

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART 1 – FOR PUBLICATION)

MEETING: Council – Wednesday 7 October 2015 – 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: Y Tiako (Youth Mayor) and A Thurley (Youth Council)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Fraser, M Hurst, L Martin-Haugh, G Snell and V Warwick. There were no declarations of interest.
2. MINUTES – COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 22 JULY 2015
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting of 22 July 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to the correction of a typographical error in the penultimate paragraph of the Deputy Mayor’s Communications at Minute No.3 . The ‘7 years’ quoted in the second sentence should read ‘4 years’.
3. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 22 JULY 2015
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special meeting of Council on 22 July 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to the correction of a typographical error in the top paragraph of page 8 which refers to David Kissane’s wife as ‘Maureen’. This should read ‘Maggie’.
4. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2015
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special meeting of Council on 9 September 2015 be approved as a

correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor informed the meeting that former Councillor Bob Clark had recently passed away.

Members then paid tribute to former Councillor Clark and the meeting stood for a minutes' silence in his memory.

The Mayor reminded Council that after the last meeting he had undertaken to write to the Queen to congratulate her on becoming the longest serving monarch of our country. A reply had been received which the Mayor read to the meeting.

The Mayor then informed Council of his other engagements since the last meeting.

6. MAIN DEBATE – PRESENTATION FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

Council received a presentation from the Youth Council which followed up from the Debate held at Council in October 2014 on work experience.

During the presentation the Youth Council put two proposals to the Council:

- The Council was asked to support the Stevenage Youth Council with their initiative and for the Council to be first employer to receive a 'hints and tips handout'.
- The Council was asked to distribute the 'hints and tips leaflet' across the service areas within the Council, and to their external partners.

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

1. This Council supports Stevenage Youth Council's campaign, WE4YOU; The Vote for Work Experience. The Council will gratefully accept the Youth Council's offer to the first organisation to receive and distribute the

'hints and tips guide' for employers across our services and externally through our partners and networks.

2. This Council will continue to positively support work experience acknowledging that placements enhance a young person's CV; this Council provided ten places to students in June of this year as a result of the WE4YOU campaign and are pleased to make the same invitation to Stevenage Youth Council for next year.

7. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None

8. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None.

9. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the announcement that the Council would accept 20 Syrian refugees and asked what arrangements would be put in place to accommodate those refugees so that Members could advise their constituents accordingly and allay any concerns that might be expressed.

In response the Leader informed the meeting that the Council had made an offer to accept 20 refugees from those currently housed in camps in Syria, Jordan and the Lebanon. It was anticipated that the refugees allocated to the town would be in families. It was expected that the refugees would be housed in the Private Rented Sector.

The Leader then gave an outline of the support offered by Central Government and added that she was pleased with the response of partnership organisations within the town.

The Leader concluded by saying that a dedicated page on the Council's website, including a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section would be available and that Councillor Michelle Gardner and the Interim Assistant Director Housing would take the lead roles for the Council in this issue.

Council then received updates on the following:

- Hampson Park Skatepark
- Summer Holiday Playschemes
- Stevenage Museum
- BMO Fleet Livery
- Gas Servicing Contracts
- 'Housemark' Accreditation
- Tenancy Fraud Shared Service
- Housing Enforcers
- Town Centre Public Realm Improvements
- Co-operative Councils Innovation Network
- Beat The Street
- Interfaith Week
- Safer Communities and Equalities

In reply to questions concerning the relaying of the floor in the Leisure Centre Walkway Council was advised that the work would cost in the region of £25,000 and would take place within the next four weeks. The extent by which the floor level would be raised was unknown and the Portfolio Holder undertook to advise the relevant Member after the meeting.

11. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

None.

12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Council received three questions.

- A. The Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Equalities responded to a question relating to planning regulations regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The Portfolio Holder then responded to a supplementary question relating to the use of Article 4 Directions.

In reply to a specific question the Portfolio Holder offered to meet with the Member concerned and Officers to investigate the issues raised.

- B. The Portfolio Holder Economy, Enterprise and Transport responded to a question relating to retail units in the Town Centre.

The Leader then responded to a supplementary question relating to the Government's recent announcement that local authorities would be allowed to retain Business Rates and how this could be used to encourage businesses to either remain or locate in the town.

- C. The Portfolio Holder Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council responded to a question relating to the volume of calls to the Customer Service Centre.

The Portfolio Holder then responded to a supplementary question relating to staffing levels in the Customer Service Centre and offered to undertake a site visit with the Member concerned to observe the issues at first hand.

13. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF 2014/2015

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the 2014/2015 Annual Treasury Management Review be approved.

14. CHANGES TO CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the revisions to Contract Standing Orders be approved.

15. CHANGES TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the revised Financial Regulations, as appended to the report, be approved.

16. URGENT KEY DECISIONS

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

17. DRAFT AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Draft Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 1 September 2015 be noted.