

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 30 January 2008

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Graham Clark),
the Deputy Mayor (Councillor John Lloyd,CC)
and Councillors Sherma Batson,CC, Howard
Burrell, Monika Cherney-Craw, Bob
Clark,David Cullen,CC, Pam Gallagher, John
Gardner, Liz Harrington, Richard Henry,
Jacqueline Hollywell, Bruce Jackson, David
Kissane, Lis Knight, Leonard Lambert, Mrs.
Joan Lloyd, Marion Mason, Margaret Notley,
Robin Parker,CC, Jack Pickersgill, Ralph
Raynor, David Royall, Reg Smith,MBE,DL,
Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Lilian Strange,
Pam Stuart, Sharon Taylor, Hugh Tessier
and Ann Webb

Agenda Item:

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In Attendance: -

Start/End Time: Start Time: 7.00 p.m.
End Time: 7.16 p.m.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Before considering the formal business of the meeting the Mayor took the opportunity to remind Members of the Civic Service to be held on Sunday 3rd February 2008 at 3.00 p.m. at the Methodist Church in Sish Lane. He hoped that as many Members as possible would attend.

The Mayor, the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition congratulated Councillor Margaret Notley on her appointment as Leader of the Minority Opposition Group.

The Mayor then took the opportunity to convey best wishes to Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd and to Celia Twomey (Strategic Director) who both celebrated their birthdays on this day.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Michael Downing, CC, Sue Myson, Mick Patston and Jeannette Thomas.

Additionally apologies had been received from Councillors Carol Latif and Brian Underwood who are SHL Board members and had been advised that it would not be appropriate to take part and vote in the Council's consideration of item 3 - Housing Revenue Account Rent Increase and Budget Setting Proposals 2008/09

and had therefore decided not to attend on this occasion.

At this juncture Councillor John Lloyd, CC, (Deputy Mayor) declared a Prejudicial Interest in the remainder of business on the agenda as a Board Member of Stevenage Homes Limited (SHL) and left the meeting.

Councillor Lis Knight, as a Board Member of SHL, declared a Prejudicial Interest in item 3 - Housing Revenue Account Rent Increase and Budget Setting Proposals 2008/09 and a Personal Interest in item 5 - Implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

Councillor Margaret Notley declared a Prejudicial Interest in item 5 - Implementation of the Single Status Agreement as a close family member worked for the Council.

2 MINUTES - Wednesday 5th December 2007

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5th December 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) RENT INCREASE AND BUDGET SETTING PROPOSALS FOR 2008/9

This report had not been circulated to Members 5 clear days before the meeting, nor had it been available for public inspection during this time. The Mayor determined however that, given the reason for urgency outlined in the report, it be considered on this occasion.

Councillors Lis Knight and John Lloyd, having declared Prejudicial Interests, were not in attendance for this item.

The Council considered a report concerning the proposed rent increase for 2008/09 in respect of HRA dwellings and the recommended HRA 2007/208 Probable Estimates and 2008/2009 Budget.

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that this matter had been considered by the Executive earlier that evening and he reported that Executive had approved the proposals in the report for recommendation to Council, subject to an amendment to 3.1.7 - the contingency sum was recommended to be set at £300,000 not '£400,000' as quoted in the report.

The recommendations of the Executive were moved and seconded and it was then **RESOLVED** :

1. That the rents of HRA dwellings be increased, with effect from the week commencing 7 April 2008 by 4.4% and increased or decreased by the Rent Restructuring figure determined for each dwelling in accordance with the Government's Revised National Rent Restructuring Formula, subject to the Government's caps and limits applicable to each property.
2. That the Government's Cap on the combined increase in rent and un-pooled Service Charges for an individual property be applied.

3. That the Budget, summarised at Appendix A of the report, be the Council's Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2008/09.
4. That the Housing Revenue Account estimates for 2007/08 Probables showing a net deficit of £893,370, as detailed in Appendix A of the report be approved.
5. That the Housing Revenue Account 2008/09 Estimates showing a net deficit of £1,279,390, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
6. That the increases in ancillary fees and charges, with effect from 7 April 2008, as detailed in Appendix B of the report, be approved.
7. That the contingency sum for 2008/09 of £300,000 for the HRA be approved in line with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

4 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** 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 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 SI2008 No.88.

5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT

Councillors John Lloyd and Margaret Notley, having declared Prejudicial Interests, were not in attendance for this item.

The Council considered a Part II report concerning a local pay and grading structure for the Council and Stevenage Homes Ltd. for staff with National Joint Council terms and conditions of service.

Members noted that revised officer recommendations had been circulated on a supplementary agenda.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the revised officer recommendations as circulated on the supplementary agenda, be approved.