

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 18 March 2015

Time: 18.00 hrs.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present Councillors: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair), L Bell, R Broom, E Connolly, M Gardner, J Mead and P Stuart.

Start Time: 18.00 hrs.

End Time: 19.40 hrs.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Harrington and the Youth Mayor S Field.

There were no declarations of interests.

2. MINUTES – 2 MARCH 2015

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. 2015-2016 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report which detailed responses to a scrutiny evaluation questionnaire completed by Members. The Committee also considered the work programme for the Municipal year 2015/16.

Members were advised that it was too early to test the effectiveness or review the Council's housing allocation policy as it was only introduced in January 2015 and any areas of concern raised or shortcomings identified were being addressed by the internal review processes already in place.

With regards to the Local Community Budgets (LCBs), Members were informed that the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods was undertaking a review of some aspects of the LCBs and advised that the results of the review could be included in, or supplement any subsequent reviews undertaken by the Committee.

Members were advised that review of Health and Social care was not within the scope of district councils but the sole responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council. Members welcomed a suggestion that the Scrutiny Officer continue to liaise with his

counterpart at County and raise this issue at the Hertfordshire Scrutiny Officers Network to identify what focus there has been on Stevenage at a County level. The Head of Leisure, Community & Children's Services agreed to circulate Public Health Board minutes and a hyperlink to the board's website. Members were reminded that the HCC Director would continue to be invited to update the Committee on local public health priorities.

The Committee were informed that a report analysing customer feedback about Council Services and SBC's responses was to be considered by the Executive in the next Municipal Year and that a copy of the draft report would be circulated to Committee Members.

Members acknowledged the need to consider other ways of improving public engagement, beyond the existing Residents' meetings, with the use of social media. The Strategic Director (Community) advised Members that the subject matter could be one of the issues put to the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods when invited to the next meeting as she was presently carrying out a piece of work on various aspects of public engagement.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That feedback from the Scrutiny Evaluation Questionnaire completed by Members be noted.
2. That the Scrutiny Study agreed for 2015/2016 be Local Community Budgets.
3. That the Committee, in its capacity as the Council's statutory Crime and Disorder Committee continue with its present arrangements of having two Community Safety focused meetings in 2015/16.
4. That Officers include in the work plan specific monitoring or review of recommendations from the following previous studies, Access to GP Surgeries, Community Safety Review into the Night Time Economy, the Museum and the Review into the support for the Third or Voluntary Sector.
5. That it be noted that policy development work in 2015/16 will include SBC's compliance with the Equality Framework for Local Government, Housing Allocation Policy, Care Support for Elderly Sheltered Schemes and Handling Customer Complaints/Feedback.
6. That a further meeting be scheduled for 2015/2016 with the HCC Director of Public Health to update the Committee on the local Public Health priorities.
7. That the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods be invited to discuss plans to use social media to engage communities.

4. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

PART II

6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

Chair