

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

12 July 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, 20 July 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. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications that the Mayor may wish to put before the Council.

3. MINUTES - 25 MAY 2022 (ANNUAL MEETING)

To approve as a record the attached Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 25 May 2022 for signature by the Mayor.

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4. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

None received.

5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None received.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None received.

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, the Leader of the Opposition shall be given the opportunity to raise one matter relevant to the Borough that has arisen since the last meeting of the Council. The Leader of the Council shall then have the opportunity to advise the Council of matters relevant to the Borough that have arisen since the last meeting.

9. UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS

To receive updates from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees on the recent activities of those Committees.

10. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

To consider the Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22.

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11. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

In accordance with Standing Orders, the following motions have been received for consideration:

(i) Cost of Living Crisis

To be moved by the Labour Group.

"The cost of living crisis is affecting every family across Stevenage, and many are facing dreadful decisions about what they can and cannot afford to do at the most basic levels some having to choose between heating, eating or transport to work.

The Chancellor's Spring Statement was a lost opportunity to ensure real and substantial help to those families and once again local government is left picking up the pieces of hunger, homelessness and poverty and the effects these have on everyone suffering.

In Stevenage we have now set up a Cost of Living Task Force which will work with the Stevenage Together Partnership to identify the support needed in our community and ensure we have actions in place to address the needs identified.

In Stevenage we can and must take the following urgent actions:

- We declare this to be a Cost of Living emergency and pledge to take all the action in our powers to help our community and to mitigate its impact wherever possible.
- Work through our Cost of Living Task Force to identify actions and policies to support our community and the council through the crisis.

- Call upon our MP to lobby his Chancellor of the Exchequer to take urgent measures to support individuals, communities and families through this crisis.
- Call on Hertfordshire County Council to make permanent and enduring commitment to providing holiday food to children entitled to Free School Meals.
- Work with the retail sector in Stevenage to reduce food waste, donate surpluses to food banks and ensure that affordable food is available to all.
- Ensure that all our schools have established and responsive systems for identifying and supporting those children who are struggling through food and fuel poverty
- Call upon the government to scrap the National Insurance increase, continue to impose a windfall tax on oil and gas companies while it is necessary to remove a substantial sum from citizens energy bills and immediately restore the triple lock for pensions.
- Call upon Government to restore the additional Universal Credit payment made during the Covid crisis.
- Write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to point out the critical situation facing our community and the financial impact the cost of living crisis will have on council finances.”

(ii) Homelessness Policies

To be moved by Councillor Phil Bibby CC and seconded by Councillor Wendy Kerby.

“In April of this year, there was a concerning report in the Comet newspaper under the headline ‘Couple unable to return to rented home’, describing that the landlords rented their retirement home on a short-term basis, and hoped to move back in just before Christmas last year but, two days before the tenant was due to vacate the property, having been given proper notice, she was told by the Council’s housing department to remain in the property, against the threat of being seen as making herself intentionally homeless.

Whilst it is understood that the Council and tenants acted lawfully, and this situation has now been resolved, with the couple back in their property and the tenant re-housed, the Council’s policies and practices should protect lawful landlords, who are an important source of much needed housing, with the same vigour as tenants.

We accept that the Council will always respect tenancy and homelessness legislation and guidance, but we call on it to make timely assessments of tenants facing lawful eviction and possible homelessness, being on the guard against ‘voluntary homelessness’, and make proper provision in the HRA to have an adequate supply of suitable accommodation, in case of need.”

12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

In accordance with Standing Orders, written answers to the following questions will be circulated on a supplementary agenda.

(A) Question from Councillor Claire Parris

“Can I ask if the Council has any updates on the proposed radiology facility and its location?”

(B) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness

“What assessment will be undertaken by officers of the negative consequences on the Council of a “lame duck Government” caused by the resignation of Boris Johnson?”

(C) Question from Councillor Stephen Booth

“What steps have the Council undertaken to work with partner agencies to ensure that the empty homes in Tabor Close are occupied as soon as possible?”

(D) Question from Councillor Robin Parker CC

What is being done, in conjunction with the County Council as the Highways Authority, to solve the traffic congestion issues at the exit from Swingate onto Lytton Way, which continue to be a regular problem at busy times and which started following the remodelling of Lytton Way?”

(E) Question from Councillor Alex Farquharson

“Will you guarantee that a community centre will be built to replace the previously demolished building at the Hertford Road/Kenilworth Close shops?”

(F) Question from Councillor Bret Facey

“Does the Council have any plans to close or reduce the size of the indoor market in the foreseeable future?”

(G) Question from Councillor Tom Wren

“What does the Council consider to be an acceptable time for residents to wait for telephone call enquiries to be answered?”

13. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23 - ADDENDUM

To consider a report recommending the approval of an addendum to the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23.

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14. MEMBER SUBSTITUTION SCHEME FOR REGULATORY COMMITTEES

To appoint named Councillors as substitute Members for the Council's Regulatory Committees (Licensing, General Purposes and Planning & Development Committees), as required by the Council's Constitution.

[REPORT TO FOLLOW]

15. AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

To note the Minutes of the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 28 February 2022, 28 March 2022 and 7 June 2022.

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