

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday 6 March 2017

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair),
J Brown, E Harrington, A Mitchell and C Saunders

In Attendance:

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7.15 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Bainbridge, E Connolly, J Mead and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 11 JANUARY 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 29 November 2016 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION IN STEVENAGE HOUSING STOCK

The Committee was presented with the Executive Member response to the Damp, Mould and Condensation Scrutiny Review. The Committee was pleased to note that the Executive Member had accepted all recommendations from the Review.

In relation to recommendation 2 regarding contact with tenants reporting a damp or mould issue, Officers reassured the Committee that whilst there was a corporate desire to work with customers to develop online solutions that could reduce the number of high volume, low value transactions, face to face provision would be maintained to ensure services remained fully accessible.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

4. 2017/18 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report seeking Member's approval for the Scrutiny Work Programme for the new Municipal Year.

The Scrutiny Officer had canvassed all Members involved in the scrutiny process, responses had been received from a number of Members commenting on the current scrutiny arrangements. A number of topics had also been suggested as potential scrutiny items.

Following discussion around the suitability of the topics and whether the Committee were of the view that the scrutiny process could add value to the issue, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That Scrutiny Members' feedback on ideas for improving Scrutiny (see section 4 of the Scrutiny Officer's report) be noted.
2. That having considered ideas put forward by individual Members, and from the public, the Committee determine the following subject matters to be added to a 'long list' work programme of potential Scrutiny reviews items for 2017/2018:
 - **Housing Allocations Policy** – including allocations into the sheltered housing schemes and flexicare schemes as Members were keen to see how the Policy is working with regards to its application;
 - **Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL)** – The Strategic Director advised that a contract performance review had recently been undertaken by an independent consultant. SLL and SBC Officers were currently considering the outcome of this review and the next steps. Members were advised that the outcome of the review could be considered by the Committee later in the year. Members also requested information from the Sports and Leisure Services Manager relating to data on ticket/membership sales in order to determine the number of local people using the facilities.
 - **Consultation** – Members suggested that it would be useful to review how the Council communicates and consults with local residents. The Strategic Director advised that an LGA Peer Review was due shortly on the Council's Communications Policy. The Assistant Director for Corporate Services and Transformation would arrange for the terms of reference and scope for that review to come to this Committee. It was also noted that this item was on the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - **Rough Sleepers** – consideration of the plight of rough sleepers in the Town. The Assistant Director for Housing and Investment would arrange for Officers to report back on the action plan which had come out of the recent Modern Member Programme (MMP) Homelessness session. Members could then consider if there was a need to consider this matter further.
 - **Lettings** – a new Reconnection Key Worker post had been established within the Homelessness Team on a 6 month pilot. It was agreed that this issue be considered again later in the year at the end of the pilot period;
 - **SSE (Southern Scottish Electric) Energy Utility Contact with**

Community Centres – a response would be sent to all Members from the Acting Head of Property and Estates Services updating them on the current situation with regard to the monitoring of this contract;

- **Symonds Green Community Centre** – agreed that the Scrutiny Officer liaise with Councillor Notley and contact the local resident who raised the issue of a lack of facilities for older people. The Strategic Director informed the Committee that a wider review would be taking place shortly and that the results of this review could be reported back to this Committee later in the financial year.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)** – The Scrutiny Officer agreed to obtain a copy of the CAB's AGM report and circulate it to Members of the Committee.
- **Town Twinning** – it was noted that the Environment and Economy Select Committee had suggested this topic as a potential cross committee review. Members were of the view, however that there was limited interest in scrutinising this issue.
- **Crime and Disorder** – This would be covered at the usual Annual Meeting.
- **Public Health** – to be dealt with as an annual review item. It was noted that a Stevenage Health Summit was being planned ideally to take place prior to the summer holidays.

3. That the comments regarding the Future Town Future Council programme and the relationship between Scrutiny and the Officer Senior Leadership Team (see section 5.4 & 5.5 of the report respectively) be noted.
4. That it be noted that item on the Private Rented Sector – monitoring of recommendations and agreed actions would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.
5. That the following Policy Development work identified so far for the Committee be noted:
 - Performance Management Framework
 - Sheltered Housing – this issue to be dealt with alongside the scrutiny of the Housing Allocations Policy.

5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR