutiny Officer and Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer worked with the Communications Team on developing a poster and leaflet. The leaflet was distributed to all those residents living in a conservation area, setting out details of the drop in session at the Town Hall and the online survey. The identical poster was initially distributed to all Ward Councillors and the Task Group Members asking them to promote the survey to their residents and displaying the posters where possible. Following a request from Councillor Dhindsa the poster was later distributed to all those Councillors who had not received a copy.
- 3.11 Eleven residents attended the drop in session on 26 January 2016. They spoke to the Task Group and provided their views about conservation areas and the impact of developments just outside the designated boundaries.

- 3.12 The online survey, which ran from 13 January until 1 February, had 131 responses. In order to increase awareness of the survey it was referenced in the Mayor's newsletter and officers paid to have a Facebook boost. On each of these occasions there was a spike in the number of responses. This has provided officers with useful ideas on how to promote events and surveys in the future and how long the preparation can take to ensure it is carried out properly.
- 3.13 All those who responded to the survey online or in person will be sent a copy of the report. The majority of people will receive it by email and advised where it can be found in the 'Scrutiny Task Group Reports Library'. Those residents who have only provided their address will receive a paper copy.
- 3.14 The Task Group's report and recommendations will be presented to Cabinet on Monday 7 March 2016 for consideration. Any comments will then be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its first meeting in the new Municipal Year, Thursday 23 June 2016.
- 3.15 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the report and recommendations prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

- 4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that it is anticipated that the costs can be contained within the existing budget, but if additional resources are required then these will need to be approved through the Council's budget process.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Legal and Democratic Services Section Head that the legal implications are contained within the Appendix to the report.

4.3 **Equalities**

- 4.3.1 No equality issues have been identified in the Task Group's report and recommendations.

4.4 **Potential Risks**

- 4.4.1 None have been identified as a direct result of the Task Group's report and recommendations.

4.5 **Staffing**

- 4.5.1 The Task Group's report and recommendations make reference to the need to retain adequate resources to ensure the current work can continue.

Appendix

Appendix A Management of Conservation Areas Task Groups final report and recommendations

Background Papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

None



MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP

**REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF WATFORD BOROUGH
COUNCIL'S CONSERVATION AREAS**

FEBRUARY 2016

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Watford Borough Council

Members – Task Group

Councillor Rabi Martins	Chair, Councillor for Central Ward
Councillor Karen Collett	Councillor for Woodside Ward
Councillor Michael Haley	Councillor for Central Ward
Councillor Anne Joynes	Councillor for Leggatts Ward
Councillor Linda Topping	Councillor for Nascot Ward

Other Members attending or contributing

Councillor Iain Sharpe	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development
Councillor Mark Watkin	Councillor for Nascot Ward and Heritage Champion

Officer Support

Watford Borough Council

Jane Custance	Head of Regeneration and Development
Robert Della-Sala	Head of Revenue and Benefits
Fiona Dunning	Interim Development Management Section Head
Sian Finney-MacDonald	Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Sally Ann Fuller	Senior Planner (temporary)
Lisa Searle	Enforcement Officer
Stephanie Waldron	Enforcement Officer, Planning
Simon Went	Senior Planner, Conservation
Sandra Hancock	Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Ishbel Morren	Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESENT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Proposed recommendations

The Task Group is looking to establish a small number of core recommendations.

COMMUNICATION

The aim of these recommendations is to improve public awareness of Watford's conservation areas:

1. Include information about conservation areas in annual council tax and business rate notices for properties with postcodes in these areas.
2. Introduce a symbol on lamp columns or existing street furniture to show that the street or neighbourhood is in a designated conservation area.
3. Improve access to comprehensive information about conservation areas on Watford Borough Council's website, including guidance to residents about living or owning property there.
4. Encourage Councillors to play an active role in raising awareness of conservation areas, for example through public meetings, promoting local history projects, arranging for officers to speak at local meetings etc.
5. Consider alternative ways to engage with residents and businesses about the need for planning permissions for certain alterations in conservation areas. This might include utilising social media to sign-post them to the Council's website for comprehensive information.

LEGISLATION, COUNCIL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The aim of these recommendations is to ensure that local planning rules affecting conservation areas reflect new technologies and other initiatives or legislation:

6. Review current Article 4 directions to reflect changes in the General Permitted Development Orders and consider whether other classes should be included.
7. Ensure that procedures remain in place to undertake regular reviews of Watford Borough Council's Article 4 directions in order to address the potential impact of changes in technology or legislation.
8. Continue with the regular review of Watford Borough Council's toolkit of documents to ensure that these remain relevant.

9. Ensure that Watford Borough Council's development management officers continue to consult with the conservation and policy team when considering applications adjacent to conservation areas, in order to minimise the impact of new developments on properties within those areas.

COUNCIL RESOURCES

The Task Group acknowledges the excellent work that has been undertaken by officers in Watford's conservation areas and considers that it is important to continue this good work:

10. Continue to assign conservation area management responsibility to a designated officer and commit to providing adequate council resources to continue the excellent work that has been done to manage Watford's conservation areas and protect the character of Watford's built environment and street scene, particularly within designated conservation areas.

TRAINING

Watford Borough Council is committed to equipping its Councillors with the highest levels of knowledge and understanding about conservation and design issues:

11. Include conservation, design and enforcement issues in the induction and development management training for Councillors to establish a comprehensive training programme.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 July 2015, Councillor Rabi Martins stated that he would like to propose a review of the town's conservation areas, and particularly to review the effectiveness of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan.

The proposal followed concerns raised by the Estcourt Residents Association that houses in their local conservation area had undertaken inappropriate developments and allowed front garden walls to fall into disrepair.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer advised that she would circulate the proposal form to members interested to participate.

It was anticipated that the review would produce the following outcomes:

- to understand how the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan was being implemented and the implications this had on the ground, including:
- recent reviews of conservation areas and targeted planning enforcement
- publicity for conservation areas i.e., how residents and other stakeholders were made aware of areas that were designated as conservation areas and the implications of that;
- identify any future work to be undertaken to ensure effective management of conservation areas in the future.

In order to obtain relevant evidence, it was proposed that:

- the Conservation Areas Management Plan should be updated to see what additional work had been undertaken and to identify where further action was required
- a comparative study should be made with two neighbouring authorities to gauge relative resource levels and the policy documents in place
- enforcement issues should be investigated to establish if additional powers were needed, particularly to counter the impact of new and emerging technologies
- the views of local residents and businesses should be sought by conducting a series of one-to-one interviews with Councillors.

The Task Group would comprise:

Councillor Rabi Martins (Proposer)
Councillor Karen Collett
Councillor Michael Haley
Councillor Anne Joynes
Councillor Linda Topping

Councillor for Central Ward
Councillor for Woodside Ward
Councillor for Central Ward
Councillor for Leggatts Ward
Councillor for Nascot Ward

This included a late change of membership, prior to the first meeting of the Task Group, with Councillor Joynes replacing Councillor Dhindsa.

OVERVIEW OF THE TASK GROUP'S WORK

The Management of Conservation Areas Task Group has carried out its work in a little over three months, drawing on the expertise of Watford Borough Council's officers as well as the wider views of residents in order to complete its inquiry.

A first meeting was held on 10 November 2015 at which Councillor Martins was elected Chair. Setting the scene for the Task Group, he underlined the importance of reviewing the effectiveness of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan. In particular, he argued that although several areas across the town had been marked for conservation, the character of these was beginning to suffer through inappropriate modifications to buildings without reference to the Council.

The Task Group agreed a busy timetable of meetings with tightly focussed agendas to draw out the key issues for consideration. These were to:

- establish a status report for the Task Group by updating the action points included in the Conservation Areas Management Plan
- examine the effectiveness of Article 4 direction to see if this was sufficiently robust to tackle new threats to conservation areas, such as the siting of solar panels
- study current Council enforcement practices to understand the processes undertaken and the timescales involved
- undertake a comparative study of Watford Borough Council's management of its conservation areas with some neighbouring authorities
- gather information and views from residents living in conservation areas
- examine the rules governing shop front design to ascertain whether more needed to be done to protect their appearance.

This work was carried out in three further meetings of the Task Group on 2 December 2015, 5 January and 2 February 2016.

In addition, a public drop-in session was held at the Town Hall on 26 January 2016. Members of the public, and particularly those living in Watford's conservation areas, were encouraged to give their views directly to Task Group members in a series of informal conversations.

Further feedback from residents was encouraged using an on-line survey, which was promoted through the Council's website and social media.

In a separate survey, the Task Group also sought the views of Councillors.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

The Task Group's recommendations are intended to improve general awareness and appreciation of Watford Borough Council's conservation areas and ensure that planning rules reflect new technologies.

COMMUNICATION

The aim of this group of recommendations is to improve public awareness of Watford's conservation areas.

Recommendation 1 – Include information about conservation areas in annual council tax and business rate notices for properties with postcodes in these areas.

The Task Group is committed to improving public awareness and engagement in Watford's conservation areas. A series of different proposals is suggested to achieve this objective.

The first of these is the introduction of information about conservation areas on the council tax and business rate notifications for the relevant properties. This could be in the form of a small dialogue box, which could sign-post the reader to further details on the Council's website.

The Task Group is mindful of the potential costs of this proposal and of the need to ensure accurate recognition and recording of the properties included in the conservation areas. As such, it is accepted that it may not be possible to introduce this information on the 2016/17 council tax and business rate notifications.

Recommendation 2 – Introduce a symbol on lamp columns or existing street furniture to show that the street or neighbourhood is in a designated conservation area.

The Task Group is keen to address the lack of awareness about conservation areas not just amongst those living and working in these areas, but also those visiting or passing through.

This could be assisted by using a standardised sign or symbol. Different approaches are currently in use, for example in Estcourt, Watford Heath and Oxhey Village, however the Task Group feels that a single, unified approach should be introduced and used in all the conservation areas.

The Task Group welcomes the work that the Council has undertaken to declutter streets in the conservation areas. This proposal is not intended to undermine this work and the Task Group recommends that the symbol should be affixed to lamp columns or existing street furniture.

It is suggested that Hertfordshire County Council's locality budgets or the Watford Ward Councillors' Neighbourhood Forum budgets might offer possible sources of funding to offset some of the costs of this proposal.

Recommendation 3 – Improve access to comprehensive information about conservation areas on Watford Borough Council's website, including guidance to residents about living or owning property there.

In January 2016, Watford Borough Council launched a new website.

The Task Group recommends that the new website should include easily accessible and comprehensive information about conservation areas, including links to all key documents, such as the management plan, character appraisals and shop front design guide, together with guidance for members of the public about what being in a conservation area means in practical terms.

Recommendation 4 – Encourage Councillors to play an active role in raising awareness of conservation areas, for example through public meetings, promoting local history projects, arranging for officers to speak at local meetings etc.

The Task Group considers that Councillors have an active part to play in raising public awareness about conservation areas in their wards. It is suggested that they use local meetings to promote the benefits as well as to draw attention to the requirements of undertaking certain alterations to properties. Meetings could involve Council officers who would be invited to speak and answer questions from members of the public.

Recommendation 5 – Consider alternative ways to engage with residents and businesses about the need for planning permissions for certain alterations in conservation areas. This might include utilising social media to sign-post them to the Council's website for comprehensive information.

The work of the Task Group has been informed using a survey of residents. This survey was widely promoted using social media and the subsequent level of public engagement has been encouraging.

The Task Group recognises the potential benefits of using social media and suggests its use for future Council consultation and information exercises.

In regard to conservation areas, it is suggested that the Council might use social media at key times of the year, for example when people are considering making alterations to their homes in the early Spring, to signpost them to the Council's website for advice about the planning permissions required for some alterations to properties in conservation areas.

LEGISLATION, COUNCIL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The aim of these recommendations is to ensure that local planning rules affecting conservation areas reflect new technologies and other initiatives or legislation.

Recommendation 6 – Review current Article 4 directions to reflect changes in the General Permitted Development Orders and consider whether other classes should be included.

The Task Group recognises that the Council operates in an ever changing environment in terms of emerging technologies and changes in government legislation.

In the light of changes in the General Permitted Development Orders, it is recommended that current Article 4 directions are reviewed and, where necessary, revised.

Recommendation 7 – Ensure that procedures remain in place to undertake regular reviews of Watford Borough Council’s Article 4 directions in order to address the potential impact of changes in technology or legislation.

It was noted that a timetable of regular reviews of Watford Borough Council’s Article 4 directions was in place. Welcoming this fact, the Task Group further recommended that time and resources should continue to remain in place to enable this action to continue.

Recommendation 8 – Continue with the regular review of Watford Borough Council’s toolkit of documents ensuring that these remain relevant.

To inform its work, the Task Group undertook a comparative study of the toolkit of documents available in Watford Borough, Dacorum Borough, St Albans City and District and Three Rivers District Councils. This revealed that Watford Borough Council had a robust toolkit of conservation documents in place.

Members of the Task Group consider that it is vital that this toolkit is reviewed regularly and updated as required to ensure that decisions could stand up to challenge at appeal.

Recommendation 9 – Ensure that Watford Borough Council’s development management officers continue to consult with the conservation and policy team when considering applications adjacent to conservation areas, in order to minimise the impact of new developments on properties within those areas.

The Task Group received a number of comments from residents concerned about the impact of new developments just outside their conservation areas, but impacting on them.

In addition, the Task Group recognises that some areas of Watford are undergoing periods of rapid change and development. For this reason, it is important to ensure that existing good practice, which sees the active involvement of conservation and policy officers in development management discussions impacting on conservation areas, continues.

COUNCIL RESOURCES

The Task Group acknowledges the excellent work that has been undertaken by officers in Watford’s conservation areas and considers that it is important to continue this good work.

Recommendation 10 – Continue to assign conservation area management responsibility to a designated officer and commit to providing adequate council resources to continue the excellent work that has been done to manage Watford’s conservation areas and protect the character of Watford’s built environment and street scene, particularly within designated conservation areas.

The Task Group acknowledges that officers and the administration have a long standing record of creating and managing conservation areas in the town and considers that it is important to continue this good work and maintain the necessary high standards

In recognition of the importance of maintaining the character of the conservation areas, it is further recommended that officer resources should not be eroded over time.

TRAINING

Watford Borough Council is committed to equipping its Councillors with the highest levels of knowledge and understanding about conservation and design issues.

Recommendation 11 – Include conservation, design and enforcement issues in the induction and development management training for Councillors to establish a comprehensive training programme.

During its investigation, the Task Group drew on expertise from a range of disciplines, including conservation, design and enforcement. The Task Group

believes that knowledge of these different areas is important for the work of Councillors, particularly those involved in development management.

The Task Group recommends that a modular approach be introduced for induction and development management training in the future. This could include the production of a succinct factsheet for new members listing, *inter alia*, key facts about conservation areas and any historic buildings in their individual wards.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

<https://www.watford.gov.uk>

1. A guide to living in a conservation area (taken from the Watford Borough Council's website, 2015)
2. Article 4 Directions – information from Watford Borough Council's website, 2015
3. Conservation Areas in Watford map
4. Conservation Areas Management Plan (Supplementary planning document), adopted July 2013
5. Urban Design and Conservation Strategy, adopted 2014

HISTORIC ENGLAND

<https://historicengland.org.uk>

6. Living in a Conservation Area, Historic England website
7. Understanding Place: Conservation Area, Designation, Appraisal and Management
8. Valuing Places: Good practice in conservation areas

PLANNING PORTAL

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

9. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
10. Glossary extracted from the National Planning Policy Framework's Glossary

Management of Conservation Areas – evaluation table

Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion	
Proposer: Councillor/Officer/Member of public Cllr Rabi Martins	
<p>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i> • <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i> • <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i> 	<p>Management of Conservation Areas in the Town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan.
Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?	<p>The issue has been brought to the attention of ward councillors by the Estcourt Road Residents Association because Estcourt Road is in a Conservation Area and according to them a number of houses in the area have replaced windows, allowed front garden walls to fall into disrepair, built extensions etc.</p>

What are the specific outcomes you wish to see from the review?

Examples might include:

- *To identify what is being done and what the potential barriers are;*
- *To review relevant performance indicators;*
- *To compare our policies with those of a similar authority;*
- *To assess the environmental/social impacts;*
- *To Benchmark current service provision;*
- *To find out community perceptions and experience;*
- *To identify the gap between provision and need*

1. To understand how the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan is being implemented and the implications this has on the ground, including:
 - Recent reviews of conservation areas and targeted planning enforcement;
 - Publicity for conservation areas i.e. how residents and other stakeholders are made aware of areas that are designated as conservation areas and the implications of that;
 - Ongoing review of conservation areas.

<p>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires/Surveys • Site visits • Interviewing witnesses • Research • Performance data • Public hearings • Comparisons with other local authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conservation Area Character Appraisals; b. Conservation Areas Management Plan; c. Examples of enforcement action; d. Results of revision consultations; e. Additional comments relating to a Conservation Area article in About Watford; f. Input from Ward Councillors; g. Input from Residents Association's in Conservation areas.
<p>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</p>	
<p>It must affect a group or community of people</p>	<p>Yes – those people living and working in conservation areas.</p>
<p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p>	<p>The character of a town is shaped by its buildings and people.</p> <p>The council has a major role in promoting and protecting the Borough's heritage, through its planning function, property management and leisure services.</p> <p>The council recognises its responsibility to maintain its character as evidenced by its designation of selected areas as Conservation areas and a locally listed buildings register.</p>

<p>It must not have been a topic of scrutiny within the last 12 months</p> <p><i>There will be exceptions to this arising from notified changing circumstances. Scrutiny will also maintain an interest in the progress of recommendations and issues arising from past reports.</i></p>	<p>No similar topic has been considered by scrutiny in the past 5 years or more.</p>
<p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p>	<p>It is not an issue specifically dealt with by any other council committee.</p>
<p>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making Watford a better place to live in 2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth 3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town 4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please confirm which ones</i> Yes – 1 and 3 above</p>

<p>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i> • <i>imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i> 	<p>YES</p> <p>The consultation on Conservation Area Appraisals won't take place until October.</p> <p>The Senior Planning (Conservation and Urban Design) is leaving the authority at the end of August. This is likely to be a post that is difficult to fill. Officer resources to service the O&S review are therefore likely to be limited and this work could impact on other projects such as Local Plan 2.</p>
<p>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</p>	<p>Not directly</p>

<p>Are there likely to be any Equality implications which will need to be considered?</p> <p><i>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Age</i> • <i>Disability</i> • <i>Gender reassignment</i> • <i>Pregnancy or maternity</i> • <i>Race</i> • <i>Religion or belief</i> • <i>Sex</i> • <i>Sexual orientation</i> • <i>Marriage or civil partnership (only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)</i> 	N/A
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<p>Sign off <i>(It is expected that any Councillor proposing a topic agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee will participate in the Task Group)</i></p>	
<p>Councillor/Officer</p> <p><i>R Martins</i></p>	<p>Date</p> <p>18th May 2015</p>

MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP**Tuesday 10 November 2015****Agreed Actions**

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)
Councillors Collett, Haley, Joynes and Topping

Also Present: Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (IM)

1. Election of Chair/Task Group Membership

Councillor Martins was elected chair.

The membership of the Management of Conservation Areas Task Group was confirmed. This included a permanent change in membership, with Councillor Joynes replacing Councillor Dhindsa, which had been agreed prior to the start of the review.

RESOLVED –

that Councillor Martins be elected Chair of the Task Group.

2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

3. Disclosures of Interest

It was noted that each of the Councillors had at least one conservation area in their ward, with the exception of Councillor Joynes in Leggatts ward.

4. Scope and Background Papers

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the Task Group had a tight timetable. Work needed to be completed before the end of the Municipal Year.

The Task Group's findings would need to be concluded in the week beginning 1 February in order to allow reporting to:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 March 2016
- Cabinet on 7 March 2016 (Chair to attend).

Councillor Martins argued that the review of the effectiveness of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan was an important piece of work. It might not be possible to cover all the issues within the time allocated. In that event, one of the recommendations might relate to further work that should be undertaken.

Watford was a small town but had a number of locally and nationally listed buildings. Although several areas across the town had been marked for conservation, the character of these was beginning to suffer through inappropriate modifications to buildings without reference to the Council.

The Task Group should review the current management of conservation areas in Watford and establish what more could be done to protect them in the future.

Councillor Martins invited views on what steps the Task Group might take. During discussions the following ideas were raised:

- comparisons should be made with a neighbouring authority e.g., Dacorum Borough Council or St Albans City and District Council
- residents' views should be sought on their experiences and issues about living in a conservation area. This might be undertaken in an informal drop-in session arranged at the Town Hall
- some focus should be given to shop fronts and whether more could be done to protect their appearance
- the Council might consider charging for its services after non-compliance by residents or businesses following earlier notifications
- the Task Group should invite the Council's enforcement officers to speak at one of the meetings to outline their powers and rates of success.

Members were encouraged to write in with any further thoughts to the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer.

5. Next Steps

Summing up the Task Group's suggestions, the Chair proposed the following actions to be undertaken:

- update the 13 action points (G1 – G13) in the Conservation Areas Management Plan to provide a status report for the Task Group
- examine the issues around the rules governing shop fronts to establish how these might be protected better
- examine the effectiveness of Article 4 Direction (providing additional planning control in a particular location by removing "Permitted Development" rights over certain alterations e.g., new porches, replacement windows and doors) to see if it is sufficiently robust to tackle new threats to conservation areas such as the siting of solar panels
- study current Council enforcement practices to understand the processes undertaken, including examples of proactive work, formal action and the time-scales involved (to be discussed at 2 December meeting)

- gather information and views from individual residents, residents associations and other interested parties e.g., architects (Joe Kent), Mary Forsythe, Oxhey Village Environment Group. This could be by way of a drop-in session to the Town Hall which should be publicised as widely as possible. Councillors would be asked to help publicise the event to interested parties by contacting individuals and residents associations in their wards [the survey undertaken for the housing trust task group would be used as a template]
- look at Dacorum Borough Council and/or St Albans Council to see if lessons could be learned.

6. **Date of Next Meeting**

Three meeting dates were agreed:

- Wednesday 2 December
- Tuesday 5 January
- Tuesday 26 January

(The topics for each of the meetings to be agreed by the Chair and officers.)

Further meetings could be arranged as required.

MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP**Wednesday 2 December 2015****Agreed Actions**

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)
Councillors Collett, Haley, Joynes and Topping

Also Present: Interim Development Management Section Head
Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Enforcement Officers (LS, SW)
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (IM)

7. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

8. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

9. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November were submitted and signed.

10. Enforcement

The Task Group had received a Planning Enforcement Plan for 2015. This outlined how the Council dealt with alleged breaches of planning control and how it made decisions regarding enforcement action to rectify proven breaches.

Enforcement officers were invited to discuss how the enforcement process was undertaken in conservation areas, and whether the approach taken differed to non-conservation areas.

During a wide-ranging discussion, the following points were raised:

- conservation area designation did not remove permitted development rights for properties in that area. (Permitted development rights were granted by Parliament and not by the local authority.) Buildings within conservation areas might be subject to Article 4 Directions, which would remove permitted development rights and require certain works to have planning permission
- in order to assist residents and businesses in conservation areas, local planning officers provided free advice and assistance on planning applications in those areas. They also imposed less onerous requirements on drawings and materials details
- Article 4 Directions varied between conservation areas. A full list of all the Article 4 Directions was included in the Conservation Areas Development Plan. Article

4 Directions did not cover building interiors

- General Permitted Development Orders (GPDO) had changed over time. It was important for local authorities to assess their Article 4 provisions to ensure that they kept pace with change, particularly in regard to new technologies such as satellite dishes and solar panels. This might be an area of work that the Task Group could recommend
- enforcement procedures needed to be consistent, regardless of whether the case was in a conservation area or not. Alleged breaches in conservation areas were not expedited. Different consideration was given to listed building enforcement, where work carried out without the necessary consent and failing to comply with a condition attached to that consent was a criminal offence
- enforcement action was discretionary and required officers to follow five key principles (proportionality, expediency, consistency, transparency and equality). Alleged breaches of planning control within a conservation area required consideration of whether planning permission was likely to have been granted had due process been allowed to take place
- breaches of control were dealt with according to set procedures, which also attached deadlines for completion at each stage. These were set out in paragraph 4.8 of Watford Borough Council's Planning Enforcement Plan 2015 (circulated with the agenda for this meeting)
- development became immune from enforcement if no action was taken within four years of substantial completion
- the number of complaints about alleged breaches of planning control in conservation areas was relatively small. There had been none in the last year concerning replacement windows
- there were insufficient Council resources to undertake proactive enforcement work. Prior to the departure of the Senior Planner (Urban Design and Conservation), all properties in Watford Borough Council's conservation areas had been photographed. This gave a baseline of information to use in any disputes. [A new officer – shared with Three Rivers District Council – would be in post from 7 December.]
- the Interim Development Management Section Head tabled a comparative spreadsheet, detailing planning enforcement benchmark statistics in the East Hertfordshire region. This quantitative data showed that very little proactive work was being undertaken by Watford and surrounding councils, although it was known that this was not necessarily the case outside Hertfordshire
- it was important to consider the Council's objectives with the introduction of any new restrictions. Objectives in different conservation areas might vary. For example, there had been some success in removing unnecessary street clutter (signage) in residential areas as well as replacing unsightly concrete bollards. However in the civic core there were issues about advertising and shop front design that needed to be balanced with the commercial needs of the area

- there was a lack of awareness about conservation areas as well as the implications of living or running a business in a conservation area. This might be assisted by using a standardised sign or symbol on existing street signs (although there was no desire to introduce additional street clutter)
- another suggestion, which could run in parallel with the street signage proposal above, would be the introduction of a dialogue box on the annual council tax and business rate notifications. This would alert the addressee to the fact that their house or business was located in a conservation area and would signpost them to further information about development issues
- the new Council website should make more prominent reference to conservation areas and the restrictions placed on development in these areas. Whilst comprehensive information was currently available on the website, it was not always easy to locate.

11. **Conservation Areas Management Plan**

The Task Group had received an update of actions on the Conservation Areas Management Plan as well as a separate post completion evaluation report, which had been published in February 2015.

These reports were noted.

Any comments should be sent to the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer.

12. **Next Steps**

Tuesday 5 January 2016

- Comparative study with Dacorum and/or St Albans
- Shop front design guide
- Preparation for 26 January drop-in
- Draft survey for all Councillors

Tuesday 26 January 2016

- Drop-in session at the Town Hall to gather views from residents, residents associations and other interested parties (5.00pm to 8.30pm?)

Tuesday 2 February 2016

- Review of feedback from the drop-in session and related information
- Recommendations for the final report

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

- Tuesday 5 January
- Tuesday 26 January
- Tuesday 2 February (to begin at 6.00pm)

MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP

Tuesday 5 January 2016

Agreed Actions

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)
Councillors Collett, Haley, Joynes and Topping

Also Present: Councillor Connal (to agenda item 6)
Head of Regeneration and Development
Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (IM)

14. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

15. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

16. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December were submitted and signed.

17. Comparative Study

The Task Group reviewed the comparative study of data regarding the management of conservation areas in Watford Borough, Dacorum, St Albans City and District and Three Rivers District Councils.

Although there was some variation in the size and scope of the various Councils, the comparative exercise highlighted the different approaches in neighbouring authorities as well as best practice.

During discussions, the following points were raised:

- there was scope to examine Watford Borough Council's Article 4 Directions, particularly in regard to new technologies. Following best practice guidance, the Council's approach was to specify classes of development rather than to pursue full scale removal of development rights. Any new provisions would be reviewed in this context and take into account advice from Historic England (replacing English Heritage) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Watford Borough Council had a relatively favourable resource allocation in its conservation expertise, despite previous restructuring. Additional expertise could be brought in on an ad hoc basis as the need arise
- Watford Borough Council had a robust toolkit of conservation documents in place, which was vital to back up its position in the event of an appeal. It was noted that

much of the detailed work had been achieved when a full time conservation officer had been in place.

18. **Shopfronts**

The Task Group revisited the Shopfront Guidance to establish whether any changes should be made to the document.

Following a brief discussion, there were no immediate proposals for change.

The Chair invited Task Group members to submit any late comments to the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer for consideration.

19. **Preparation for 26 January 2016 Drop-in Session**

During discussions on arrangements for the public drop-in session on Tuesday 26 January, the following points were agreed:

- the drop-in session would run from 5.30 pm until 7.30 pm, although discussions would continue if members of the public remained
- social media, the Council's website, leafleting to houses in the conservation areas, poster distribution around the town, and the Watford Observer would all be used to promote the drop-in session
- further public feedback would be sought using Survey Monkey, with a link on the Council's website. This would contain a slightly reworded survey to make the questions more self-explanatory
- all members would be asked to contact their residents associations, interested groups and individuals etc, to advertise the drop-in event and encourage attendance and questionnaire responses. To assist in this, posters would be distributed to Councillors to place in local shops and community spaces.

20. **Councillor Survey**

The following points were agreed on the Councillor Survey:

- it should be sent to all Councillors
- the survey should be altered slightly to reflect the fact that some Councillors would not either live in or represent a ward containing a conservation area
- question 7 should be reworded to encourage the development of a database of individuals who could be approached in regard to conservation issues.

21. **Date of Next Meetings**

- Tuesday 26 January (5.30pm to 7.30pm)
- Tuesday 2 February (to begin at 6.00pm)

MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP**Tuesday 2 February 2016****Agreed Actions**

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)
Councillors Collett, Joynes and Topping

Also Present: Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (IM)

22. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Councillor Haley.

23. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

24. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 January were submitted and signed.

The Chair commented that this would be the final meeting of the Task Group. Future discussions would be undertaken using email.

He thanked members of the Task Group and officers for their time and contributions.

The Task Group's final report would be presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 3 March and then to Cabinet on 7 March.

25. Survey Feedback

The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer had tabled a late draft report on the findings of the survey for residents. The report would be subject to further editing and required a number of appendices to be added.

She reported that the link to the survey had been taken off the Council's website on 2 February. 139 responses had been received in total. Of these, 127 had been completed on-line, 8 at the drop-in session on 26 January and 4 during door-to-door canvassing.

Two spikes in the response rate were notable. The first had followed inclusion of the survey in the Mayor's fortnightly newsletter on 22 January. The second followed a boost the survey's profile on Facebook on 29 January.

The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer observed it was important to understand that the respondents were self-selecting and therefore not necessarily

representative of the wider views of residents living in Conservation Areas.

Despite these caveats, the survey findings were both constructive and encouraging. Residents appeared engaged in their local areas and had put forward constructive comments and suggestions.

The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer advised that the appendices, which would provide more detailed information on the comments and concerns of residents, would be circulated to members of the Task Group separately.

Task Group members expressed disappointment at the limited number of responses to the Councillor survey – 6 in total, of which 5 were members of the Task Group. It was agreed that this did not provide sufficient data to undertake any meaningful analysis.

Councillor Collett agreed to raise the Task Group's concerns about the lack of Councillor engagement at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

26. Task Group Recommendations

The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer had tabled a sheet of draft recommendations drawn from the Task Group's discussions to date and feedback from the surveys.

These were reviewed and discussed by the Task Group. Approving the direction of the proposed recommendations, it was agreed to add more details to the current statements and circulate these to the Task Group for final approval.

During discussions on the proposed recommendations, the following points were raised:

- there should be an additional recommendation for the Council to be proactive with residents about the requirements for undertaking certain alterations to properties in conservation areas. This should use social media, which had proved an effective communication tool in the survey for residents;
- the final report should acknowledge the Task Group's understanding that there would be cost implications in some of the recommendations and it would be important to seek funding sources for any projects to enhance conservation areas;
- it would be helpful to include some information on Watford's conservation areas in the induction training for new members. This might involve producing a succinct factsheet with signposts to the Council's website for more detailed information.

**Conservation Areas Management Plan
Actions Update**

Actions		Update
G1	<p>Guidance Information</p> <p>The Council will produce a section on Conservation Area Guidance on its website and will send out a letter annually to all residents and businesses in the conservation areas informing them of any significant changes to local planning controls.</p>	<p>Information is included on the Council's website: Conservation advice :: Watford Borough Council A guide to living in a conservation area :: Watford Borough Council</p> <p>An annual letter has not been issued as there have been no significant changes within the conservation areas. Officers need to consider whether an annual reminder letter to owners would be effective.</p>
G2	<p>Raising the profile of conservation areas</p> <p>The Council will utilise opportunities for raising the profile of conservation areas by using existing communication resources, installing new street signs, working with local community groups and exploring the potential of new media/technology as appropriate.</p>	<p>The Council uses the About Watford publication to promote campaigns successes.</p> <p>Street signs – information on bands below existing street name plates.</p> <p>St Mary's – new website, signage and leaflets produced. A film was produced 'Nest of Stones', which has been featured at various events including the Edinburgh International Film Festival.</p>
G3	<p>Delivering effective development management</p> <p>The Council will utilise the full range of strategic policy and guidance documents to ensure that development in conservation areas is of a standard that enhances the amenity of the local area.</p>	<p>Character appraisals have been produced for each conservation area.</p> <p>Supplementary planning documents include: the Shopfront Design Guide (adopted February 2013).</p>

Actions		Update
G4	<p>Traditional materials</p> <p>Appropriate external materials and finishes will be expected in all new development in conservation areas. The Council will seek to encourage the use of traditional materials through pre-application advice, as well as in information in relevant planning documents and on the Council website.</p>	<p>Article 4 directions have had an impact in reversing the previous incremental deterioration of the character of conservation areas. The Council has been able to direct residents towards using 'conservation style' products.</p> <p>The Council has just sent out a guide for Estcourt residents alongside the letter regarding the consultation on the revised appraisal – this could be sent out more widely and put on the Council's website.</p>
G5	<p>Article 4 Directions</p> <p>The Council will consult on targeted Article 4 Directions for those areas identified as being appropriate in conservation areas. If Directions are confirmed, the Council will monitor the properties in question and provide adequate levels of publicity to ensure their successful application.</p>	<p>The consultation took place alongside the Conservation Areas Management Plan in Spring 2013. Explanations were given at public meetings and, as a part of the order, the Council wrote to the properties affected.</p> <p>Information about Article 4 directions are available on the Council's website – Article 4 directions :: Watford Borough Council and in each of the Conservation Area Character Appraisals.</p> <p>See above comment regarding the two page guide sent to Estcourt residents (under G4).</p>
G6	<p>Highway Works</p> <p>Utilising national and regional best practice guidance, the Council will seek to ensure that any future highways works will bring a positive improvement to the character and appearance of the conservation areas.</p>	<p>The Council has worked with Hertfordshire County Council, particularly on replacing lamp columns and de-cluttering projects.</p>

Actions		Update
G7	<p>No Waiting Markings</p> <p>Where yellow lines are necessary within conservation areas they should preferably be 50mm wide, with a line colour of BS 381C No. 310 (primrose). Any additional signage relating to parking/loading restrictions should be kept to a minimum.</p>	<p>The introduction of 'conservation grade' double yellow lines is only practical where an entire road is being resurfaced. Removing existing no waiting markings is expensive, both financially and environmentally.</p>
G8	<p>Street clutter audit</p> <p>The Council will carry out a detailed audit of the public realm to identify the best way to minimise street clutter and better integrate street furniture in the conservation areas. An Action Plan for reducing street clutter will be prepared and taken forward in collaboration with public sector partners and elected members.</p>	<p>Work has been undertaken with Hertfordshire County Council – this resulted in the removal of 'at any time' signs, which were no longer legally required.</p> <p>The removal of guard railings is more complicated as safety audits are required.</p>
G9	<p>Trees and Green Spaces</p> <p>The Council will monitor trees in conservation areas that have notable amenity value. Where appropriate, opportunities for additional tree planting will be explored. The Council will ensure that a collaborative approach is taken to the management of green spaces within conservation areas.</p>	<p>Tree planting has already taken place in Estcourt Road Greening (see annex 1).</p> <p>Works have also taken place to enhance Watford Heath by the parks team.</p>

Actions		Update
G10	<p>Enhancement Schemes</p> <p>The Council will explore the potential for delivering the enhancement schemes detailed in Section 3 of this document, as well as other schemes as they become available in conservation areas. The Council should produce Planning Briefs for those sites detailed in Section 3 of this document as being suitable for conservation led regeneration.</p>	<p>Enhancements have included –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tree planting • plaque restoration • lamp column repainting. <p>See annex 1.</p> <p>No planning briefs have been produced yet – these would require additional resources as they are not a current priority.</p>
G11	<p>Community Group and Heritage Champions</p> <p>The Council should work actively with local community groups and elected councillors to improve the management and monitoring of conservation areas.</p>	<p>Councillor Mark Watkin is the Heritage Champion for 2015/16</p> <p>OVEG was involved in conservation area designation for Oxhey and in developing ideas for Watford Heath. Other groups have not been as willing to engage collectively, but the Council is in touch with active members of the community who are willing to work with the Council and to provide comment.</p>
G12	<p>Conservation Area Character Appraisals</p> <p>The Council will aim to update conservation area character appraisals every five years to ensure that they are fit for purpose. This process should involve a reassessment of the conservation area boundaries.</p>	<p>Character appraisals are currently under review and have been published for consultation. Four have been updated and are currently out for consultation – ending 4th December 2015. The attached table at annex 2 shows the work plan for the next five years, including when reviews are scheduled.</p>

Actions		Update
G13	<p>Enforcement</p> <p>Wherever practicable the Council will take steps to deal with the effects of unauthorised development in order to protect the special character and appearance of the conservation areas. A photographic record of the conservation areas should be regularly maintained to ensure that enforcement action can be successfully taken forward.</p>	<p>Proactive planning enforcement work has been undertaken, e.g. removal of 100 unauthorised signs; removal/relocation of satellite dishes.</p> <p>Further work will be carried out in those cases where residents have not complied.</p> <p>There is a photographic record of all Article 4 properties (2013). Where proactive programmes have been undertaken, such as satellite dish removal/relocation work, the Council has also photographed all of these properties. This record should be reviewed in 2018.</p>

Enhancement Schemes

Annex 1

Scheme	Location	Stakeholders	Progress
Bridge Repairs	Grove Mill Lane	Canal & River Trust, WBC	Works added to C&RT maintenance programme for 2015/16.
Canal Towpath Upgrade	Grove Mill Lane	Canal & River Trust, WBC, HCC	Works complete.
Tombs Renovation	St Mary's	WBC, Heritage Lottery Fund	Works complete.
Wall Repairs	St Mary's	Landowners, WBC	Wall is responsibility of private landowner (not WBC). Repairs not urgent.
Landscape Plan for green space adjacent to car park	St Mary's	WBC	Draft plan produced. Parks Department currently looking into funding as part of wider open space enhancement programme. Target of 2015/16.
Man & Woman Sculpture Renovation	St Mary's	WBC	Plinth replaced. Sculpture cleaning scheduled for March 2015.
Footway Improvements	The Square	WBC, HCC	Works complete.
Cemetery Enhancements	The Square	WBC	Works complete.
Church Paving - St John's	Estcourt	St John's Church, WBC, HCC	Draft plan produced. Parks Department currently looking into funding (e.g. landfill tax grant). Target for works of Christmas 2015.
Estcourt Road 'Greening'	Estcourt	WBC, HCC	New street trees planted. Pocket park upgraded. Plans for additional landscaping at southern end nearing completion.

Scheme	Location	Stakeholders	Progress
Watford Heath Enhancements	Watford Heath	WBC	Final plan complete. Works to take place in Summer 2015.
Highway Works	Watford Heath	HCC	Draft plan produced. Cllr SGM may fund in 2015/16 through locality budget.
Bandstand Enhancement	Civic Core	WBC, Heritage Lottery Fund	Funding agreed. Works to take place in Summer 2015.
Dancing Woman Sculpture Renovation	Civic Core	WBC	Works complete.
Peace Memorial Renovation	Civic Core	WBC, War Memorials Trust	Works complete.
The Parade Public Realm Enhancement	Civic Core	WBC	Works complete.
Enhancement of Public Space adjacent to St Albans House	Civic Core	WBC, HCC	Works in progress. Completion in April 2015.
Enhancement of Public Space adjacent to Town Hall	Civic Core	WBC, HCC	Draft plans produced. HCC exploring funding options. Target of 2016/17.
Demolish Flyover	Civic Core	WBC, HCC	No progress.
Underpass Entrance Enhancements	High Street/King Street	WBC, HCC	New footway surface, safety mirror and coping to plant beds complete. Landscape works drawn up. Cllr SGM may fund in 2015/16 through locality budget.

Scheme	Location	Stakeholders	Progress
Pavement widening: High Street	High Street/King Street	WBC, HCC	Draft plans produced. Funding from S106 partially achieved; remainder may be collected in Spring 2015. Target of 2015/16.
Plaque Restoration	Macdonnell Gardens	Haig Homes, WBC	Works complete.
Access Road Improvements	Macdonnell Gardens	Haig Homes	Works are down to Haig Homes. Not urgent.

Conservation and Design Team Document Review Schedule - Dec 2015

		2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				Comments	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Character of the Area Study	2011																					May not be necessary	
Local List	2010																						Will be a few changes
BAR	2012																						Could be done externally
CA Management Plan	2013																						
RDG	2008																						Adoption of review July 2014
Free Standing Heritage Assets Management Plan	2014																						Annual work programme – liaise with facilities – external contractors
Shopfront Design Guide	2013																						
Watford Heath	2008 updated 2013																						Updated Document Adopted 2013
High Street	2007 updated 2013																						Updated Document adopted 2013
St Mary's	2009																						Consultation end 04/12/15
Civic Core	2009																						As above
Nascot	2010																						As Above
Estcourt	2010																						As above
The Square	2011																						
Macdonnell Gardens	2012																						
Grove Mill	2012																						Joint with TRDC
Oxhey Village	2013																						Adopt Q1

COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH DACORUM, ST ALBANS AND THREE RIVERS

	WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL	ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL	THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL
Number of conservation areas	10	25	19	22
Number of locally listed buildings	240	around 400	around 4,000	over 250
Number of nationally listed buildings	92	over 2,000	over 800	350
Size of planning teams, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialist conservation officers design officers 	0.5 plus 0.8 FTE on conservation and design. Planners DM team - 8 plus 2 enforcement; policy 4 FTE but part of the 0.8 is policy as well	3 specialist conservation and design officers (2 part-time), plus 12 planners (3 enforcement officers, 4 policy)	1.5 posts – 1 x full-time conservation, 0.5 x design	0.5 conservation officer DM team - 8 plus 2 enforcement; policy 4 FTE
Suite of documents in place, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conservation area appraisal conservation area management plan shop front design guide Article 4 directions 	all these documents are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conservation area appraisals (do not cover all areas) conservation area management plan in train around 400 Article 4 directions (do not cover all areas needed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conservation area character statements Article 4 directions shopfront design guide (1985) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conservation area appraisals conservation area management plan Article 4 directions shopfront design guide
Are these documents reviewed and updated regularly?	yes – conservation area character appraisals are being updated currently and the remainder are reviewed on a rolling programme approx every 5 years	no	this is part of the team's workload, but there are limited resources to complete this task	no

	WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL	ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL	THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL
What do the Article 4 directions cover?	enlargement, improvement and alterations. Alterations to roof facing the street, porches, painting and exterior work, garden gates fences and walls, buildings in curtilage, storage containers for domestic heating, formation of hardstanding	roofscape, including chimneys and roof lights, front façade, front gardens and garden walls, painting, materials, fenestration, front doors, hardstanding	all permitted development withdrawn in the more historically important parts of the conservation area	all permitted development withdrawn in the conservation area
Volume of planning applications to conservation team	approximately 210 per year or 4/5 per week	12-30 applications per week	38 majors, 105 listed buildings, 15 conservation area minors and demolitions per annum	35 per month, or approximately 400 per annum
Total number of planning applications to the Council	around 1,700 per annum	around 3,000 per annum	around 3,500 to 4,000 per annum	around 3,000 per annum

**MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP
PUBLIC SURVEY, JANUARY 2016**

The survey asked the following questions –

1. Which street do you live on?
2. How long have you lived in the area?
 - less than 12 months
 - 1-5 years
 - 5 years or longer
3. Do you know if your street is in a conservation area?
 - Yes
 - No
4. How did you find out that you lived in a conservation area? (Tick all that apply.)

i) informed by the solicitor when you bought the house	
ii) informed by the landlord when you rented the property	
iii) letter from Watford Borough Council	
iv) advised by your local residents association	
v) other (please give details)	
5. Are you aware of the planning restrictions on properties in conservation areas?
 - Yes
 - No
6. Do you have examples when planning restrictions have been used?
7. Do you have examples of when action has been taken to rectify inappropriate developments or alterations where you live?
8. Do you have any other comments about conservation areas?
9. Would you like the Council to contact you in the future about conservation issues?
 - Yes
 - No
10. Would you like to hear about other council news and events by email?
 - Yes
 - No

11. Please fill in your contact details below

Name
Address
and/or postcode
Email address
Phone number

**MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP
PUBLIC SURVEY: ANALYSIS**

OVERVIEW

139 responses were received in total. Of these, 127 were completed on-line, 8 at the drop-in session on 26 January 2016, and 4 during door-to-door canvassing.

The survey was on the Council's website for 3 weeks: from 12 January until 2 February. It was promoted in the Mayor's fortnightly newsletter on 22 January (which is sent to around 2,000 addresses), as well as on Facebook.

On 29 January, we paid a small fee to boost the survey's profile on Facebook with a targeted, wider audience. This elicited a further 50 responses.

QUESTION ANALYSIS

Q1 WHICH STREET DO YOU LIVE ON?

132 people answered this question. 7 did not respond.

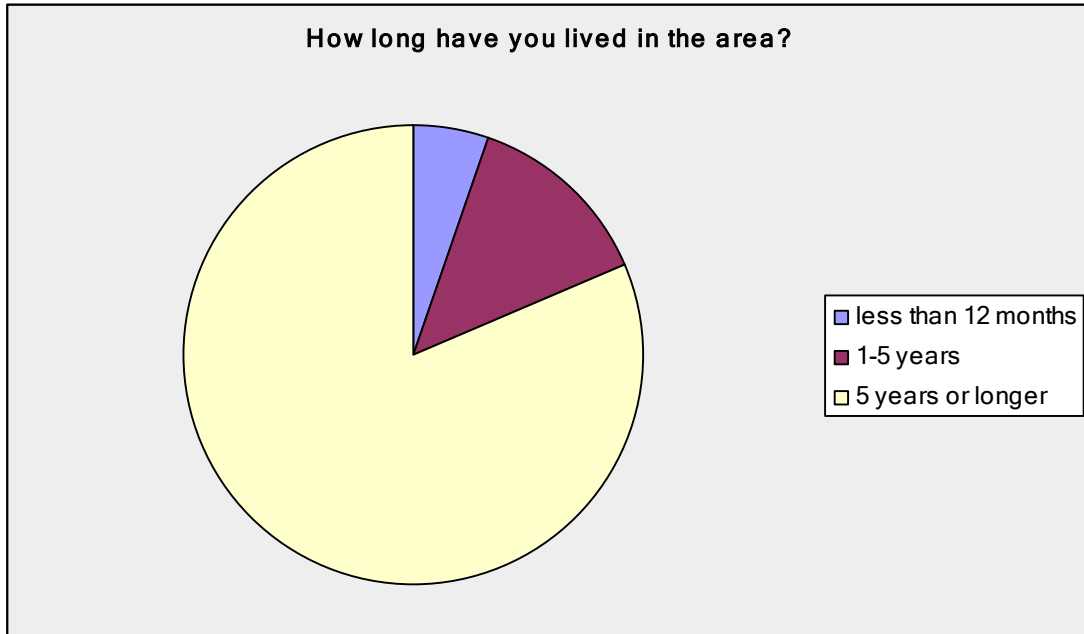
Of these, 73 lived in conservation areas, 55 lived outside a conservation area and 2 named streets outside the Borough. 7 provided insufficient details to assess whether their road was inside or outside the conservation area.

A comprehensive list of responses is attached at Annex A.

Q2 HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THE AREA?

135 people answered this question. 4 did not respond.

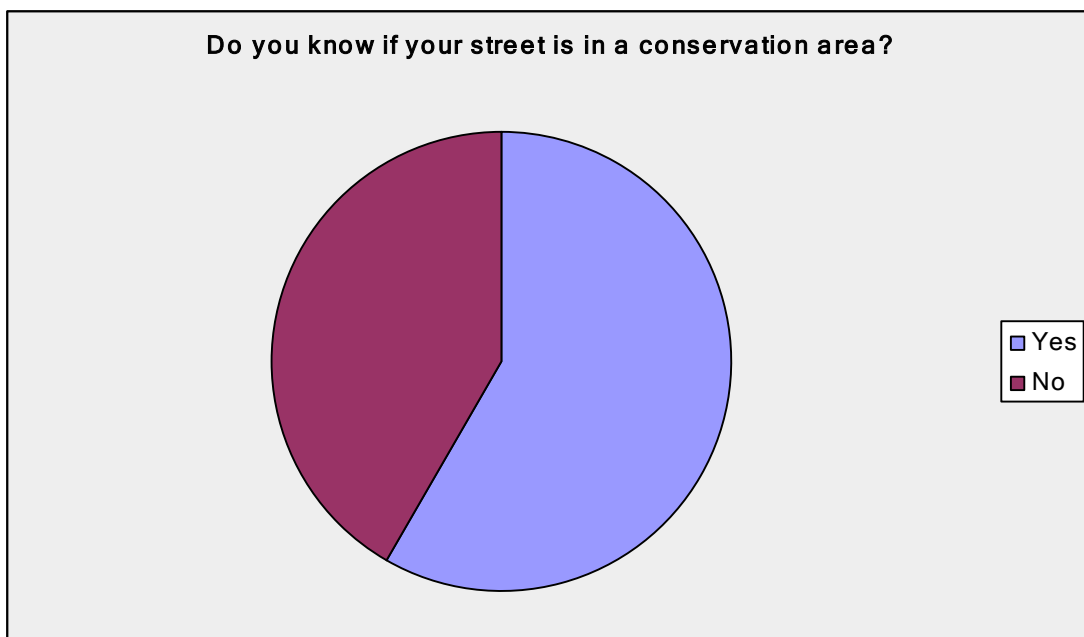
How long have you lived in the area?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
less than 12 months	5.2%	7
1-5 years	13.3%	18
5 years or longer	81.5%	110
<i>answered question</i>		135
<i>skipped question</i>		4



Q3 DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR STREET IS IN A CONSERVATION AREA?

137 people answered this question. 2 people did not respond.

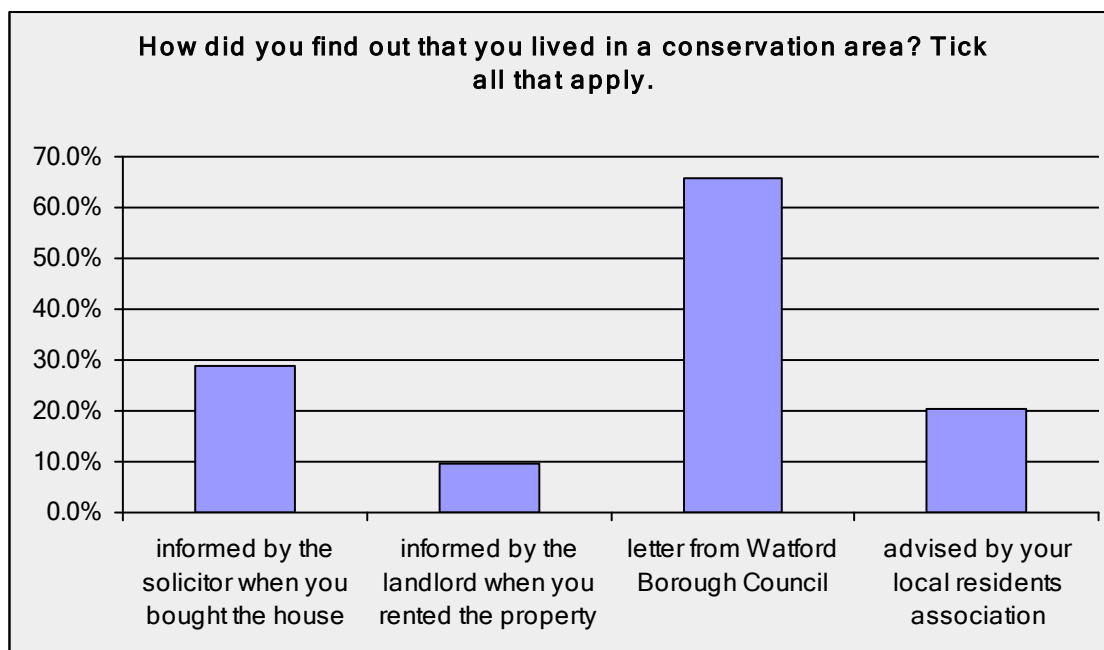
Do you know if your street is in a conservation area?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	58.4%	80
No	41.6%	57
<i>answered question</i>		137
<i>skipped question</i>		2



Q4 HOW DID YOU FIND OUT THAT YOU LIVED IN A CONSERVATION AREA? Tick all that apply.

73 people answered this question. 66 did not respond.

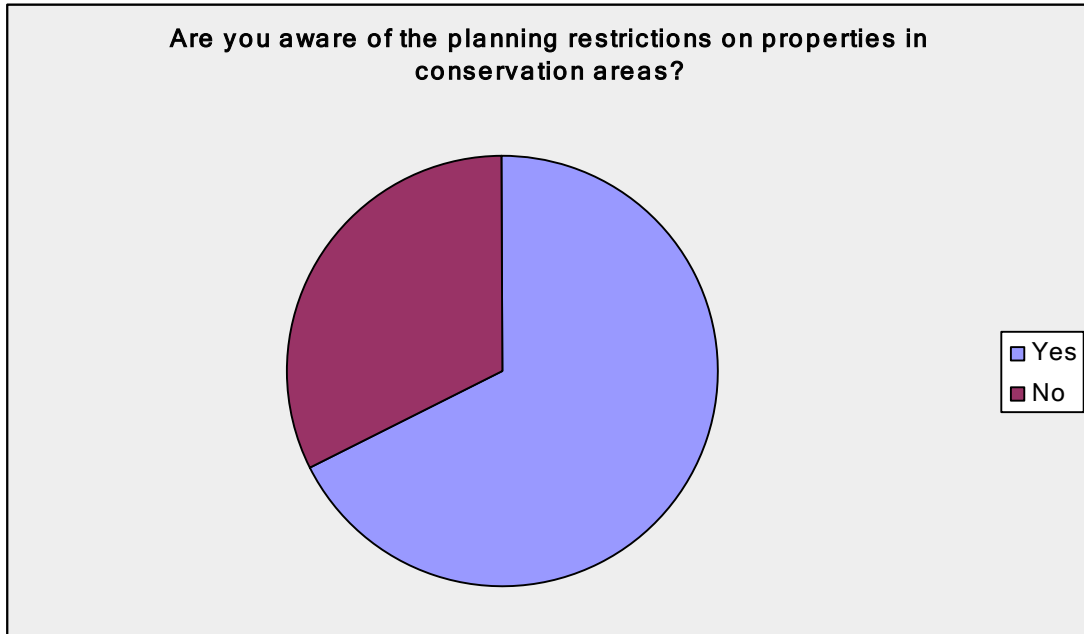
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
informed by the solicitor when you bought the house	28.8%	21
informed by the landlord when you rented the property	9.6%	7
letter from Watford Borough Council	65.8%	48
advised by your local residents association	20.5%	15
Other		8
<i>answered question</i>		73
<i>skipped question</i>		66



Q5 ARE YOU AWARE OF THE PLANNING RESTRICTIONS ON PROPERTIES IN CONSERVATION AREAS?

120 people answered this question. 19 did not respond.

Are you aware of the planning restrictions on properties in conservation areas?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	67.5%	81
No	32.5%	39
<i>answered question</i>		120
<i>skipped question</i>		19



Q6 DO YOU HAVE EXAMPLES OF WHEN PLANNING RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN USED?

71 people answered this question. 68 people did not respond.

Do you have examples of when planning restrictions have been used?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	71
<i>answered question</i>	71
<i>skipped question</i>	68

Examples of the types of issues cited included:

- Inappropriate developments, which were out of keeping with the area
- Height and size of extensions and new buildings
- Flat conversions
- Replacement doors and windows
- Porches
- Loft conversions, including the use of dormer windows
- Installation of solar panels
- Exterior brickwork and paintwork
- Impacts on wildlife and the Green Belt
- Siting of mobile homes.

Q7 DO YOU HAVE EXAMPLES OF WHEN ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO RECTIFY INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTS OR ALTERATIONS WHERE YOU LIVE?

65 people answered this question, of whom 21 provided examples. 74 people did not respond.

Do you have examples of when action has been taken to rectify inappropriate developments or alterations where you live?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	65
<i>answered question</i>	65
<i>skipped question</i>	74

Examples included –

Developments in Conservation Areas

- community campaigned against an inappropriate proposed development which was eventually refused permission
- Council firm in refusing inappropriate developments
- series of applications refused before a suitable development was agreed

Use of materials

- replacement windows in sliding sash style; improvement on previous uPVC designs
- new house had to use same style bricks to existing properties
- new windows

Enforcement

- location of satellite dishes

Q8 DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ABOUT CONSERVATION AREAS?

77 people answered this question, of whom 70 provided comments. 62 did not respond.

Do you have any other comments about conservation areas?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	77
<i>answered question</i>	77
<i>skipped question</i>	62

Comments included

More / expansion of Conservation Areas

- Would like more of Nascot to be included in the conservation area
- More conservation areas would help maintain the character of Watford
- Oxhey conservation area should be extended to the railway

Communication

- Unaware conservation areas existed
- Aware of restrictions in conservation areas, but surprised that there appear to be none on properties adjacent to conservation areas or overlooking them
- Make the Management Plan simpler and show the relevance to the owner of the property (advantages and restrictions)
- People moving in unaware the property is in a conservation area; leaflet could be available from estate agents
- Residents living in a conservation area should be informed regularly
- Insufficient time to study draft consultation and respond
- Provide information about how houses should be renovated, e.g. provide photos of how windows used to look to enable residents to match as closely as possible
- Unsure if road is in conservation area
- More information about designated areas would be helpful
- More information about what can and can't be done to property
- Lack of resident education

Maintenance of properties

- Council should require people to carry out maintenance on property
- Concerned that the landlord will not maintain the property
- Some financial help or grants should be available for people who have to comply with costly rules on alterations
- Grants needed to help people put in original features
- Concerned about state of property / land / structures in conservation areas
- Trees need to be pollarded / pruned
- Should not be unreasonable additional expenditure for residents to upgrade or improve their homes
- Four bins in front of a property, solar panels and a TV aerial on the roof change appearance more than a satellite dish
- Concerned about a property in the conservation area which appears neglected since its recent sale
- More appropriate street lamps
- Pavements need to be maintained

Developments in conservation areas

- New developments lose an area its character and sense of community
- Demolition of old large houses and replacement with flats must stop
- Inappropriate developments not in keeping with conservation area
- People should seek planning permission to put things up
- New developments should be designed to match the character of current properties
- Properties turned into multi occupancy dwellings adversely affect the character of an area
- Planning conditions not monitored for compliance nor enforced
- Restrictions on new buildings stopped a new development being built higher and less sympathetic to the surroundings
- Installation engineer ignored comments when told the conservation area did not allow the work he was doing
- Frustrating not to be allowed same dormer extension as neighbour, but builder allowed to build two houses not in keeping with neighbouring properties
- Proposed development looks too modern for the style of the conservation area
- More concerted determination needed by town planners to agree appropriate developments when proposed by large companies

Developments next to conservation areas

- Lack of restrictions for properties / developments next to and overlooking conservation areas
- Inappropriate developments in neighbouring areas not in keeping with conservation areas
- Developments next to conservation areas have an impact on them
- New building outside conservation area will have an adverse effect on residents in the conservation area
- Area previously in conservation area now outside and planning permission sought for huge block of flats

Against conservation areas

- Council able to control the population
- Some existing policies ridicule integrity of conservation areas
- Hard pressed to find properties with all original Victorian features and materials
- Arbitrary selection of streets to be part of conservation areas
- Emphasis is only on the look from the front
- Red tape and bureaucratic process
- Pain to get approval from Council; takes too long
- Too restrictive to home improvements; too expensive to apply for planning permission each time

Support for conservation areas

- Place is lovely and have a friendly community
- Hope always kept a conservation area
- Lovely living in wonderful area, lovely buildings
- Important to preserve the character of these areas
- Vital in conserving areas of architectural interest and keeping the spirit and character of the area
- Important to retain conservation areas for the benefit of future generations
- They must be maintained, especially in built up areas
- Wonderful living in a conservation area
- Broadly speaking in favour of them, but in some areas brought in too late to save the character
- Like the way the character of area is protected
- Like living in a conservation area; restrictions are appropriate; they preserve the valuable character of the area
- Very positive about them
- Conservation areas important to the well-being of people
- Fantastic move, long overdue
- Essential to protect character of the area
- Helpful to try to preserve the identity of particular areas
- Like living in a conservation area and would like it to remain

Q9 WOULD YOU LIKE THE COUNCIL TO CONTACT YOU IN THE FUTURE ABOUT CONSERVATION ISSUES?

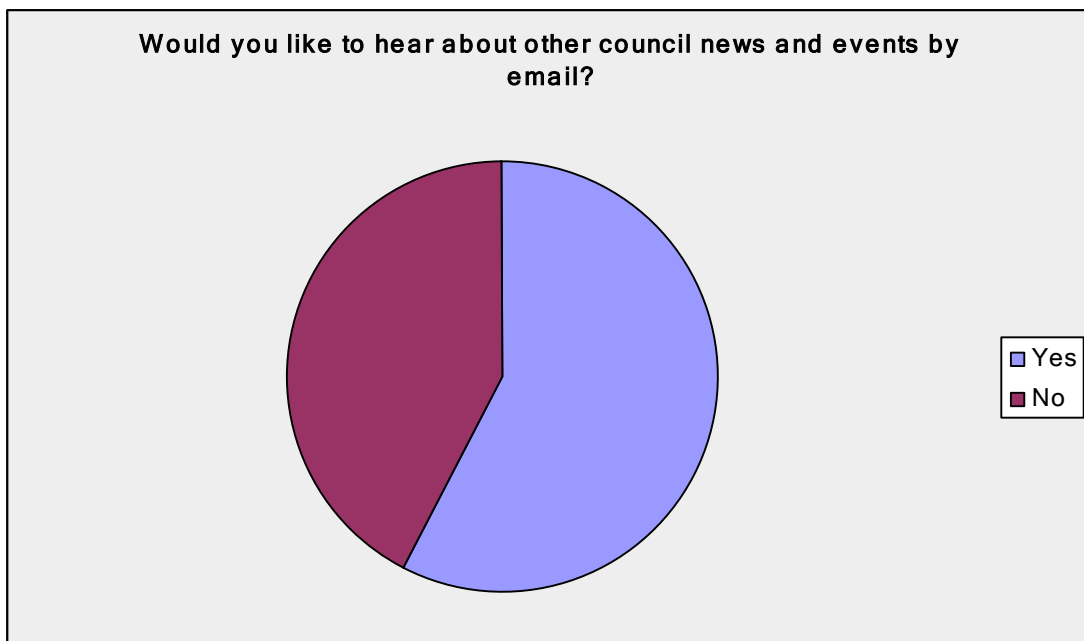
97 people answered this question. 42 people did not respond. The respondents' information will be forwarded to Planning Policy for inclusion in the service's database.

Would you like the council to contact you in the future about conservation issues?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	71.1%	69
No	28.9%	28
<i>answered question</i>		97
<i>skipped question</i>		42

Q10 WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT OTHER COUNCIL NEWS AND EVENTS BY EMAIL?

92 people answered this question. 47 people did not respond.

Would you like to hear about other council news and events by email?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.6%	53
No	42.4%	39
<i>answered question</i>		92
<i>skipped question</i>		47



Q11 PLEASE FILL IN YOUR CONTACT DETAILS BELOW.

82 people answered this question. 57 people did not respond.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Name	98.8%	81
Address	100.0%	82
ZIP/Postal Code	96.3%	79
Email Address	86.6%	71
Phone Number	64.6%	53
<i>answered question</i>		82
<i>skipped question</i>		57

**QUESTION 1
WHICH STREET DO YOU LIVE ON?**

WARD / CONSERVATION AREA	STREET NAME	NO. OF RESPONSES
Callowland (Nascot CA)		0
Central (Civic Core CA)	Crossroads House, The Parade	1
Central (Estcourt CA)	Earl Street	2
	Estcourt Road	4
	Loates Lane	1
	Queens Road	2
	Sotheron Road	3
	Sutton Road	2
		14
Central (High Street / King Street CA)	Granville Road	1
Central (St Mary's CA)		1
Nascot (Nascot CA)		0
	Alexandra Road	1
	Church Road	6
	Cole Road	2
	Denmark Street	3
	Essex Road	4
	Langley Road	2
	Malden Road	3
	Nascot Place	2
	Nascot Road	1
	Nascot Street	6
		30
Oxhey (Oxhey CA)	Hillside Crescent	1
	Lower Paddock Road	5
	Upper Paddock Road	1
	Villiers Road	1
		8
Oxhey (Watford Heath CA)	Watford Heath	1
Park (Grove Mill Lane CA)		1
	Grove Mill Lane	4
Vicarage (The Square CA)		4
	Banbury Street	1
	Oxford Street	3
	Souldern Street	6
		10

Woodside (Macdonnell Gardens CA)

Macdonnell Gardens 4

Streets outside conservation areas

Beechwood Rise 1
 Bradshaw Road 1
 Bruce Grove 1
 Bucks Avenue 1
 Cannon Road 1
 Cassiobury Drive 1
 Chenies Way 1
 Chester Road 1
 Colnhurst Road 1
 Croxley View 1
 Dowry Walk 1
 Eastbury Road 2
 Eastfield Avenue 1
 Ebury Road 1
 Edward Amey Close 1
 Field End Close 1
 Gadswell Close 1
 Gladstone Road 1
 Grover Road 1
 Harwoods Road 1
 Hillrise Avenue 2
 Lamb Close 1
 Langley Road 1
 Longspring 1
 Lowson Grove 1
 Market Street 1
 Marlborough Road 1
 Maytree Crescent 1
 Merton Road 1
 Moor View 1
 North Approach 1
 Oxhey Road 3
 Parkside Drive 2
 Pinner Road (not in CA) 1
 Princes Avenue 1
 Queenswood Crescent 1
 Raphael Drive 1
 Ridge Lane 1
 The Ridgeway 1
 Royal Court, Queen Marys Avenue 1
 Sandringham Road 1
 Shakespeare Street 1
 Southwold Road 1
 Tucker Street 1
 Tudor Walk 1
 Wellington Road 1
 Wentworth Close 1
 West Street 1

Streets outside Borough	Whippendell Road		1
	Wiggenhall Road		1
		55	
Anonymous	St George's Drive, Carpenders Park		1
	Vivian Gardens		1
		2	
	Pinner Road		1
	Church Road		1
	Anonymous		5
	In conservation area		2
			<hr/>
			139

**MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS TASK GROUP
SURVEY OF COUNCILLORS' VIEWS, JANUARY 2016**

1. Is there a conservation area in your ward?

- Yes
- No

2. Which conservation area(s) do you represent?

- Civic Core (Central, Park)
- Estcourt (Central)
- Grove Mill Lane (Park)
- High Street/King Street (Central)
- MacDonnell Gardens (Woodside)
- Nascot (Nascot, Callowland)
- Oxhey (Oxhey)
- St Mary's (Central)
- The Square (Vicarage)
- Watford Heath (Oxhey)

3. How did you find out that you had a conservation area in your ward?

- live in the ward
- informed by residents or a residents' group
- informed by Council officers
- other (please give details)

4. Are you aware of the planning restrictions on properties in conservation areas?

- Yes
- No

5. Do you feel, or have you been notified by residents, that there have been inappropriate developments or alterations to properties in Watford's conservation areas? (please give examples and ward name)

6. Are you aware of any action taken to enforce planning restrictions or rectify inappropriate developments or alterations in Watford's conservation areas? (please give examples and ward names)

7. Do you have any other views or comments about Watford's conservation areas?

8. Do you have any residents in your ward who take a particular interest in conservation issues and would be interested in being contacted in the future?

9. Please provide the following details:

Name

Ward