

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: 28 June 2016

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair),
D Bainbridge, J Brown, E Connolly and J Mead.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7:45 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Harrington, C Saunders and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that the terms of reference be noted.

3. MINUTES – 31 MARCH 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 31 March 2016, are approved as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

4. EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF LOCAL COMMUNITY BUDGETS

The Committee acknowledged the Executive Member's response to the recommendations from the Local Community Budget Review.

Members made a number of comments with regards to the Executive Member's response to be brought to that Member's attention.

- Recommendation 2 – In response to a question on when LCB training could be provided for Members, the Head of Leisure, Environmental Health & Children's Services Officer advised that following the outcome of this meeting, Officers could proceed with facilitating training for Members.
- Recommendation 5 – Members requested a slight change with the

wording in the application form process, requesting information on who benefits from the grant. Members requested that the wording 'in no more than 100 words' to read 'in no more than approximately 100 words' as not all cases would the information requested be limited to only 100 words. The Head of Leisure, Environmental Health & Children's Services advised that the request was simply a guide, however the wording could be changed.

- Recommendation 6- Members suggested if the applicant has an interest in the application, then the form should ask applicants to specify their interest.
- Recommendation 8 – In response to Member's request for further Officer involvement in the application process, the Head of Leisure, Environmental Health & Children's Services Officer indicated he could include a revised note in the Member Guidance Notes which would remind Members of their responsibility to check the suitability of an award but that officer advice would be available on request.
- Recommendation 10 – The Head of Leisure, Environmental Health & Children's Services would be requesting colleagues in IT to confirm if it was technically feasible to defer a grant if the whole amount had not been awarded.
- Recommendation 12 - Members were concerned that the monitoring feedback form of completed projects was not being made available to Members who had supported the project. It was requested that the Executive Member be invited to the Committee for further explanation if he did not agree to Members being given access to this information. It was suggested that Members could be given access to the electronic folder to view for themselves if they so wished.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Executive Portfolio Holder response be noted.

5. DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENT & PRESENTATION – SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO DAMP AND MOULD IN STEVENAGE HOUSING STOCK

The Head of Asset Management gave a presentation on Damp and Mould in Stevenage Housing Stock.

The Officer acknowledged that mould and damp was caused by a number of factors and that the Council had plans to address it through various initiatives.

The Head of Asset Management informed Committee that the Council's policy on Damp and Mould would be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

The Committee considered the Draft Scoping Document and made a number of comments as follows:-

A suggestion of a site visit to properties affected by mould and damp was welcomed by Members. The Head of Asset Management agreed to facilitate the visit with Members being able to visit properties where works had been undertaken under the Whole House 1 Contract, to void properties and those still experiencing damp and mould issues.

A suggestion to publicise the review via an advert in the local paper and to extend it to Stevenage residents affected by mould and damp was noted. The Scrutiny Officer stated that Officers should first see how many residents could be encouraged to attend based on the information that already existed before pursuing an advert

On the issue of inviting a critical friend, Members welcomed inviting Officers from similar sized new towns such as Harlow and Crawley, who have housing stock built around the same time to come and share their experiences.

Councillor E Connolly agreed to lead on research questions concerning sheltered housing.

6. COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND DRAFT MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2016-17

Noted

7. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None.

8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

9. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR