

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: 7 March 2016

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair), L Bell, E Connolly, L Harrington, C Saunders and P Stuart.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7:45 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Mead and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 6 JANUARY 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 6 January 2016 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. MINUTES – 18 JANUARY 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2016 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to amending 'N Jennings' to read 'Nick Jennings'.

4. 2016-2017 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report, the purpose of which was to agree the scrutiny work programme for the new Municipal year. The report detailed suggestions provided by Members for the work programme during the 2016/2017 Municipal year.

The Scrutiny Officer informed Members that as part of looking at ways of improving scrutiny, both himself and the Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services would be attending a scrutiny training event in March 2016, details which the Scrutiny Officer would feed back to the Committee to consider.

Members were advised that review of Integrated Community Transport could not be undertaken presently by SBC as it is solely dependent on HCC

future plans.

On the question of how the Council consults and whether consultation undertaken included an adequate representation of Stevenage residents, the Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services advised that the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy was in the process of being refreshed and Members of the Committee would be able to contribute to the strategy before it was considered by Executive.

In response to how Council addresses homelessness provision, the Strategic Director (Community) advised that this would be included within the housing allocations policy being considered by Executive in April 2016 and advised that the document would be circulated for Members' views.

On the different strategies that Council employed regarding damp and mould in council owned properties, the Strategic Director (Community) informed Members that the Council adhered strictly to Nationally agreed best practices and that new tenants had been issued a new policy on how it is to be addressed. Members acknowledged that this was of considerable concern and agreed that any review undertaken should be extended to the private housing sector.

On the issue of community centres, Members agreed that this would need to be revisited and welcomed an officer presentation.

In response to a Member's question regarding lack of staff present at Fairlands Park on Sundays, the Strategic Director(Community) informed the meeting that he would ensure an update was provided by the Head Leisure, Environmental Health and Children's Services.

Members welcomed an update from the Director of Public Health especially in light of the proposed cuts by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and how they would impact on health priorities.

A Member requested potential scrutiny review into the effectiveness of signposting by the Council for provision of services in the community and for acute services.

With regards to monitoring of recommendations arising from previous studies such as conditions in the private rented sector and community transport for older people Members welcomed updates be provided by the relevant Heads of Service.

The Committee was informed that during the 2016/17 Municipal year a number of items such as consultation engagement strategy, homelessness provision, community centres detailed in the report would be brought back to the Committee as policy development items.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the feedback received from Scrutiny Members regarding ideas for improving scrutiny is noted.
2. That having considered ideas put forward by individual Members and officers, the following topics are added to the work programme of potential Scrutiny review items for 2016/17: (i) Provision of services in the community by groups who serve people in acute crisis / poverty, including Citizens Advice Bureau, Credit Union, Food bank, Debt Counselling. (ii) The way the Council consults (iii) Damp / Mould issues in Stevenage Council Homes.
3. That the Committee, in its capacity as the Council's statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, has one Community Safety focused meeting in 2016/17.
4. That officers include in the work Plan specific monitoring or review of recommendations from the following previous studies: Conditions in the Private Rented Sector, Community Transport for Older People and Stevenage Museum.
5. That it be noted that Policy Development work in 2016/2017 will include: HRA Business Plan, Performance Management Framework, Consultation Engagement Strategy, Community Centres, Council to Residents Communication, (when the Customer Assurance – Equal Access to All project is delivered), Older Persons Provision.
6. That a further meeting be scheduled for 2016/17 with the Hertfordshire County Council's Director of Public Health to update the Committee on Local Public Health issues and progress with the Healthy Hub.

5. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None.

6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR