

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 15 June 2022

Time: 2.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Richard Henry (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Lloyd Briscoe, Jackie Hollywell, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Simon Speller and Jeannette Thomas.
Councillor Phil Bibby CC (observer)

Start / End Time: Start Time: 2.00pm
End Time: 3.25pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Robin Parker CC (observer) and apologies for lateness from Councillor Jeannette Thomas.

At this juncture, the Chair welcomed new Executive Members Councillor Sandra Barr - Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council and Councillor Simon Speller - Environment and Climate Change, to the meeting. She also thanked outgoing Executive Members, Councillors Rob Broom noting his significant efforts to bring the Co-operative Neighbourhood Programme to life and John Gardner for his work over many years on the Environment and Regeneration Portfolio.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 4 MARCH 2022 AND 16 MARCH 2022

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 4 March 2022 and 16 March 2022 be approved as correct records for signature by the Chair.

3 MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 10 March 2022
Community Select Committee – 16 March 2022
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 22 March 2022
Environment & Economy Select Committee – 23 March 2022
Community Select Committee – 29 March 2022

The Executive's thanks were given to all those Members serving on the three Scrutiny Committees for their work and commitment during the last Municipal Year.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES FOR 2022/23

The Executive considered a report seeking approval of the Council's key priorities and areas of focus for 2022/23 for inclusion in the Annual Report, to be reported to Executive at its July meeting and which would form the basis of corporate performance reporting for the year.

It was noted that in setting the Council's priorities for the year, a number of national and local themes had been considered including the cost of living crisis, the war in Ukraine, and more locally, regeneration social and affordable housing, homelessness and refugee support.

Members agreed that due to the on-going cost of living crisis, an Executive Member task force would be established to consider the implications for residents. The Group's findings would be reported back to Executive Members.

It was agreed that the Council should be celebrating and giving emphasis to the positive work undertaken and achievements of the Council. Members thanks were expressed towards those Council Departments, in particular the Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Stevenage Direct Services Teams, who had been instrumental in ensuring that Stevenage Day had been hugely successful on 12 June 2022, following a 2 year break due to the Pandemic.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed priorities for 2022/23, as set out in the report, be agreed.
2. That these priorities be included in the Annual report for 2021/22, to be reported to the Executive in July 2022.
3. That the priorities form the basis of the Future Town Future Council programme and inform the corporate performance suite for 2022/23, with progress against this being reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis.
4. That a Cost of Living Task Force be established including The Leader of the Council and Executive Members Councillors, Barr, Briscoe, Henry and Thomas with a view to considering the implications of the crisis and reporting their findings back to the Executive

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

5 CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE - JUNE 2022

The Executive considered a report providing an update on the Council's Climate Change Strategy and initiatives. The report provided Members with an overview of

the action that the Council was taking to address climate change. Members were also advised that the Council had been successful in bidding for central government funding and in particular investment in the Council's housing stock and electric buses.

Councillor Speller, the new Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change shared his thoughts on the Council's Climate Change Programme, areas for greater focus and outlined future work on engagement and collaboration with various stakeholders including the Community, Members and also the Youth Mayor and local schools. He suggested that the next report to Executive on Climate Change should be delayed and brought to a later meeting to allow enough time for sufficient progress to be made.

Officers agreed to provide a written update to Members relating to the Additional Insulation Project and in particular clarification as to whether double or triple glazing should be installed in the social housing properties within the Scheme.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That further details on the community engagement and stakeholder relationships be received at the September 2022 Executive.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other options considered: As contained in report.

6 ASSESSMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME FOR 2022/23 AND RELATED LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Executive considered a report regarding the key announcements of relevance to local government in the Government's legislative agenda for 2022/23, and the potential opportunities and implications for Stevenage.

It was noted that the new bills which were intended to be introduced over the next year related to levelling up, planning system reforms, housing regulations and rights for renters, the new Schools Bill, energy, crime and justice, health and transport and infrastructure investment.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that there was no appetite at District or County Council level for a single Unitary Authority in Hertfordshire.

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

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

Thanks were expressed to the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team for their

work around the recent Jubilee events including the lighting of the Beacon in the Town Centre and the Picnic in the Park event in Fairlands Valley Park.

8 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100A 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 the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

9 PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 16 MARCH 2022

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 16 March 2022 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

10 PURCHASE OF STRATEGIC LAND OPPORTUNITY FOR USE AS SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of the proposed purchase of a strategic land opportunity for use as supported accommodation.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be agreed.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

11 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR