



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday, 17 June 2020

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Virtual (via Zoom)

Contact: Ian Gourlay Tel: 01438 242703

Members: Councillors: L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), S Barr, L Chester, M Downing, ME Gardner, S-J McDonough, A McGuinness, J Mead, S Mead, A Mitchell CC, R Parker CC, C Parris and S Speller

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 16 MARCH 2020

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 March 2020

Minutes attached

Pages 5 – 8

3. PART 1 DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

To consider the following Part 1 Decisions of the Executive taken on Wednesday 10 June 2020.

Executive Agenda Item No.		Page No.
2	Minutes of the Executive – 13 May 2020	3
3	Coronavirus Recovery Plan - Review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Impact of Covid-19 on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget	9
4	Corporate Performance – Quarter Four 2019/20	43

Notice of Decisions to follow

PLEASE BRING YOUR AGENDA AND REPORTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2020

4. URGENT PART 1 DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair agreed to waive the right to call-in relating to the following Urgent Decisions taken by Officers in order to comply with new legislation and as part of the Council's emergency response to the national COVID-19 pandemic:

- a. Gas Access Process
- b. Damp and Condensation Service
- c. Aids and Adaptation Service
- d. Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund
- e. Temporary accommodation
- f. Housing lettings and terminations
- g. Customer Service Centre and main reception walk-in services
- h. Closure of the play service
- i. Community response team
- j. Local Community Budgets
- k. Community Centres
- l. Indoor Market
- m. Car parks
- n. Parks equipment and car parks in open spaces
- o. Commercial rent policy
- p. Caretaking service
- q. Cemetery arrangements
- r. Closure of recycling banks
- s. Toilet closures
- t. Suspension of non-urgent repairs
- u. Allotment communal facilities
- v. Pavilion closures
- w. Suspension of bulky waste collections and skip services
- x. Highway verge cutting

y. Major works / delivery team projects

The Officer Key Decisions were included in the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Incident Management Report that was considered by Council on 20 May 2020.

The Key Decision forms which provide more details are available on the Council's website via the following link: [Link to Key Decision Forms.](#)

5. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent

6. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

7. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

To consider the Part II Decisions of the Executive taken on Wednesday 10 June 2020

Executive Agenda Item	Page No.
7 On-site Building Material Management Contract 2020/25	81

Notice of Decisions to follow

PLEASE BRING YOUR AGENDA AND REPORTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2020

8. URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None.

9. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 16 March 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Laurie Chester, Michael Downing, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris.

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.25pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Michelle Gardner, Andy McGuinness, John Mead and Sarah Mead.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12 AND 17 FEBRUARY 2020**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 and 17 February 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 **PART 1 DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered the decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive meeting held on 11 March 2020:

Minutes of the Executive – 12 February 2020

Noted.

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny and Select Committees

Noted.

Damp and Condensation Policy

Members were pleased to note that following the Scrutiny Review on this issue, it was now clear as to the Council's responsibility as well as the onus on the tenant. It was also noted that the focus was now around managing properties and matching the appropriate tenants to those properties.

In response to a question, Officers advised that following the Business Unit Review, there were 8 tenancy advisors supported by Wardens to enforce the conditions of tenancy agreements. A review of the restructure would be undertaken in 6 months to monitor the staffing levels required.

Aids and Adaptations Service Policy

It was noted that the focus was now around managing properties and matching the appropriate tenants to those properties.

In response to a question, Officers advised that following the Business Unit Review, there were 8 tenancy advisors supported by Wardens to enforce the conditions of tenancy agreements. A review of the restructure would be undertaken in 6 months to monitor the staffing levels required.

Officers advised that other than sometimes experiencing some delay, the relationship between Stevenage Borough Council and Herts County Council was good in relation to aids and adaptation cases.

Variations of Tenancy Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy

It was noted that the reference to pets and other animals would be adapted to allow tenants to keep certain types of pets without needing to obtain permission.

In response to a question about smoking, officers advised that within the agreements, tenants were asked to refrain from smoking for two hours prior to a visit from Council officer. This provided the support for officers to rebook visits if necessary.

Officers clarified that the question relating to the sexuality of the tenant was included in the consultation questionnaire and not in the Tenancy Agreement itself.

Community Wealth Building (CWB)

A Member requested that the work undertaken in and by community centres should be linked into the work on CWB.

In relation to procurement rules, Officers clarified that each contract was agreed on an individual basis. Contract Standing Orders refer to the inclusion of local companies but the rules around the tender assessment must be published in advance of the tender process.

Corporate Performance 2019/20 – Quarter 3

Officers advised that cases of absence due to coronavirus would be recorded separately from the generic sickness figures. Officers advised that the Council was following NJC advice regarding self-isolation and could allow staff to have the ability to work at home did require a level of trust in employees. It was acknowledged that there were groups of staff members who could not work at home due to the nature of

their jobs.

In response to a question regarding the rise in sickness figures since the introduction of the new reporting regime, Officers suggested that this could be as a result of past under reporting and recording.

In response to a question regarding recycling rates for the Town, Officers confirmed that Stevenage was similar to other urban areas but that a range of issues were being looked at as part of the waste strategy which was currently under review.

Officers agreed to look at the overall in way performance data was reported to see if it could be made clearer.

3rd Quarter Revenue Monitoring Report - General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2019/20

In response to a question, officers confirmed that the reduction in Council Tax arrears was partly due to the late banding of new properties such as Park Place.

3rd Quarter Capital Monitoring Report - General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2019/20

Noted.

Urgent Part I Business

Officers advised that a briefing note would be sent to all Members with an update on the current situation in respect of Coronavirus.

4 URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None.

5 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report requesting the Committee to agree the Work Programme for the Committee for the new Municipal Year.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Council's response to the Coronavirus would be a future topic to scrutinise.

In relation to the review of the Scrutiny process, it was agreed that this would carry over to the new Municipal year as a number of committee meetings had now been cancelled due to the coronavirus situation. Officers advised that due to the exceptional circumstances the Council was having to work in it might be that committees would have to work differently in the near future.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (1) That the Council's response to the Coronavirus be a future topic to scrutinise;
- (2) That further details of what should be included in the Committee's work plan be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in the new Municipal Year.

6 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

7 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.

2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

8 **PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12 FEBRUARY 2020**

Noted.

9 **PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II decisions of the Executive held on 12 February 2020 be noted subject to Councillor Mitchell's name being removed from the second paragraph in Item 4.

10 **URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

11 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR