

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 3rd October 2007

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Barnwell School East Campus, Collenswood Road, Stevenage

Present: Members: Councillors G. Clark (Mayor), R.A. Clark, J. Lloyd, CC (Deputy Mayor), S. Batson, CC, H. Burrell, M. Cherney-Craw, M. Downing, CC, J. Harrington, R.J. Henry, J. Hollywell, B. Jackson, P.D. Kissane, T. Kent, CC, L.A. Lambert, C. Latif, Mrs J.E. Lloyd, M.A. Mason, S.M. Myson, M. Notley, R.G. Parker, CC, J. Pickersgill, J.R. Raynor, R. Royall, R. Smith, MBE, DL, G. Snell, S.K. Speller, Mrs L.G. Strange, P. Stuart, S. Taylor, H.C.L. Tessier, J. Thomas, T. Turner, B.G. Underwood and Mrs. A. Webb.

In Attendance: The Chair and members of the Youth Council.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 7.00pm
End Time: 8.55pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors D.W. Cullen, CC, P.E.J. Gallagher, J. Gardner L. Knight, JP, M.P. Patston, S. Batson, CC and the Chief Executive, Mr Peter Ollis.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES –Tuesday, 10th July, 2007

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 10th July 2007, at Barclay School, Stevenage, having been circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATION

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Barnwell School for allowing the meeting to be held in their Hall.

The Mayor gave a short update regarding the engagements he had carried out since the last meeting of Council. He particularly mentioned the opening of Wellfields Centre and charity events that included six AGMs, 3 curry nights and 2 quiz nights. He had also attended a party for a resident of McGovern Court to celebrate his 100th birthday.

The Mayor then invited Councillor S.M. Myson to address the meeting regarding the Britain and Anglia In Bloom competitions.

Councillor Myson said that she was delighted to announce that Stevenage had won a silver award in the Britain In Bloom competition for the second year running, as well as a gold award in the Anglia In Bloom competition.

Councillor Myson thanked the Mayor and Councillors T. Kent, R.J. Henry and L. Knight for their support and praised the volunteers and officers, with special thanks to Jean Allinson and Julia Knight for their hard work. Councillor Myson then presented the awards to the Mayor, who also thanked the officers involved.

The Mayor then gave his apologies as he had another engagement and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor John Lloyd, Chaired the remainder of the meeting.

4 MAIN DEBATE - CLIMATE CHANGE – TAKE IT SERIOUSLY OR THE POLAR BEAR GETS IT!

The Deputy Mayor stated that as he expected the debate to be a lively one, he moved that Standing Order 17 (f) be waived to allow the debate to run over 40 minutes.

Councillor Sharon Taylor, Leader of the Council seconded the motion.

Upon being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** that Standing order 17 (f) be waived.

Dave Barton from the Energy Saving Trust gave a short presentation about climate change and what steps could be taken to combat its effects. He spoke about how greenhouse gasses had raised the world's temperature and how this had affected the climate both globally and locally. He gave details about the international response and policies that had been put in place and the significance of the Nottingham Declaration. He went on to say how important it was to develop a local strategy and gave some examples of actions that could be taken.

The following telephone numbers were given for further information and advice:

- 1) Local Authority and public agencies 0870 2412089
- 2) General Public 0800 512012

Members of the Youth Council conducted an interactive presentation that illustrated how small changes to the way people live could have a huge impact on climate change.

Those present at the meeting were requested to stand up/sit down in reply to a series of questions about their electricity usage, recycling, modes of transport, number of cars per household, car sharing and the use of public transport.

The Chair of the Youth Council thanked those present for their participation and concluded that although improvements in those areas had been made, there was still more that could be done by each person to reduce their carbon footprint.

Keith Brown, Head of Property and Design Services then gave a presentation about what the Council would be doing as part of its commitment to the Nottingham Declaration that SBC had signed up to in January 2007. He detailed practical steps the Council were taking to combat global warming, which would be reflected in the Council's emerging Climate Change Strategy.

The Deputy Mayor thanked everyone for their presentations and called on Councillor Richard Henry to open the debate.

Councillor Henry opened the debate and moved the following Motion that was seconded by Councillor Sharon Taylor.

'That this Council acknowledges that, as both community leader and service provider, it still has work to do in targeting policies to help the Town make a real difference to climate change. Therefore, through re-affirming the Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration, it resolves to prepare a Climate Change Strategy for Stevenage that will go on to develop specific proposals for adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.'

