

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

9 July 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, SG1 1HN on Wednesday 17 July 2013 at 7.00pm and you are summoned to attend to transact the following business.

Yours faithfully

Scott Crudgington
Deputy Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES – ANNUAL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2013

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2013.

Minutes attached – Item 2 – Page 1

3. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2013

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Special Council meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2013.

Minutes attached – Item 3 – Page 11

4. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications that the Mayor may wish to put before Council.

**5. MAIN DEBATE – STEVENAGE - A TOWN THAT CARES
OUR COMMITMENT TO BEING A CARER FRIENDLY COUNCIL**

Prior to the debate there will be a presentation from various groups and service providers regarding the role of Carers and how they can best be supported.

6. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None received.

8. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The following question was received from Mr Trevor Palmer:

'The greatest impact to the most vulnerable people in our society, and their carers both professional and voluntary, is the forced relocation or savage cuts in benefits arising from the Under Occupancy reductions in Housing Benefit. A brutally unfair tax on innocent residents just for being poor, widely known as the Bedroom Tax.

The Council and Stevenage Homes are being extremely zealous at issuing threats with very little personal contact for the smallest of infractions, against their increasingly draconian policies for rent payments. SBC are too ready to implement a political philosophy from the Con Dem government that social tenants are a menace to be phased out and forced into private rented accommodation, where there will be a likely increase in housing benefit need rather than a reduction.

Many of the most vulnerable tenants need a 'spare room' where family members take turns to stay with their loved ones on a rota basis for example as voluntary carers.

Measures such as reclassifying box rooms as treatment rooms or offices rather than bedrooms, or classifying adapted homes as special cases that are to be used only by the vulnerable and therefore not as suitable for use by less disadvantaged families, would go a long way. But a stated policy by SBC that there will not be any evictions from Social Housing as a result of reduced Housing Benefit would be widely supported in the community. It would protect the meagre social housing stock left in Stevenage for future. It would demonstrate true social responsibility of the council to protect its voters, rather than consign them to the street, or to expensive residential care just as the budgets for providing it are being cut. It would demonstrate a vision of the true cost of these changes against the supposed savings.

Therefore, what steps will the Council take to ensure such tenants are not forced from their homes and will it demonstrate a leadership in this and set an example to other strongly supported Labour Councils or will they bow themselves to New Labour Central Office dictates?’

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL’S UPDATE

In accordance with the Council’s Standing Orders, the Leader of the Opposition shall be given the opportunity to raise one matter relevant to the Borough that has arisen since the last meeting of the Council. The Leader of the Council shall then have the opportunity to advise the Council of matters relevant to the Borough that have arisen since the last meeting.

10. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

None received.

11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

None received.

12. MATTER REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE – NEW HOMES BONUS – 2013/14 SCHEME ALLOCATIONS

At its meeting on 28 May 2013 the Executive considered the report attached as Item 12 concerning the New Homes Bonus. As a consequence of agreeing the Schemes proposed the Executive are recommending to Council –

That the General Fund Revenue Account Contingency Sum held by the Executive be increased by £357,000 to maintain this sum at the £400,000 level previously agreed.

Report attached – Item 12 – Page 13

13. MATTER REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE - SOSTEVENAGE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

At its meeting on 25 June 2013 the Executive considered the report attached as Item 13 concerning the SoStevenage Community Strategy and agreed the following recommendation to Council –

That that subject to minor amendments for updating and/or accuracy the Community Strategy be approved

Report & Appendices attached – Item 13 – Page 22

**14. OFFICER REPORT – STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PLAN – SHARING THE DIVIDENDS 2013 – 2018**

To consider an officer report regarding the Corporate Plan– Sharing the Dividends 2013 – 2018

Report and Appendices attached – Item 14 Page 56

15. OFFICER REPORT - ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2012/2013

To consider an officer report regarding Member level Scrutiny activities in 2012/2013.

Report attached – Item 15 Page 110

16. OFFICER REPORT – SHARED SERVICES

To consider an officer report regarding the acceptance of the provision of individual services for East Herts Council.

Report attached – Item 16 Page 125

17. AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 26 MARCH AND 29 MAY 2013

To note the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 26 March and 29 May 2013.

Minutes attached – Items 17A Page 127 and 17B Page 131

18. APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE MINUTES – 18 JUNE 2013

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 18 June 2013.

Minutes attached – Item 18 Page 136
