

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 19 June 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair) (Chair), (Vice Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Michael Downing, John Mead, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris

Start / End Start Time: 6.00pm
Time: End Time: 7.34pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Bibby, L Chester, M Gardner and A McGuinness.

Councillor M Downing declared a personal interest in item 10 as he was Chair of the Bus Users Group who had been consulted regarding the Stevenage Bus Interchange.

2. MINUTES - 16 MAY 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 May 2019 are approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for the Committee are noted.

4. PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive held on 12 June 2019.

Minutes of the Executive – 14 May 2019

Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees

The Executive had sought clarification regarding the number of rough sleepers in the Town. It was requested that these details also be circulated to Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Appointment of Committees of the Executive

Decent Homes Refurbishment Contract Procurement Options Appraisal (Investment)

The Project Manager (Housing & Investment) answered members' questions on the report considered by the Executive.

It was noted that fencing was not included as part of these contracts and at Members' request the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) undertook to follow up the issues of delays with fencing repairs.

Hertfordshire Home improvement Agency (HHIA) – 12 Month Review

The Committee was concerned that, given the performance issues referred to in the report, the Executive's decision to endorse the continued participation in the HHIA had no caveats regarding outcomes from the recovery plan.

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) explained the issues that the HHIA had faced in its first year and it was anticipated that there would be improvement given the Action Plan that was now in place. She explained that the Leader and Executive Portfolio Holder would be receiving a further report in six months' time to ensure that progress was being made. The Committee was of the view that the Executive's decision to endorse the Council's continued participation in the HHIA should be subject to the report in December showing evidence of satisfactory improvement.

In response to Members' requests the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) agreed to circulate information on the performance of those Hertfordshire districts who were not a member of the HHIA.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following decisions of the Executive are noted –

Minutes of the Executive – 14 May 2019

Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees

Appointment of Committees of the Executive

Decent Homes Refurbishment Contract Procurement Options Appraisal (Investment)

Hertfordshire Home improvement Agency – 12 Month Review

5. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The Committee received an update on its 2019/20 Workplan.

The Scrutiny Officer indicated that the Committee's work on Complaints and Feedback Handling was likely to need two meetings.

He further explained that the Committee's review of the Council's Scrutiny Function would be very much directed by the recent Government Guidance on Scrutiny. He was to attend a symposium at the Centre for Public Scrutiny the following day and would bring a paper to a future meeting on the Guidance.

Regarding the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group to be held on 23 July, individual Members expressed the view that the quoted workload for that meeting would be too

much. The Scrutiny Officer indicated that he would liaise with the Portfolio Holder.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Workplan is noted.

6. EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF SBC SICKNESS MANAGEMENT

The Committee received the Executive Member's response to the review of the Council's sickness management.

Where the Executive Portfolio Holder had not agreed any of the recommendations of the Committee, in whole or part, the Senior Human Resources Manager explained the reasoning for this.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Executive Portfolio Holder's response to the Committee's review of the Council's sickness management is noted.

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

None

8. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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 involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That, having considered the reasons for the following items being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

10. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the Part II decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive held on 12 June 2019.

Councillor M Downing declared a personal interest in item 10 as he was Chair of the Bus Users Group who had been consulted regarding the Stevenage Bus Interchange.

Stevenage Bus Interchange

Town Centre Regeneration – The Town Square and North Block

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II decisions of the Executive held on 12 June 2019 are noted.

11. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR