

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART 1 – FOR PUBLICATION)

MEETING: Council – Wednesday 17 July 2013 – 19.00 hrs.
Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

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

ALSO PRESENT: ABK Mboho (Youth Mayor) and J Barnes (Youth Council)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Burrell, L Chester, D Cullen, S Speller and V Warwick and Mr N Parry, Chief Executive.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Mayor informed Council that he had accepted a late item of business; a report entitled 'Capital Budget 2013/2014 – Virement' which would be dealt with as item 19 on the agenda.

2. MINUTES – ANNUAL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2013

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting of 22 May 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3. MINUTES – SPECIALL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2013

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Special Council meeting of 22 May 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

4. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor provided Council with a brief update of events that he had attended since the last meeting.

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

Hannah Rignell from the HCC Community Wellbeing Team, Sue Reeve from Careers in Hertfordshire and Geoff Brown from Crossroads Care gave a presentation which covered the range of activities and support for carers provided by their agencies in the town.

After a full debate, which included input from the public gallery, it was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED:**

'That this Council is aware of the vital role carers play in Stevenage by providing selfless support for family and friends, filling the gap not served by our health and social care system.

In acknowledgement and subject to consideration by the Community Select Committee and approval by Executive, this Council agrees to make a public commitment to carers, along the lines of the attached draft*, which states what we can offer to Carers, both through our services and as an employer. This will enable Carers to know what we will do to support their invaluable contribution to the town.

Through this commitment, the Council pledges to ensure Carers are recognised as important people in our local community.'

* Draft attached at the end of this Summary of Decisions.

6. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None.

8. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A question concerning Housing Benefit and the collection of rent arrears was put to Council by a local resident, Mr Trevor Palmer which was answered by the Leader.

In reply to a comment made from the public gallery the Leader undertook to investigate the text of letters sent by the Council to tenants finding themselves in rent arrears.

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

The Leader of the Opposition enquired about the cost of the recent tripartite event and asked if it represented good value for money.

In reply Council was informed that Stevenage hosted the event every three years and that budget provision had been made for the event over that period. Council was also informed that some funding for the event came from the Stevenage, Ingelheim, Autun Association. It was acknowledged that future events might not be carried out in the same way as the process was subject to continuous review.

Council received updates about the following:

- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- The 'Meet Your Mutual Exchange' event
- New council homes at Hertford Road
- New affordable homes at Wedgwood Way
- The World of Work / Apprenticeship event at the Business Technology Centre

- The Jobs 250 programme
- A New Pan for Stevenage
- Town Centre news.

10. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

None.

11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

None.

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

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the request to increase the General Fund Revenue Account Contingency Sum held be the Executive by £357,000 in order to maintain the sum at £400,000 as previously agreed be approved.

13. MATTER REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE – SOSTEVENAGE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that subject to minor amendments for updating and/or accuracy the SoStevenage Community Strategy be approved.

14. OFFICER REPORT – STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN – SHARING THE DIVIDENDS 2013/18

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the draft document, known as Sharing the Dividends 2013-2018, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

15. OFFICER REPORT – ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2012/2013

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the work undertaken by the Development and Scrutiny Committees during 2012 / 2013 be noted.

16. OFFICER REPORT – SHARED SERVICES

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that, subject to the decisions to be taken by the Executives of Stevenage Borough Council and East Herts Council on 23 July regarding the creation of a shared service, arrangements be confirmed and approved for the East Herts Council's ICT, Business Improvement and Print and Design service functions to be provided through Stevenage Borough Council.

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

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Audit Committees held on 26 March and 29 May 2013 be noted.

18. APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE 18 JUNE 2013

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 18 June 2013 be approved as a correct record.

19. CAPITAL BUDGET 2013/2014 - VIREMENT

This report had not been circulated to Members five clear days before the meeting nor had it been made available for public inspection during that time. The Mayor determined however that given the requirement under financial regulations for budget virements to capital schemes over £250,000 to be approved by Council and the need for the works to be completed before the winter, it be considered on this occasion.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that a virement of £1,000,000 from the Decent Homes Roofing capital budget to the Decent Homes capital heating budget to facilitate the upgrade of heating and water systems in two sheltered housing schemes be approved.

DRAFT

Our Commitment to Carers

We deliver a range of services to the 84,000+ residents of Stevenage. Around 8,550 of our residents are carers, the largest number of any town in the county. The majority of carers will come into contact with us at some point and we aim to signpost them to appropriate information and support. Many of our employees are carers and we offer flexible conditions to help them balance their caring role with their working lives. We are committed to ensuring carers are recognised as an important part of our local community.

Our Commitment

We will:

- Provide in-kind support, information, advice and guidance to local carers groups through our Community Development and External Funding support
- Promote carers' groups across the town
- Ensure carers have a voice in the development of our strategic plans, policies and strategies
- Improve information about services and facilities for carers in Stevenage
- Support our carer employees to balance work and caring to improve their quality of life.
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments which include consideration of carers when planning or reviewing services.

To achieve this, we need to work on:

- Delivery of carer awareness training to key members of staff
- Creating a webpage for carers on the council website to signpost and provide information
- A review of our flexible working policies and workforce strategy
- Developing a communications campaign to promote employee support
- Promoting the carers' agenda to our statutory, business and voluntary and community sector partners
- Supporting managers to complete robust Equality Impact Assessments, considering the needs of carers.

Measuring Our Commitment

We will measure:

- The number of carers the council consults and engages to ensure our services reflect their needs
- The number of hits on our caring pages on the Stevenage Borough Council website
- The number of our caring employees