

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**ECONOMY ENTERPRISE AND TRANSPORT
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Monday 25 June 2012

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors P Stuart (Chair), P Bibby CC (Vice Chair),
L Harrington, J Brown and S Walker

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
End Time: 6.55 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Mead and H Tessier.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference be noted.

3. MINUTES – 27 MARCH 2012

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2012 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the amendment of Item 3, paragraph 5, to read 'That Members note the recommended generic...' and not 'That Members note the recommendations generic...'

4. INWARD INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND BUSINESS SUPPORT SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Committee considered a report that detailed the draft recommendations arising from the scrutiny study of Inward Investment Opportunities and Business Support.

In reply to a question the Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the report, and recommendations, as agreed and amended by the Committee would be put before the Economy, Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder, the Strategic Director

(Environment), and the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Transport. They would have two months in which to formally reply to the Committee and it was expected that the responses would be reviewed at a meeting in early October.

In reply to a further question the Committee was advised that a review of the effectiveness of the report would be undertaken in approximately twelve months time.

A Member requested that should an action plan be drawn up as a result of the recommendations put forward by the Committee it should include measurable targets. The Scrutiny Officer undertook to approach the relevant officers to ensure that any resultant action plan would include such targets as discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations from the report be presented to the Economy, Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder, the Strategic Director (Environment) and the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Transport:

1. That when Government guidance is issued on the changes to locally determine Business Rates (from April 2013) a meeting be arranged with the Federation of Small Businesses to explore ways the Council can be flexible to encourage Small and Medium Sized Enterprises into the area.
2. That the Council build upon the opportunity provided by the New Homes Bonus to provide more apprenticeships and employment opportunities for young people in future years.
3. That the Council investigate ways that it can support more local businesses via its procurement for goods and services (especially under the £75k ceiling).
4. That Stevenage Borough Council promote and advertise the 'Supply Hertfordshire' website.
5. That Officers consider ways, including face to face meetings, to provide more promotion and marketing of the Business Technology Centre 'My Incubator' around the neighbourhood shops and indoor market.
6. That a promotional DVD video clip be created as a link from the SBC website and linked from other relevant sites to give a flavour of the diverse businesses based in the town and the opportunities that new companies choosing to base themselves in the town could enjoy.
7. That Officers from Legal and Environmental Health contact the owner of the former Kodak building requesting that efforts be made to tidy the appearance of the site.
8. That Officers consider ways in which the Council and its partners could support the locally skilled workforce in Stevenage to take advantage of employment opportunities when they arise.
9. That, where economically viable and with regard to long-term payback of the initial

investment, the Council incorporate sustainable building methods into any future building projects.

5. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None.