Councillors and members of the public contributed to the debate and raised a number of opinions and issues that they considered important.

It was hoped that that any new builds would be carbon neutral and that more use would be made of solar panels and wind power. It was confirmed that SHL had installed condensing boilers in their homes and would continue to do so. It was also confirmed that the option to 'build beyond minimum building standards' would be taken into account when plans for the Town Centre Regeneration and new council offices were considered.

It was agreed that more education was needed to raise awareness of how people could help combat the effects of Climate Change by making small changes to their lifestyles and it was suggested that the Chronicle magazine could be used as a vehicle for ideas.

Councillor Henry thanked everyone for their comments and moved an amendment to the Motion.

Councillor Taylor seconded the amendment to the Motion and upon being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED:**

That the words "by the end of the year" be inserted after "a Climate Change Strategy for Stevenage".

The substantive Motion was then put to the vote and it was **RESOLVED:**

'That this Council acknowledges that, as both community leader and service provider, it still has work to do in targeting policies to help the Town make a real difference to climate change. Therefore, through re-affirming the Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration, it resolves to prepare a Climate Change Strategy for Stevenage by the end of the year that will go on to develop specific proposals for adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.'

5 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None received.

7 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

The Deputy Mayor called upon Councillor Robin Parker, the Leader of the Opposition to raise one matter relevant to the Borough.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about problems he had experienced when reporting faulty street lights to the County as these were not always numbered. He asked that officers contact the County to request that all the street lights be clearly numbered and referred to the successful automatic reporting system in place in Stevenage Old Town.

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that faulty street lighting was a very important safety issue and that the new fault reporting scheme in Stevenage Old Town had made a real difference. She added that this had been funded through the Stevenage Old Town Area Committee.

On this occasion, there was no update from the Leader of the Council.

8 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

None received.

9 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

None received.

10 MATTER REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE – TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2006/07

Council considered a recommendation from the Executive concerning the review of progress made towards achieving the objectives in the 2006/07 Treasury Management Strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the 2006/07 Treasury Management Review be approved.

11 MATTER REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE – STEVENAGE 2021 – OUR TOWN : OUR FUTURE

Council considered a recommendation from the Executive concerning final draft of the second Stevenage Community Strategy '**Stevenage 2021 – Our Town: Our Future**' as attached at Appendix A to the report.

It was confirmed that when the East of England plan was agreed, the growth proposals for major housing developments at the West of Stevenage would be taken into account in the Community Strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that, as part of the Council's policy planning framework, the final draft of the second Stevenage Community Strategy 'Stevenage 2021 – Our Town: Our Future' be approved.

12 OFFICER REPORT – REPORT OF INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Council considered an officer report that sought approval of the recommendations from the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances and in the light of the report, determine a new scheme of allowances.

The Deputy Chief Executive drew Council's attention to an error that had been made in the report of the Independent Panel. He confirmed that there was no Special Allowance proposed for the position of Leader of the largest Opposition Group and that the figure should read zero. However, the individual who currently served in that position was a Member of the Executive and as such would receive the appropriate Special Responsibility Allowance.

Councillor S. Taylor thanked members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for their diligence and hard work.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Independent Panel be approved and a new scheme of allowances be adopted from 1st November 2007 (subject to specific backdating recommended), as set out at Appendix B to the report.

13 OFFICER REPORT – STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL : MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Council considered an officer report that sought agreement of the revised Vision and Values for the Council, together with a new framework for the Council's Corporate Business Strategy 2008 to 2013.

It was **RESOLVED** that the revised Vision and Values together with the framework for the five year Corporate Business Strategy 2008 to 2013, as set out in the report, be agreed.

14 OFFICER REPORT – PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

Council considered an officer report that sought approval of amendments to the Council's Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix A to the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the amendments to the Prudential Indicators as detailed in Appendix A to the report be approved.

15 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE – 28th June, 2007 MINUTES

The Leader of the Council drew Council's attention to the extent of questioning from Members that had taken place both prior to and during the meeting of the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Statement of Accounts Committee held on 28th June 2007, having been circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Deputy Mayor as a correct record.

16 AUDIT COMMITTEE – 26th June 2007 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee, an Advisory Committee of the Council, held on 26th June 2007 be noted.

MAYOR