

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, 22 July 2021

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice Chair), Myla Arceno, Adrian Brown, Michael Downing, Alex Farquharson, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Sarah Mead, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris and Loraine Rossati

Start / End Start Time: 6.00pm
Time: End Time: 7.05pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Andy McGuinness.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 14 JUNE 2021

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee noted the minutes of the Executive meeting held on Wednesday 9 June 2021.

2. Minutes of the Executive – 9 June 2021

Noted.

3. Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees.

Noted.

4. Covid-19 update

The Strategic Director (TP) advised that he provided an update on the latest Covid-19 position at the Executive meeting held on Wednesday 9 June 2021.

In response to a question from a Member, the Strategic Director (TP) advised Members that a small number of officers were self-isolating and working from home. Those members of staff not able to work from home due to the nature of their jobs

would be advised to undertake other tasks such as on-line training.

Officers also confirmed that the review into the backlog of complaints/service requests in certain areas such as repairs would include all factors that contributed to the backlog and not focus only on the impact of the Pandemic.

The Committee noted the update.

5. Review of Article 4 Directions and Employment Sites in Stevenage

In response to a question, the Assistant Director (Planning and Regulation) confirmed that new arrangements or an extension to current arrangements would be needed following the Central Government decision to cease Article 4 Directions from July 2022.

Members were pleased to note that the Executive had taken on board the comments on this item made at the Planning and Development Committee.

6. Stevenage Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2021: Public Consultation

Members were reminded of the All Member Briefing arranged on this matter for 6.00pm on Wednesday 28 July 2021.

It was noted that Design was one of the topics which was to be considered by members of the Planning and Development Committee as part of their workload.

In response to a question regarding the street furniture strategy, the Assistant Director (Planning and Regulation) advised that although there was no defined programme for inspection, the Engineers within his Service checked on a regular basis, all furniture in the town for any maintenance and repair work needed. Following further consideration and suggestions from Members, the Assistant Director agreed he would look at formalising the inspection regime.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) 12 Month Review

Members agreed that the review of CIL should take place in 2022/23. Officers also agreed to consider what other local authorities were doing to address the CIL issue.

It was also suggested that due to the confusing nature of the subject it would be useful for Members to have a separate session on it. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to work with the Assistant Director (Planning and Regulation) on this issue.

8. Annual Report 2020/21

In response to a suggestion from members, the Strategic Director (TP) agreed to look at increasing the information regarding the good work of the Refuse/Recycling and Street Cleaning Teams which would be of significant interest to the Public. He also agreed to include information about what happens to the waste in Stevenage in a future edition of the Chronicle.

The Strategic Director advised that the publication of the Annual Report would be on-line rather than in paper copy.

The Chair of the Committee agreed that the issue of Council communications could be a potential area to be looked at in the future by the Committee,

9. Review of the Use of Agency Staffing

In response to Members, the Senior HR and Transformation Manager advised that in-sourcing of services remained a preference for the Council but that there were a small number of services such as cleaning and security where agency staff were employed to ensure resilience in those areas.

It was also noted that agency staff continued to be used on an emergency basis or for those posts that could not be recruited to.

10. Proposed In Principle Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers for Delivery of SG1 Development

Noted.

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

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

None.

5 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

6 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 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.

7 PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 14 JUNE 2021

Noted.

8 **PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

Noted.

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

None.

10 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR