

Public Document Pack

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

17 May 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage on Wednesday, 25 May 2022 at 7.00pm and you are summoned to attend to transact the following business.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Partridge
Chief Executive

AGENDA

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

2. **MINUTES - 24 FEBRUARY 2022 AND 9 MARCH 2022**

To approve as a correct record the attached Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 24 February 2022 and 9 March 2022.

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3. **ELECTION OF MAYOR**

To elect the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

4. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

To elect the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

5. **APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH MAYOR**

To appoint a Youth Mayor for 2022/23, as nominated by the Stevenage Youth Council.

6. **BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2022**

To advise of the results of the Borough Council Elections in Bandley Hill, Bedwell, Chells, Longmeadow, Manor, Martins Wood, Old Town, Pin Green, Roebuck, St. Nicholas, Shephall, Symonds Green and Woodfield Wards held on 5 May 2022, together with the percentage turnouts.

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7. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

To note the appointment of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

8. APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADERS AND DEPUTY LEADERS OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL

To note the appointment of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Political Groups on the Council for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

To consider various issues concerning the Council's political management structure and the Constitution for 2022/23.

REPORT TO FOLLOW

10. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

A. To appoint Members to the Standing Committees of Stevenage Borough Council for the Municipal Year 2021/22; and

B. To appoint to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for each of those Committees.

REPORT TO FOLLOW

11. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

To appoint Council representatives onto various outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

SCHEDULE TO FOLLOW

12. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER

To consider an officer report concerning the appointment of the Monitoring Officer.

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 24 February 2022

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Sandra Barr (Mayor), Margaret Notley (Deputy Mayor), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Sandra Barr, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, John Duncan, Alex Farquharson, John Gardner, Jody Hanafin, Liz Harrington, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence CC, Nick Leech, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Lin Martin-Haugh, Andy McGuinness, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Margaret Notley, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Loraine Rossati, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Sharon Taylor OBE CC, Jeannette Thomas and Tom Wren

Start / End Start Time: 7.00pm
Time: End Time: 8.40pm

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Doug Bainbridge, Teresa Callaghan, Wendy Kerby and Maureen McKay.

The Chief Executive advised the Council that in relation to agenda item 3 – Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting, in accordance with guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, there was no requirement for Members to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest. The exception to this being any councillor who was two or more months in arrears on their Council Tax, in which case they would need to declare this and not take part in the vote.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 26 JANUARY 2022**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 26 January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3 **FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/23 AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22 - 2025/26**

Before presenting the 2022/23 Budget, the Leader spoke about the assault on freedom and democracy and the prospect of the destructive and tragic war and the consequential humanitarian issues as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. She encouraged Council members to stand together in solidarity with the people of

Ukraine and sent them the Council's prayers and love.

The Leader then presented the proposed 2022/2023 Budget, projected 2022/23 General Fund Budget and final proposals for the 2022/23 Council Tax and Council Tax Support Scheme.

In presenting the budget, the Leader advised that the proposed budget would be a budget to:

- invest in covid recovery;
- support Stevenage residents at the time of a cost of living crisis;
- invest in Stevenage peoples' priorities;
- invest in tackling climate change and
- continue to strive for equality.

The Leader reflected on the extraordinary circumstances that had been faced by the town, businesses, Stevenage communities and residents as the pandemic inflicted new Covid-19 variants on everyone with their particular impact on the most vulnerable. She thanked Stevenage residents for the way they had supported family, friends and neighbours throughout the pandemic and the way in which they had embraced the vaccination programme.

She also thanked Council officers for delivering the vital front-line services, which supported the most vulnerable residents, housing the homeless, delivering help and emergency funding to businesses, keeping public spaces safe and taking on the move to virtual working.

Council was advised by the Leader that the bottom line cost of COVID to the Council was an estimated £4.8Million which made setting a budget next year more difficult than ever. Residents would also be facing a cost of living crisis unprecedented in recent times as the cost of fuel, energy and food were hit by inflation not seen for decades and which was about to be exacerbated by a huge national insurance increase negating any pay rises local people may have been awarded.

The Leader advised that the Council was proposing to increase Council Tax by £4.45 a year or 2.26% for a band C property, as well as increases to a number of fees and charges and make budget reductions of £93k to meet the funding gap and set an affordable and manageable budget. When taking account of the County Council increase of 3.99%, and 4.69% from the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Band C Council Tax in Stevenage for 2022/23 would be £1,758.11, per month, an overall increase of 3.87%. The Police and Crime Commissioner would receive £198.22, Hertfordshire County Council would get £1,359.38 and the final £200.51 would be for Stevenage Borough Council.

The Leader reminded Council that only 11% of the Council Tax Bill would go to Stevenage Borough Council, which represented a charge of £3.86 a week for all of the 120 services which included town centre transformation, building more social and affordable homes, waste and recycling, the co-operative neighbourhoods programme, leisure services and many more. The remainder of the charge would be for the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for policing charges.

The Leader thanked the Members of the Leader's Financial Services Group, a cross party group of Councillors, who had scrutinised the detail of the savings and growth proposals.

In relation to the Council Tax Support Offer from the Council, the Leader advised that for those households in receipt of maximum benefit they would only pay £17 per year or 33 pence per week.

In her speech, the Leader shared some of the Council's achievements over the previous year including:

- Securing £37.5m from the Government to contribute to 9 major projects across the Town which would support the Council to deliver better transport links and improved leisure and cultural facilities;
- A new Bus Interchange;
- Town Centre improvements including demolitions across the Town centre to ready sites for development;
- The relocation of Autolus – a cell therapy company who were building their £65million European headquarters in the Town Centre.

The Leader referred to the continuing priorities for the Council including:

- Delivering more social and affordable housing for the Town. The building of hundreds of new homes in Stevenage alongside generating local prosperity by creating new jobs on the development sites and offering workers professional training;
- Work to combat crime and anti-social behaviour through the efforts of the Neighbourhood Wardens, Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse and the No-More Service, all of which offering much needed support for the Community;
- Changes to the Leisure Facility Management Contract to update the leisure provision and exciting proposals for a new leisure centre and a new museum/heritage centre to help residents to stay fit and well as part of the Healthy Stevenage Strategy;

The Council were then advised of plans for the Town for the upcoming year:

- The celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with Beacon Lighting taking place on 2 June 2022;
- The Big Jubilee Lunch would be taking place on Sunday 5 June with a Picnic in the Park event at Fairlands Valley Park. It was hoped that this would encourage the Stevenage community to come together and celebrate;
- Stevenage Day would be returning on 12 June to King George V playing fields after a break of 2 years;
- The Area Action Plan for the Station Gateway area, construction works on the new cycle, electric vehicle and car park hub would be starting in May;
- Construction would be starting on the first phase of the £350m flagship SG1 Town Centre Transformation scheme at Southgate and at the former Matalan site and the Swingate building would be demolished ready for construction.

The Leader spoke about the challenging target for climate change in Stevenage which was to get to net zero by 2030 and advised that the Council had set out ten things that every resident could do to help achieve that goal. She also advised that through the Herts Growth Board a study had been commissioned of Gunnels Wood Road to prepare a master plan to drive the development of the industrial area and also that the Town was eagerly awaiting the opening of Marks and Spencers in April

The Leader then moved the Motion, recommendations of the Executive and the formal Council Tax Resolution that had been circulated to Members. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd, Deputy Leader.

In seconding the Motion, the Deputy Leader advised that there had been a clear significant impact of Covid on the Budget over the last 2 years. Impacts had been felt including lower parking and commercial income, and increased homeless costs. Although some additional funding had been received from the Government, it had cost the Council an additional £4.8million which had to be found within the Budget.

The Deputy Leader advised that despite this the Council had managed to retain a prudent level of resources within its Budget. However an additional £2.14m still remained to be found from the 2022/23 Budget.

It was noted that Business Rates gains would help to improve the Council's financial resilience or continue to provide the services important to residents.

Council was advised that due to a projected period of high inflation and the number of uncertainties facing the Council there would be an additional financial report submitted to the June 2022 Executive meeting.

The Deputy Leader advised that due to the financial situation, there would unfortunately be some service reductions to services including during term time to the Play Service and also the Council would have to increase some fees and charges. However, the increase in Council Tax would allow the Council to continue with the 120 Services it provided.

She thanked Members and Officers for their consideration and scrutiny of the proposed budget.

The Leader of the Opposition (Councillor Phil Bibby) stated that his Group had intended to put forward an alternative budget but the timescales involved had not made this a viable proposal. He agreed that there were additional challenges due to the impact of Covid but that the Council could not expect the Government to provide unlimited funding.

Cllr Bibby advised that in order to bridge the gap in the budget, his Group were of the view that a number of issues could be considered including:

- Whether the move to digitalisation would actually contribute to the Council's required savings;
- Whether the Council was getting good Value for Money from Consultants

- employed;
- Communications – could all the expenditure proposed be justified;
- Could the Modern Member Programme be revisited to make more effective for Members;
- were there alternative ways to fund the Civic Links Programme;
- Significant savings could be made if a Joint Waste Authority was in place.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Robin Parker advised that despite the limitations of only being advised by Central Government of settlement figures in December, the budget process remained successful in Stevenage with the input of the Leaders Financial Services Group although the deadline for submission of Budget Amendments should be removed.

The points raised by the Group included:

- There should be much better publicity about the Council Tax share for Stevenage Borough Council;
- New budget initiatives were publicised, sometimes to the detriment of the basics which could be forgotten such as cycleways, telephone response times, housing and fence repairs, recycling boxes not being replaced etc;
- Improved publicity on issues such as the Lytton Way works was essential to avoid public criticism;
- Income generation should be considered such as solar power generation on the Council's own buildings, advertising on Council property;
- Assumed income from land sales may not come to fruition.

After a full debate, a recorded vote* was taken and it was RESOLVED:

1. That the following be approved:
 - a. the revised working revenue estimates for the year 2021/22 amounting to £11,680,510 and the revenue estimates for 2022/23 amounting to £11,151,760;
 - b. the contribution from balances totalling £1,458,912 in 2021/22;
 - c. the contribution from balances totalling £1,055,629 in 2022/23.
2. That it be noted that at its meeting on 19 January 2022 the Executive calculated the amount of 28,003.7 Band D equivalent properties as its council tax base for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011.
3. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:

- a. £82,635,061 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act, less the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d)
- b. £76,318,266 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act.
- c. £6,316,795 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3a above exceeds the aggregate at 3b above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- d. £225.57 Being the amount at 3c divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year
- e. Valuation Bands
- | | |
|---|----------|
| A | £ 150.38 |
| B | £ 175.44 |
| C | £ 200.51 |
| D | £ 225.57 |
| E | £ 275.70 |
| F | £ 325.82 |
| G | £ 375.95 |
| H | £ 451.14 |

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 3d. above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. a. That it be noted that for the year 2022/23 Hertfordshire County Council have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

Basic Amount Of Council Tax	Adult Social Care Charge	2022/23 Council Tax
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A	£ 899.09	£ 120.45	£ 1,019.54
B	£ 1,048.93	£ 140.53	£ 1,189.46
C	£ 1,198.78	£ 160.60	£ 1,359.38
D	£ 1,348.63	£ 180.68	£ 1,529.31
E	£ 1,648.33	£ 220.83	£ 1,869.16
F	£ 1,948.02	£ 260.98	£ 2,209.00
G	£ 2,247.72	£ 301.13	£ 2,548.85
H	£ 2,697.26	£ 361.36	£ 3,058.62

- b. That it be noted that for the year 2022/23 Hertfordshire Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and amended by Section 27 of the Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£ 148.67
B	£ 173.44
C	£ 198.22
D	£ 223.00
E	£ 272.56
F	£ 322.11
G	£ 371.67
H	£ 446.00

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e. and 4a. and b. above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts for council tax for the year 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£1,318.59
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B	£1,538.34
C	£1,758.11
D	£1,977.88
E	£2,417.42
F	£2,856.93
G	£3,296.47
H	£3,955.76

6. To determine in accordance with Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992 that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e.
7. That Members note the inclusion of the 2022/23 Fees and Charges of £341,780 (Appendix B to the report) in the draft 2022/23 budget.
8. That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), summarised in section 4.13 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be noted.
9. That the minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,471,038 in line with the 2022/23 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be approved.
10. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2022/23, (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
11. That the Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options as set out in section 4.2 and Appendix A, of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report totalling £780,945 and £39,370 for the General Fund and HRA respectively for 2022/23 be approved.
12. That the Growth options included in section 4.3 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report are approved for inclusion in the 2022/23 General Fund (£120,078) and HRA (£63,360) budgets.
13. That the General pressures set out in section 4.3 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be approved.
14. Members approve a further £300,000 to pump prime Transformation to be included in the Council's 2022/23 budget setting processes to enable to significantly contribute to the savings targets as set out in section 4.11 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report.
15. Members approve the identification of a further £500,000 of MYMC options

for the June 2022 MTFS report as set out in paragraph 4.11.4 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report.

16. Members approve the use of the business rate gains only once realised and ring fence the use for firstly the financial resilience of the Council and if required to be transferred to the Income Equalisation Reserve and thereafter, they are used for Regeneration or Co-operative Neighbourhood one off spend.
17. That the 2022/23 Council Tax Support scheme is approved as set out in section 4.6 to the of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report.
18. That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny as set out in section 4.19 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be noted.
19. That Members note the Equalities Impact Assessments appended to the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report in Appendices D and E.
20. That the work of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LFSG) in reviewing the efficiency, commercial and fees and charges as outlined in section 4.17 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be noted.
21. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views considered as part of the 2022/23 General Fund budget setting process.
22. That in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue with the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2023, (paragraph 4.18.5-4.18.7 refers in the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report).
23. That final General Fund Capital Growth Bids for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix A (and incorporated into Appendix C) to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 be approved.
24. That the revisions to the 2021/22 General Fund budget as incorporated into Appendix C to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report be approved.
25. That the Final 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix C to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 be approved, together with the recommended resourcing.
26. That the CFO brings a report forward during the 2022/23 financial year setting out the Council's key capital regeneration and community asset ambitions and key land and asset disposals, not currently in the capital strategy to determine a funding strategy to meet these Corporate priorities.
27. That the Final HRA budget requests for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix B (and incorporated into Appendix D) to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report as approved at the 26 January Council be noted.
28. That the Final 2022/23 HRA Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix D to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report be approved.

29. That the updated forecast of resources 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix C (General Fund) and Appendix D (HRA) to the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report be approved.
30. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets as detailed in Appendix E in the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 be approved for consideration by the Executive.
31. That the funding increase requested for the Bus Interchange scheme as set out in paragraph 4.1.2 of the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 be approved.
32. That the Executive be given delegated authority to approve all of the On Hold schemes, so that they can go ahead depending on the outcome of the work identified as set out in paragraph 4.3.1 of the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26.
33. That the 2022/23 de-minimis expenditure limit, as set out in section 4.11 of the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report, be approved.
34. That the 2022/23 contingency allowances respectively in paragraphs 4.12.1 and 4.12.2 of the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report be approved.
35. That the Executive delegation set out in paragraph 4.12.3 of the Draft Capital Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 report, allowing Executive to approve increases to the capital programme for grant funded projects, be approved.

*Recorded Vote

For – Councillors Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Sandra Barr, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, John Gardner, Liz Harrington, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Lin Martin-Haugh, Andy McGuinness, Sarah Mead, Robin Parker, Claire Parris, Loraine Rossati, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Sharon Taylor, Jeanette Thomas and Tom Wren - 25

Against – Councillors Phil Bibby, John Duncan, Alex Farquharson, Jody Hanafin, Chris Howells, Graham Lawrence, Nick Leech, Adam Mitchell and Margaret Notley - 9

Abstentions – 0

Not present – Councillors Doug Bainbridge, Teresa Callaghan, Lizzy Kelly, Wendy Kerby and Maureen McKay.

4 **ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2022/23**

The Council considered a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 including its Annual Investment Strategy Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy following consideration by the Audit Committee and Executive.

In response to a question regarding the recent and potential future rises in the interest rates, Officers advised that they had factored in the recent rise and would be monitoring closely the situation including the assumed significant increase in fuel and utility costs.

It was then moved, seconded and **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved.
2. That the prudential indicators for 2022/23 be approved.
3. That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy be approved.

CHAIR

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 9 March 2022

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Sandra Barr (Mayor), Margaret Notley (Deputy Mayor), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, John Duncan, Alex Farquharson, John Gardner, Jody Hanafin, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence CC, Nick Leech, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Maureen McKay, Lin Martin-Haugh, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Loraine Rossati, Simon Speller, Sharon Taylor OBE CC, Jeannette Thomas and Tom Wren.

Start / End Start Time: 7.00pm
Time: End Time: 11.00pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Doug Bainbridge, Andy McGuinness and Graham Snell.

Councillor Sharon Taylor declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Items 12 (Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23) and 13 (Pay Policy Statement 2022/23), in view of her role in the negotiations on Local Government Pay Awards as a member of the NJC Employers' Side.

2 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor announced that she had accepted:

- an additional Question from the Public in respect of bus services in the town. The question had arisen at a meeting of the Stevenage Bus Users Group held on 1 March 2022 and was submitted by Mr David Martin (Treasurer of the Group), and hence was received after the deadline date for submission of questions. The question and answer had been sent to Members on the supplementary agenda for the meeting; and
- an urgent motion from the Labour Group concerning the crisis in Ukraine. This had also been sent to Members on the supplementary agenda for the meeting. She announced that she would be taking this urgent motion first under Item 9 (Notice of Motions).

The Mayor summarised the activities that she and her consort had been involved with since the previous Council meeting in July 2021. These had included:

- the opening of two stores in the indoor market, one of which was the home for the Covid snake;
- opening the specialist Walkwell shop in the Westgate Centre;
- drawing the Christmas raffle at the Nationwide Building Society;
- filming a Christmas message (with the Leader) to residents;
- being involved in the film for Holocaust Memorial Day;
- making a film to promote Stevenage Day 2022;
- making a film to send a message celebrating the new Stevenage Special Constables' passing out ceremony;
- accompanied by Councillor Claire Parris, attending the Mayor of Hertsmere's Holocaust Memorial Day lantern parade;
- a visit to the Coptic Church cathedral in Stevenage, and being part of the contemporary martyrs' day 2022, an online event to highlight the suffering of Orthodox Christians and modern day martyrs of the Coptic Church;
- judging (with Councillor John Gardner) the green network logo competition; and judging (with the Deputy Mayor) the right up you street award, the friendliest road competition, which was won by Baddeley Close in Shephall;
- awarding the winning medals to the children of Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Schools writing competition;
- visiting Mossbury School to open the "Mossy Mile", comprising new exercise equipment;
- a visit to the new SADA refuge house in Stevenage;
- attending the Betty Game Trust annual meeting;
- a private viewing of the new art installation and exhibition titled "Out in Stevenage", imagining an LGBTQ+ history of the town;
- a preview of the new Bus Interchange facility;
- opening/launching the new North Herts College Construction Hub;
- breaking ground at Dunn Close, in readiness for the new supported housing scheme;
- hosting a fundraising Gala Ball at the Cromwell Hotel;
- the celebration of the life of her late friend and former councillor (and Mayor) Carol Latif at Harwood Park Crematorium; and
- attending the very moving tribute to the bravery of the people of the Ukraine held in the Town Square on the early evening of 4 March 2022.

3 MAIN DEBATE

There was no Main Debate.

4 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

There were no Petitions and Deputations.

5 QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

The Council received three questions from the Youth Council. The responses to the three questions had been published in the supplementary agenda for the meeting.

No supplementary questions were asked by the Youth Mayor.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Council noted that a response to the question submitted by Mr Jim Borchers regarding the recycling of waste paper by Schools had been published in the supplementary agenda for the meeting.

No supplementary question had been received.

The Council further noted that a response from Councillor Lloyd Briscoe (Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport) to the question submitted by Mr David Martin (from BUGS) concerning bus services in the town had also been published in the supplementary agenda for the meeting.

Mr Martin was present at the meeting, and addressed his original question to Councillor John Gardner (Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration).

Councillor Gardner replied that he echoed entirely the views expressed by Councillor Briscoe in his response to the original question.

7 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Phil Bibby, asked the following question:

“The Council had recently issued a press release without evidence claiming that ‘people who cycle regularly live longer than those who do not, and cycling regularly to work or school has been shown to be the most effective thing an individual can do to improve health and increase longevity’. Should the Council not be giving more truthful and balanced advice, rather than propaganda?”

The Leader of the Council replied that she was not aware of the source of that information, but felt that it was unlikely that officers would make such statements without some empirical evidence to back it up. She undertook to ensure that Councillor Bibby was provided with this evidence. She also hoped that Hertfordshire County Council would continue to promote cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle and in the Climate Change ambition to achieve a net zero carbon target.

The Council then received updates from relevant Executive Portfolio Holders on the following matters:

- Health Protection Board spend;
- Household Support Fund;
- ICT work supporting Transformation;
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund;
- Hertfordshire County Council Support Funding;
- Loyalty Initiative Funding;
- Growth through Sustainability;
- Storm Eunice response;

- Icon Planning appeal; and
- Launch of the Council's Leisure Management Contract Procurement Process which would conclude in 2023.

In respect Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, the Leader of the Opposition noted that it would cost approximately 20,000 per unit to upgrade the whole of the SBC housing stock. He appreciated that the Council would not be able to fund this immediately and was unlikely to attract 100% grant funding, but asked if the Council would be preparing a long-term plan to tackle the issue?

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People replied that the Council would be updating its Housing Revenue Account Business Plan in June 2022, which would include an assessment of decarbonisation costs. The Leader of the Council added that the £1.8M funding received by the Council for Wave 1 of the Decarbonisation Fund was welcome, and commented that it would be incumbent on the Government to recognise that local authorities could not upgrade the whole of their housing stock without further financial support.

8 UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS

The Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee advised that the Committee had met on a number of occasions in recent months, including some additional meetings to consider the Towns Fund Business Cases. The Committee had also been involved in a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meeting on the Council's Transformation plans.

The Chair of the Community Select Committee stated that the recent work of the Committee had centred upon the proposed new Heritage Centre for the town. Difficulties had been experienced in the Committee's statutory responsibility to scrutinise crime and disorder due to data issues, although officers were working to resolve these issues. The Committee had also received an interesting presentation from the Council's Neighbourhood Wardens, as well as an update on the Your Say complaints system.

The Chair of the Environment & Economy Select Committee advised that the Committee's work had continued to focus on scrutiny of the Council's Climate Emergency plans. The Committee would be producing an interim report on this matter covering progress over the past year. As well as formal meetings, the Committee had also met informally to gather the views of Executive Members and other experts and interested parties. He would report further on the Committee's continuing work on Climate Change during the 2022/23 Civic Year.

9 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Urgent Motion – Crisis in the Ukraine

Councillor Sharon Taylor moved and Councillor Loraine Rossati seconded the following urgent motion:

“That this Council expresses its strong solidarity and support for the people of

Ukraine and agrees that this be expressed on behalf of the Council and the people of Stevenage.

We express our solidarity and support to the Ukraine community in Stevenage and pledge assistance within our powers with their humanitarian aid efforts.

Council agrees to undertaking the following action urgently and in writing:

- To the Russian Ambassador in the UK, demanding that he requests his Government to withdraw troops from Ukraine immediately;
- To the Ukrainian Ambassador in the UK, expressing the Council's support and solidarity, and respect for his nation's sovereignty, freedom and courage; and
- To the Prime Minister of the UK, asking that all efforts are made to welcome refugees coming from Ukraine to the UK, and advise of our willingness to help settle individuals and families whose lives have so sadly and suddenly been affected by the military action in Ukraine."

Following debate, and upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Bus Services in Stevenage

Councillor Lloyd Briscoe moved and Councillor Michael Downing seconded the following motion:

"Bus services in Stevenage are vital to so many of our residents providing them with a vital link to work places, shops, medical services, social & leisure activity, access to education and so much more.

That is why it is so disappointing to see a deterioration in our bus services in town with residents reporting many bus services cut at short (or no) notice meaning they have long waits for their bus. For some time now we have experienced some areas left with no bus service from early evening or no service at all.

This council is working towards our net zero carbon by 2030 target and with the county council on our Sustainable Travel Town status. A key part of this will be to encourage more use of public transport rather than private cars. Our new bus interchange is part of building an integrated public transport system. However this depends on regular, reliable, sustainable and affordable bus services.

Therefore this Council resolves:

1. To convene a bus summit with the bus operators to explore the opportunities and address the challenges of delivering better bus services
2. To lobby the county council, as transport authority, to work with us and bus operators to ensure every area of Stevenage has a bus service
3. To seek reassurance from the county council that there will be no further cuts to bus subsidies for Stevenage bus routes
4. To explore with the county council better ways of providing up to date travel information to passengers

5. To ensure we do all we can through the planning process to ensure bus routes are planned with new neighbourhoods and maximum use is made of CIL & Section 106 to incentivise bus use.
6. To encourage the County Council as the Local Transport Authority and Arriva to continue to work with SBC concerning the ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Area) bid for Stevenage.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Phil Bibby and seconded by Councillor Adam Mitchell:

- 2. Delete the words ‘To lobby the County Council, as transport authority’ and amend the remainder thus ‘To work with the County Council, as Transport Authority, and bus operators to ensure every area of Stevenage has a bus service.’
- 3. Delete entirely.
- 4. Re-number 3.
- 5. re-number 4. and add ‘In addition to this, we must acknowledge that car use is unlikely to reduce in the foreseeable future, so this Council should do all it can to ensure adequate residential parking in existing neighbourhoods, new neighbourhoods and new developments.’
- 6. Re-number 5. delete and replace with ‘To fully support the County Council’s and Arriva’s ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Area) bid for Stevenage.”

Following debate, and upon being put to the vote, this amendment was lost.

During the debate upon the substantive motion, the mover and seconder accepted a minor revision suggested by a Member to remove the word “Arriva” from point 6 and replace it with “bus operators”.

Upon the substantive motion being put to the vote, it was therefore **RESOLVED:**

1. To convene a bus summit with the bus operators to explore the opportunities and address the challenges of delivering better bus services
2. To lobby the county council, as transport authority, to work with us and bus operators to ensure every area of Stevenage has a bus service
3. To seek reassurance from the county council that there will be no further cuts to bus subsidies for Stevenage bus routes
4. To explore with the county council better ways of providing up to date travel information to passengers
5. To ensure we do all we can through the planning process to ensure bus routes are planned with new neighbourhoods and maximum use is made of CIL & Section 106 to incentivise bus use.
6. To encourage the County Council as the Local Transport Authority and bus operators to continue to work with SBC concerning the ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Area) bid for Stevenage.

Council Meetings

The motion detailed in the agenda for the meeting was moved by Councillor Phil Bibby and seconded by Councillor Adam Mitchell.

An amendment which had been circulated to Members on the supplementary agenda for the meeting was moved by Councillor Sharon Taylor and seconded by Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd. The mover and seconder of the original motion expressed support for this amendment.

Following debate, and upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

Following further debate, and upon the substantive motion being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED**:

“That Council notes that in the interests of democracy, it is important to continue to encourage and allow all political parties represented in Council to table motions but, to ensure all Council meetings are conducted in a timely fashion, thus facilitating the continued attention and interest of both our members and the public, there is a need to limit the time spent in debate. This can be achieved by limiting the number of motions and the time allowed for both debate and individual speakers.

Also, Council notes that the main debate has not taken place for some while, so could be regarded as no longer necessary. However, it is appreciated that members may benefit from presentations on matters of interest to the community, as appropriate and, therefore, we should provide for this in Standing Orders.

Council moves that the following amendments be made and to stand until a complete review of the Constitution has been undertaken and completed in 2022/23 and that in any case the following amendment be reviewed prior to the annual meeting in May 2023 to ensure the revised arrangements are satisfactory.

The Council therefore moves that Standing Orders be amended as follows:

15. Motions subject to notice is amended to provide that each political group is permitted to submit one written motion for debate, within a seven working day period ending on the 3rd working day prior to publication of the agenda, at any ordinary meeting of the Council.

The revised standing order 15 to read:

15. Motions subject to notice
 - a. Motions under Standing Order 7 can be moved without notice.
 - b. Each Political Group is permitted to submit one written motion for debate at any ordinary meeting of the Council.
 - c. Written notice of any other motion must be signed by the Member or Members giving the notice.

Notice must be delivered to the Constitutional Services Manager not earlier than 10 clear working days prior to the dispatch of the agenda for the Council meeting and not later than midday on the third clear working

day prior to the despatch of the agenda for the Council meeting.

Every motion must be about something for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Borough.

- d. If it appears to the Constitutional Services Manager that a motion of which he/she has received notice is not in order, or is framed in improper or unbecoming language, he/she shall take the direction of the Mayor as to whether and in what form it shall be placed on the agenda, and the decision of the Mayor, after consultation with the giver of the notice, shall be final.
- e. A Member may only place one Notice of Motion on the agenda.
- f. All motions for which notice has been given will be printed on the Council agenda in the order received unless a Member giving notice stated, in writing, that he/she proposed to move it at a later meeting or has since written to withdraw it.
- g. Where a Motion relates to Council business i.e. is not Executive business or has been delegated by Council to another Committee, the matter will be considered at the meeting to which it has been submitted unless it has subsequently been withdrawn.
- h. Where the Motion relates to Executive business or has been delegated to a Committee of the Council, any Member may, without notice, move a procedural motion to the effect that the motion detailed in the agenda is to be debated at the Council meeting. Where such a procedural motion has been moved and seconded, that motion will be put to the Council without debate and with the support of a simple majority of those present determine that a motion, detailed in the agenda, be dealt with at the meeting at which it is proposed.
- i. With no such procedural motion being carried, once the motion detailed in the agenda is moved and seconded, there shall be no debate and the Motion shall stand referred to the Leader, Executive or such Committee as appropriate for consideration and decision.
- j. In the event of a motion detailed in the agenda being debated at the Council meeting (i.e. the relevant procedural motion has been carried) the normal rules of debate apply subject to the Leader, Chair of the appropriate Committee or relevant Executive Member (or her/his nominee) having the right of reply at the close of any debate, immediately before the mover of the motion.
- k. Any motion submitted under this Standing Order to change the agreed Budget and Policy Framework of the Council may be approved in principle only and will stand referred to the Leader / Executive (and subsequently considered by the Scrutiny Overview Committee) who, after considering an officer report thereon, will submit a recommendation

to the next Council meeting.

- I. Any motion submitted under this Standing Order that relates to Executive business or may be approved in principle only and will stand referred to the Leader / Executive (and subsequently considered by the Scrutiny Overview Committee) who, after considering an officer report thereon. The outcome of any such matter will be reported to next ordinary meeting of the Council.
- m. Where a motion is referred to the Executive or a Committee, the Member moving it shall, if he/she is not a Member of that body, be entitled to attend the meeting to explain her/his motion.
- n. The provisions of this Standing Order, where appropriate, apply to a Motion to remove the Leader from office.

And Standing Order 19 Rules of Debate is amended, as follows:

'Time limits for speakers during debates, unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the Standing Orders are as follows:

- Mover of a motion - six minutes
- Seconder of a motion - four minutes
- Leader of the Council - four minutes
- Leader of the Opposition - four minutes
- All other speakers - three minutes
- Right of reply - three minutes'

A new point c (v) is added:

'The time allowed to debate motions is a maximum of 1 and ½ hours (90 minutes). At the expiry of the 90 minutes allowed for debating written motions the Mayor shall end any debate in progress at that time (whether or not all motions have been debated) and move that the question now be put to the vote.

Any motion not debated within the 90 minute time limit will fall.'

The revised standing order to read:

c. Procedure

- (i) Members must refer to one another in meetings by their correct title of 'Councillor'.
- (ii) A Member can only speak about the matter under discussion or on a point of order, or in personal explanation.
- (iii) Time Limits for speakers during debates, unless otherwise stated elsewhere in these Standing Orders are as follows:

- Mover of a motion – six minutes
- Secunder of a motion – four minutes
- Leader of the Council – four minutes
- Leader of the Opposition – four minutes
- All other speakers – three minutes
- Right of reply – three minutes

(iv) A Member can only speak once on a motion except in the case of:

- Speaking once on an amendment to the motion moved by another Member;
- Moving a further amendment if the motion on which he/she last spoke has been amended;
- If her/his first speech was on an amendment moved by another Member, he/she can then speak on the original issue, whether or not the amendment on which he/she first spoke was carried;
- In exercise of a right of reply;
- On a point of order; or
- In personal explanation.

(v) The time allowed to debate motions is a maximum of 1 and ½ hours (90 minutes). At the expiry of the 90 minutes allowed for debating written motions the Mayor shall end any debate in progress at that time (whether or not all motions have been debated) and move that the question now be put to the vote.

Any motion not debated within the 90 minute time limit will fall.

The Council also moves that Standing Orders, 6 Council Meetings, is amended and 9. Main Debate is re-written, as follows:

Standing Order 6.b(viii) is amended to read:

To deal with any Community Presentation, as appropriate (Standing Order 9);

Standing Order 9 is replaced as follows:

9. Community Presentation

At any ordinary meeting of the Council there may be a presentation on a matter of interest to the community (**Community Presentation**).

- a. The subject of any Community Presentation must be agreed with the Chief Executive, and notice must be delivered to the Constitutional Services Manager, not later than midday on the tenth clear working day prior to the despatch of the agenda for the Council meeting.

- b. The Council may receive a presentation, relevant to the subject matter of the debate may be, from a Councillor, officer and or other invited person(s).
 - (i) If the presentation is from a Councillor or officer, it should last no longer than 10 minutes.
 - (ii) If another person or persons are making the presentation it should last no longer than 20 minutes.
 - (iii) Collectively no Community Presentation should last longer than 30 minutes.
- c. At the Mayor's discretion Councillors and members of the public may ask questions of those providing the, or comment on the content of the, presentation subject to a maximum time allowance for questions of 20 minutes.
- d. No Councillor or member of the public is permitted to speak for more than three minutes.
- e. No debate or vote will take place on the content of the presentation (not being a motion before Council).
- f. The presentation is not subject to any other rules of debate as provided for within this Constitution."

Housing and Direct Services Departments

Councillor Stephen Booth moved and Councillor Robin Parker seconded the following motion:

"That this Council calls for a thorough review of the housing and direct services departments to focus particularly on:

- (a) Improving the response to tenants requesting attention to repairs and other property problems.
- (b) Ensuring that all incoming calls are dealt with promptly, are recorded and tenants do not have to wait longer than 30 minutes maximum during normal working hours to speak to someone. Where this is impossible, a proper call-back system to tenants is initiated.
- (c) Maintaining a detailed register of outstanding housing maintenance works and reporting same to councillors on a weekly basis.
- (d) Ensuring that tenants are properly informed by phone, text or email when access to their properties is needed for work and visiting times are agreed.
- (e) Compensating tenants when council trade persons fail to turn up for previously agreed appointments.
- (f) Ensuring that councillors are kept informed of the initiation and progress of refurbishment and upgrade programmes, especially in the wards they represent."

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Phil Bibby and seconded by Councillor Wendy Kerby:

“(e) add after ‘tenants’, delete ‘when Council’ and replace with ‘by the contractor, if employed, or Council, if own staff used, when”

Following debate, and upon being put to the vote, this amendment was lost.

Following further debate, and upon it being put to the vote, the substantive motion was lost.

Communications

Councillor Stephen Booth moved and Councillor Robin Parker seconded the following motion:

“Calls upon Council to properly manage its Communications & Media unit and those responsible for the publication of Stevenage Chronicle and other publications from time to time issued by the Council; particularly to ensure:

- (a) That the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity published by the Department for Communities Local Government is properly observed.
- (b) Editorial oversight is under the control of an Assistant Director.
- (c) There is close attention to detail and checking of dates and other facts.
- (d) That any featured events are to take place at least 14 days ahead of general publication and circulation.
- (e) An editorial schedule of contents is published for circulation to councillors.
- (f) A schedule of dates for potential contributors including copy dates, proofing and to press is published.
- (g) That there is a balance of editorial material between wards and council groups without party political favour.
- (h) That photos are relevant and correctly captioned.”

Following debate, and upon being out to the vote, this motion was lost.

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Policy

Councillor Robin Parker moved and Councillor Stephen Booth seconded the following motion:

“That this Council commits to considering and in due course implementing a ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) policy to apply to the Council’s financial investment counterparties.”

Following debate, and upon being out to the vote, this motion was lost.

10 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The Council received seven questions from Members to Committee Chairs/Portfolio Holders. The responses to the seven questions had been published in the supplementary agenda for the meeting.

(A) Question from Councillor Nick Leech re: Council recycling rates

Supplementary question – “The ONS statistics showed that the percentage of SBC waste sent to landfill over the past six years had remained at 60%. Why had this not improved?”

In reply, the Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration acknowledged that there was room for improvement with regard to the recycling rates. He had set out in his response to the original question some of the proposed measures for securing improvement. The Government’s review of its Waste Strategy had been postponed a number of times. One of the issues included in the Government’s consultation had related to kitchen waste – should SBC adopt a collection scheme it would increase the recycling rate by about 4.5%. There was also an onus on residents to change behaviour and increase their own recycling rates, including that secured from the Borough’s flat blocks. He would welcome a discussion with Councillor Leech and Waste Collection staff to consider the various issues going forward.

(B) Question from Councillor Julie Ashley-Wren re: repairs to SBC-owned fences

Supplementary question – “What plans were in place to deal with the 1,000+ fence repairs that were required prior to the additional 300 or so that were needed following the recent storms?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People replied that fencing had been at a low level of supply nationally over the past two years, both for councils and private properties. The Council had been undertaking emergency only fencing repairs during that time. Such emergency repairs would include, for example, where the fence bordered a footpath, and would need to be repaired for security purposes. A sum of £250,000 had been allocated in the 2022/23 budget to help deal with the fencing repairs backlog.

(C) Question from Councillor Stephen Booth re: funding for the new Bus Interchange

Supplementary question – “Did the Council fail to properly scope the works, thereby allowing the contractor once on site to maximise the costs for the additional works required to complete the contract?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration replied that the Bus Interchange was a circa £10M project. He felt that the timelines on the hoarding which surrounded the site during the works represented good value for money, and would be re-used (and updated) on the hoardings used for other Town Centre

Regeneration Schemes. It helped to enhance the interface between the Council and the public.

(D) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness re: impact on residents of Gresley Park development

Supplementary question (from Councillor Robin Parker in the absence of Councillor McGuinness) – “Can he receive a list of the benefits for the Borough to be derived from the Section 106 Agreement for the Gresley Park development, and has SBC complained to East Hertfordshire Council (EHC) and/or Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and/or the site developer about alleged planning breaches concerning the development?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration replied that Councillor Parker had previously been provided with information concerning some of the benefits to be derived from the development, including improvements to health services, education etc. He felt it had been a very well negotiated Section 106 Agreement. If Councillor Parker felt that there were planning breaches, there was no reason why he could not report these to East Hertfordshire Council himself, copying in SBC Planning Officers, in order that they could take up the matter(s) with EHC and/or HCC Planning colleagues if they deemed it appropriate to do so.

(E) Question from Councillor Robin Parker re: traffic difficulties along Lytton Way

Supplementary question – “How will SBC communicate issues and expected problems better in future?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration replied by stating that a number of the Town Centre Regeneration schemes, such as the Queensway and Town Square Improvements, had been carried out with a minimum of inconvenience to the public. The Lytton Way works had caused some inconvenience, but he commented that the responsibility for the works rested with Hertfordshire County Council. Lessons had been learnt from the project, and HCC (Ringway) had advised that any future highway works on that area would be carried out during weekends.

(F) Question from Councillor Graham Snell re: hoarding around the now closed Swingate Car Park

Supplementary question (from Councillor Robin Parker in the absence of Councillor Snell) – “Can the resource on the hoardings be shared digitally so that they can be used in local schools and by other interested organisations?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration replied that if any schools or other organisations were interested in the content on the hoardings then every effort would be made to share this with them digitally.

(G) Question from Councillor Tom Wren re: Government Grants or funding schemes available for Major refurbishment Contract

[Note: Prior to asking his supplementary question, Councillor Tom Wren declared a non-prejudicial interest, in that he was a leaseholder of an SBC property. He considered his interest was non-prejudicial, as his question was of a general nature and was applicable to leasehold properties across the Borough.]

Supplementary question – “Although many millions of Government funding had been used to improve individual council properties nationally, no funding had been provided for flat blocks. Did SBC avoid using Government funds for the Major Refurbishment Contract to by-pass the restriction of Florrie’s Law, and therefore increase charges to leaseholders, and will the Council co-operate with a Freedom of Information request and disclose all e-mails related to the Major Refurbishment Contract which mention Florrie’s Law or access to Government funds?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People replied that there had not been any Government funds available for insulation of flat blocks. The Council had only just received funding of £1.8M from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to undertake improved energy efficiency works to the SBC housing stock. In terms of cladding/insulation improvements post-Grenfell, she added that the Council would not be acting until the Fire Safety Bill had completed its passage through Parliament.

11 GAMBLING ACT 2005 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Council considered a report in respect of a review of the Council’s Statement of Principles regarding the Gambling Act 2005.

It was moved by Councillor Jackie Hollywell, and seconded by Councillor Maureen McKay, that Recommendation 2.1 in the report be approved.

Following debate and upon the motion being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** that the Stevenage Borough Council Statement of Principles (Gambling Act 2005), as attached at Appendix A to the report, be adopted.

12 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2022/23

The Council considered a report in respect of a proposed Members’ Allowances Scheme for 2022/23.

The Chief Executive drew attention to the addendum report and revised Scheme which had been circulated to Members on the supplementary agenda for the meeting. He advised that the revised documentation reflected the very recent NJC Pay Award agreement for a 1.75% increase in pay for 2021/22, which had not been confirmed at the time that the original report was written.

It was moved by Councillor Taylor, and seconded by Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd, that Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 in the addendum report be approved.

During the debate, the Leader of the Conservative Group advised that he and the members of his Group present at the meeting would be voting against the recommendations, and would not be taking the 1.75% increase in allowances.

Upon the motion being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022/23, as set out in the revised Appendix A attached to the addendum report, be agreed.
2. That the Scheme be updated should an NJC Pay Award be agreed for 2022/23.

13 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

The Council considered a report in respect of a proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

The Chief Executive advised that, as with the previous item, Recommendation 2.1 in the report would need to be revised to reflect the recent NJC Pay Award agreement for a 1.75% increase in pay for 2021/22, which had not been confirmed at the time the original report was written.

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd, and seconded by Councillor Sharon Taylor, that a revised Recommendation 2.1 and Recommendation 2.2 set out in the report be approved.

Upon the motion being out to the vote, it was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Pay Policy Statement set out in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and thereafter revised to take account of the recent NJC Pay Award of a 1.75% pay increase for 2021/22, be approved.
2. That the Pay Policy be placed on the Council's website and that a notice of the Policy be published in the next edition of Chronicle.

14 AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 8 February 2022 were received.

MAYOR

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 25 MAY 2022

BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2022

Author – Ian Gourlay ext. 2703

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1. PURPOSE

To advise Council of the results of the Borough Council Elections in Bandley Hill, Bedwell, Chells, Longmeadow, Manor, Martins Wood, Old Town, Pin Green, Roebuck, St. Nicholas, Shephall, Symonds Green and Woodfield Wards held on 5 May 2022 together with the percentage turnouts.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the results of the Borough Council Elections 2022 be noted.

3. DETAILS

At the local Elections on 5 May 2021 all wards in Stevenage had contested elections. 20,464 postal votes were sent out, with 39 Polling Stations opened.

