

## SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART 1 – FOR PUBLICATION)

**MEETING:** Council – Tuesday 07 December 2016 – 7:00 pm  
Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** All Councillors with the exception of those listed at item 1 below.  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Youth Mayor.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Batson, D Cullen L Harrington, M Hurst, S Mead, C Saunders and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2. MINUTES – COUNCIL – 4 OCTOBER 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council meeting of 4 October 2016 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to the following amendment:

Item 11 – First sentence should read ‘Portfolio Holder’ and not ‘Polio Holder’

### 3. MAYOR’S COMMUNICATION

The Mayor informed the meeting that since the last meeting, the Mayoral Team had undertaken a number of engagements in the town and he referred to a number of highlights.

**4. MAIN DEBATE – PRESENTATION FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HERTFORDSHIRE**

Council received a presentation from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, David Lloyd.

It was moved, seconded and after a full debate **RESOLVED** that:

This Council endorses the key aims highlighted within the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan. We welcome the Police and Crime Commissioner’s ongoing support, working in conjunction with the SoSafe Community Safety Partnership, to address our local priorities to reduce crime & anti-social behaviour and the renewed emphasis on tackling domestic abuse and addressing road safety issues.

The forthcoming Policing and Crime Bill will seek to promote the value of collaboration and joined up working with the Emergency Services. This Council pledges our continued support to strengthen our joint work with our Police colleagues and welcomes the innovative and positive links being built with Neighbourhood Policing teams.

We urge the Police and Crime Commissioner to consider, as part of the action planning to deliver the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan, whether the levels of resourcing for policing districts in Hertfordshire adequately reflects the differential levels of crime and disorder in the County.

**5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

None.

**6. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL**

None.

**7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The question received from the member of the public had been withdrawn.

## **8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE**

The Leader of the Opposition enquired about the proposed development at the Symonds Green Neighbourhood Centre and why the Council was not retaining the site for much needed social housing.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised that the Neighbourhood Centre was privately owned which meant that unfortunately, the Council could not direct on the tenure of the properties.

Council then received updates on the following:

- Leaseholder Forum – major works and caretaking charges;
- Tenancy Services – Outcomes from Tenants Wellbeing Day held on 23 November 2016 ;
- The Autumn Statement;
- Single Person Discount Review
- Great British High Street Awards;
- BTC - Pride of Stevenage Award;
- Firework Display;
- Christmas Lights Switch on
- A Brave New World
- Sports and Arts Finale
- Town Centre
- Play Areas

## **9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

The Mayor informed Council of the 2 motions detailed on the agenda. He advised that the first motion regarding the rail service between Hertford and Stevenage had been slightly revised and circulated around the Chamber.

The first motion was moved and seconded and after a debate, it was **RESOLVED** that, at a time of significant planned growth, which can only be delivered sustainably by continuing investment in public transport, the prospect of rail services between Hertford and Stevenage being severed for up to six years is totally unacceptable. Not only will this inconvenience thousands of passengers every week but it will encourage more traffic onto already congested roads.

The Mayor informed the meeting of the second motion on the agenda regarding state pension arrangements.

It was Moved, Seconded and after a debate, it was **RESOLVED** that the Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for the state pension from women born after 6 April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late.

#### **10. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Council received three questions. Details of the draft responses given to the original questions are attached.

- A. The Portfolio Holder for Resources then responded to a supplementary question relating to the refurbishment of the Autun Room. She advised that the original furniture had been offered to a range of charities and had been recycled where necessary.
- B. The Portfolio Holder for Resources responded to a supplementary question concerning the recent refurbishment of the toilets in Daneshill House. She reiterated that as urgent investment was required to ensure operable toilet facilities within Daneshill House, keeping the building safe.
- C. The Portfolio Holder for Housing responded to a supplementary question relating to homeless accommodation within the Town over the winter months and advised that statistics regarding the usage of The Haven would be available at the end of the winter period. In relation to the Council's own properties, those people registered on the housing waiting list and other homeless families would be given priority.

**11. 2016/2017 MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the updates to the 2016/17 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy are approved.

**12. REVISION TO CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the revised Contract Standing Orders are approved.

**13. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS (FOR AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS FROM 2018/19 ONWARDS)**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council opts in to the appointing person arrangements provided by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of external auditors for a five year period commencing on the 1 April 2018.

**14. STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL CO-OPERATIVE CORPORATE PLAN FUTURE TOWN FUTURE COUNCIL**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council's Corporate Plan – Future Town Future Council is approved.

**15. AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 28 SEPTEMBER AND 9 NOVEMBER 2016**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 28 September and 9 November 2016 are noted.

## RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS (Item 10)

- A The purpose for the refurbishment of the Autun Room was to make this space more flexible, primarily to continue use for civic and committee meetings, but with the flexibility to then accommodate public meetings, other events or training. The introduction of the new mobile desks will mean that the layout can be easily changed to suit the format and needs of the particular meeting. The option to use this room for other meetings is part of our approach to better utilise space within Daneshill House, in this instance by increasing the availability of flexible meeting space. This work enables the Council's wider work to increase income via leasing space to partners within Daneshill House, achieving £53,000 per annum income – equivalent to a 1% rise in Council Tax. The refurbishment work was carried out in-house facilities team at a cost of £3,500. The project has had a soft launch and we are considering whether to reuse some of the original seating. The older tables did not enable more flexible room settings; they were offered to a range of charities and have been recycled.
- B Funding for the refurbishment of the toilet facilities at Daneshill House was agreed as part of the capital programme for 2016/17. The new and old block toilets were last refurbished over 30 years ago and are now beyond their serviceable life. There have been a wide range of problems. This includes defective soil stacks, failing original pipework in place which is now defective and beyond end of life resulting in blockages and facilities not being available for use, the requirement to remove areas of remaining asbestos, and ventilation systems which are below required standards. Fundamentally, this was urgent investment required to ensure operable toilet facilities within Daneshill House, keeping the building safe and operational. In addition, as part of our internal engagement work between staff and the CEO, the poor state of the toilets was highlighted as a major concern. A budget of £450,000 was allocated for this, given the extensive works required. It is estimated that the pay back will be achieved within five years.
- C Thank you for your question regarding support for homeless people over the winter months. I can confirm that The Haven have opened up the Cold Weather Provision for the winter. This normally runs until approx. Feb time – subject to weather conditions. There is an agreed protocol between SBC and the Haven to ensure best use of the 10 spaces that are available. Placements will get use of all Haven facilities. There is no charge for clients using the Cold Weather Provision. There are total of 10 spaces available. A briefing to all Members with more detail was e.mail around on Friday, 25 November.