

## SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART 1 – FOR PUBLICATION)

**MEETING:** Council – Wednesday 20 July 2011 – 19.00 hrs.  
Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** All Councillors with the exception of those listed at item 1 below.

<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Speller and L Strange.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
<b>2. MINUTES – ANNUAL COUNCIL 25 MAY 2011</b>
<p>Subject to the amendment of Item 7, Membership of the Audit Committee to read '4 Labour Group Members, 2 Conservative Group and 1 non-elected Independent' it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 25 May 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.</p>
<b>3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS</b>
<p>The Mayor informed the Council that she had agreed to vary the order of business for the meeting. A question had been submitted from a member of the public which would be taken during the main debate.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to Darren Nicholson who had stood down from his role as Macebearer after 16 years.</p>

Congratulations were offered to TRACKS, which runs a nursery for children who are autistic, who had received an outstanding Ofsted report.

The Mayor displayed to Council a Lawn Tennis Association Beacon status award that had been achieved by Stevenage Tennis Club for their tennis programme at Shephalbury Park Tennis Courts which was run in partnership with Stevenage Borough Council.

The Mayor also drew attention to the display in the foyer setting the scene for the Main Debate and thanked the children from the Leapfrog Day Nursery, the Play Schemes at S Nicholas, Bandle Hill and Pin Green and the Children's Centres for their work in its production.

**4. MAIN DEBATE – “PLEASE KEEP ME SAFE” – SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN STEVENAGE**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED:**

That this Council believes that all children are unique and have natural capabilities and competencies to adapt to the world we live in. We support children's rights as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989; these rights must be realised for children to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse.

Child abuse is never acceptable in any circumstance; every child has the right to be safe. Working in partnership with community and Safeguarding authorities, this Council aims to make sure that children using its services are protected from abuse.

We will ensure that children are consulted and listened to on issues that affect them in the future and will continue to value their contributions to our community.

**5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

None

**6. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL**

None

**8. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

This item was taken with item 6 above.

The Portfolio Holder Children and Young People, Culture, Sport and Leisure responded to Ms Griffith's question. There was no supplemental question.

**8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE**

The Leader of the Opposition asked that as there were to be no Neighbourhood Forum meetings would there be officer support for the Residents Meetings and what would be the timescale for the implementation of individual councillor Local Community Budgets.

In reply Council was advised that locality budgets and guidelines for their use should be available within two weeks. Officer support would be available for Residents Meetings but it would not be at the same level as had been provided for the Neighbourhood Forums. Specialised officer support could be arranged if required, but it was expected that residents would run their own meetings. The Council would publicise dates of meetings in the Chronicle, providing that publishing deadlines were met.

The Leader then invited the Portfolio Holders to speak on her behalf.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration advised Council of the following:

- The low carbon housing scheme at Peartree Way and Cotney Croft had received a Green Apple silver award. The award was presented to the Mayor.
- The Town Centre Gardens had been successfully reopened following refurbishment.

- The Wild Stevenage project (aka Urban Meadows) was underway to encourage a wildlife habitat in the wider grass verges. Council was advised that Six Hills Common was a good example of the scheme. It was confirmed that the areas of verges closest to the road would continue to be cut.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised Council of the following:

- The low cost housing scheme at Cotney Croft and Peartree Way had been shortlisted in two categories in the Sustainable Housing Awards 2011:
  - Sustainable Smaller Housing Project of the Year, and
  - Low Energy Social Housing Project of the Year.
- A letter had been received from Grant Shapps MP reminding the Council of its statutory homelessness duty to help former armed services personnel. Council was advised that the service offered by SBC more than met the minimum requirements of this duty.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport advised Council of the following:

- The Young Persons Enterprise Charter had been signed on 25 May at County Hall. The Charter was designed to help equip young people with the necessary skills to enter the workplace and would be presented at Westminster in November.
- The Inward Investment initiative had been launched at the Business Technology Centre on 19 July detailing incentives for new business to locate in Stevenage via a website portal. The tagline for the initiative is 'Stevenage – where imagination takes hold'. Members were encouraged to visit the website ([www.investinstevenage.co.uk](http://www.investinstevenage.co.uk)).

The Portfolio Holder Community, Health and Older People advised Council of the existence of Network for Health General Interest Groups which had been set up to feed into the proposed Health Watch Local Involvement Network (LINK) to comment on proposed changes to the NHS. A General Interest Group (GIG) had not yet been established by LINK in Stevenage. A meeting of interested parties (including partners and residents) was held on 19 July to establish whether such a group was viable.

<b>9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS</b>
None
<b>10. QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS</b>
None
<b>11. MATTER REFERRED FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2010/2011</b>
It was moved, seconded and <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Annual Governance Statement 2010/2011 be agreed.
<b>12. MATTER REFERRED FROM EXECUTIVE – STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL: MAKING A DIFFERENCE</b>
It was moved, seconded and <b>RESOLVED</b> that the content of the Council's Annual Report 2011, performance measure targets for 2011/12, and arrangements for publication be agreed.
<b>13. SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 2010/2011 ANNUAL REPORT – COMPLETED SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE TOPIC GROUP REVIEWS AND SCRUTINY ACTIVITY DURING 2010/2011 MUNICIPAL YEAR</b>
It was moved, seconded and <b>RESOLVED</b> that the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Review Committee and its Scrutiny Topic Groups during 2010/2011 be noted.
<b>14. OFFICER REPORT – CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS – PROPOSED REVISIONS</b>
It was moved, seconded and <b>RESOLVED</b> that the revised Contract Standing Orders be approved.

**15. AUDIT COMMITTEE – MINUTES – 17 FEBRUARY 2011, 7 MARCH 2011 AND DRAFT MINUTES 15 JUNE 2011**

The Leader of the Minority Opposition Group requested further clarification from the minutes of the June meeting and the Strategic Director (Resources) undertook to provide the information required.

**Action: Scott Crudgington**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Audit Committees held on 17 February 2011, 7 March 2011 and 15 June 2011 be noted.