The results of the Borough Council Elections were as follows (percentage turnouts are shown under Ward name and the elected candidate is shown in bold):

Bandley Hill

Turnout: 32.63%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
ANDERSON, Andrew David	Liberal Democrats	232
CLARE, Barbara Jane	TUSC	42
LLOYD, Joan Elizabeth	Labour and Co-operative Party	786 - Elected
MALAVIA, Dhiren Rambhai	The Conservative Party Candidate	589

Bedwell

Turnout: 29.03%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BERRY, Chris	Liberal Democrats	191
BIBBY, Catherine Ann	The Conservative Party Candidate	452
CHOWDHURY, Nazmin	Labour and Co-operative Party	941 - Elected
GLENNON, Steve	TUSC	73

Chells

Turnout: 32.78%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
CHARLES, Roger Alexander	TUSC	50
CHOWDHURY, Forhad	Labour and Co-operative Party	507
WREN, Tom	Liberal Democrats	748 - Elected
WYATT, Matthew Paul	The Conservative Party Candidate	330

Longmeadow

Turnout: 34.85%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
FACEY, Bret Ray	The Conservative Party Candidate	610 - Elected
GORDON, Alistair	Labour and Co-operative Party	594
HURST, Matthew Ashleigh Steven	Independent	178
KERR, Helen Dorothy	TUSC	25
SNELL, Matthew Benjamin Robert	Liberal Democrats	121

Manor

Turnout: 37.92%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BARR, Louisa Francesca	Labour and Co-operative Party	315
CARPENTER, Dean Alexander	Green Party	93
FACEY, Victoria Louise	The Conservative Party Candidate	306
McGUINNESS, Andy	Liberal Democrats	1,218 - Elected

Martins Wood

Turnout: 33.07%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BORCHERDS, Jim	Green Party	104
BRISCOE, Lloyd James	Labour and Co-operative Party	659 - Elected
GOLDSMITH, Andy	The Conservative Party Candidate	380
WILKS, Isabel Lorna	Liberal Democrats	370

Old Town

Turnout: 37.77%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BROWN, Jim	Labour and Co-operative Party	1,107 - Elected
HANAFIN, Jody Elizabeth	The Conservative Party Candidate	942
KERR, Mark Shaun	TUSC	17
MANNAN, Madani Riad	Liberal Democrats	111
STURGES, Elizabeth Genevieve	Green Party	189

Pin Green

Turnout: 32.52%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
FACEY, Andy	The Conservative Party Candidate	484
LITTLETON, Charles Galton Darwin	Liberal Democrats	142
LOVELACE-COLLINS, Naomi Ruth	Green Party	131
MARTIN-HAUGH, Lin	Labour and Co-operative Party	749 - Elected
PICKERSGILL, Mark	TUSC	24

Roebuck

Turnout: 31.45%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BYE, Nigel Robert	Liberal Democrats	183
CLARE, Bryan David	TUSC	39
LEECH, Nicholas John	The Conservative Party Candidate	628
WELLS, Anne	Labour and Co-operative Party	757 - Elected

St. Nicholas

Turnout: 31.93%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BARR, Sandra Anne	Labour and Co-operative Party	1,079 - Elected
GENTLEMAN, Amber Elizabeth	TUSC	60
JONES, Hazel Margaret	Liberal Democrats	180
MITCHELL, Melanie Catherine	The Conservative Party Candidate	485

Shephall

Turnout: 30.50%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
BARKS, David John	Liberal Democrats	134
BROOM, Rob	Labour and Co-operative Party	834 - Elected
LAWRENCE, Celia Gwendolyn	The Conservative Party Candidate	375
MALOCCO, Michael Andrew	TUSC	53

Symonds Green

Turnout: 37.92%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
HEARMON, Clive	Liberal Democrats	115
INGARFILL, Jack Stefan George William	The Conservative Party Candidate	523
PALMER, Trevor Michael	TUSC	28
TAYLOR, Sharon Jane	Labour and Co-operative Party	902 - Elected
WARR, Richard David	Green Party	112

Woodfield

Turnout: 34.58%

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
AMATO, Amodio	Reform UK	50
BIBBY, Phil	The Conservative Party Candidate	674 - Elected
BRINKWORTH, Neil Geoffrey	Liberal Democrats	223
CALLAGHAN, Jim	Labour and Co-operative Party	488

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Files – Borough Council Elections 2022

APPENDICES

- None.

Meeting ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date 25 May 2022



APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER

Authors Simon Banks (Ext. 2212)

Lead Officer Matt Partridge (Ext. 2456)

Contact Officer Ian Gourlay (Ext. 2216)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To appoint the Monitoring Officer in accordance with s5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Mr John Oakley be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 June 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Under s5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council must designate one of its officers as its Monitoring Officer.
- 3.2 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for producing a report where they are of the opinion that any proposal, decision or omission of the Council, its committees or sub-committees or anyone employed by the Council is, or is likely to be, illegal or to constitute maladministration. The Monitoring Officer is also responsible for maintaining the register of Members' interests and for administering the arrangements for considering complaints of breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 3.3 In July 2020 Council appointed Simon Banks, Assistant Chief Legal Officer at Hertfordshire County Council, as Monitoring Officer. Mr Banks has resigned his employment with Hertfordshire County Council (effective as at

31 May 2022) and it is therefore necessary to appoint a new Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 June 2022.

- 3.4 The County Council has agreed to second Mr John Oakley to Stevenage Borough Council under s113 Local Government Act 1972. Under s113 (2) he will remain employed by the County Council, but for the purposes of any enactment relating to the discharge of local authorities' functions is to be treated as an officer of Stevenage Borough Council. He is therefore eligible for appointment by Stevenage Borough Council as its Monitoring Officer.
- 3.5 John Oakley will be the Lead Lawyer for the Shared Legal Service from 1 June 2022 and will be responsible for the day to day operation of the service.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1. John Oakley has proven experience and skills for this role having been an Assistant Chief Legal Officer (Commercial Law, Dispute Resolution, Adults, Health and Education) at the County Council since 1st January 2015 and during that time has acted as Deputy Monitoring Officer. Mr Oakley previously acted as Deputy Monitoring Officer for the London Borough of Enfield Council and has provided advice, support and guidance on a range of projects to Stevenage Borough Council; this work has included supporting the Council's Commercial and Investment Working Group.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

The cost of the Monitoring Officer is paid by Stevenage Borough Council to Hertfordshire County Council in accordance with the Partnership Agreement relating to the Shared Legal Service.

5.2. Legal Implications

The legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

APPENDICES

None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.