

## SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN PART I

**MEETING:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Monday 11 November 2013, 6pm, Autun Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors J Thomas (Chair), J Brown, M Cherney-Craw, G Clark, J Hollywell, P Stuart and H Tessier.

**THE AGENDA ITEMS REFERRED TO IN THIS SUMMARY OF DECISIONS MAY BE INSPECTED AT THE RECEPTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES, DANESHILL HOUSE.**

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<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Hearn, R Parker CC, S Speller, B Underwood and S Walker  There were no declarations of interest.	G Moody Ext 2203
<b>2. MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 OCTOBER 2013</b>	
It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes from the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2013 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	G Moody Ext 2203

### **3. PART 1 DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

This report had not been circulated to Members five clear days before the meeting nor had it been made available for public inspection. The Chair determined however that given the short period of time left before the end of the call-in period on 12 November 2013, it be considered on this occasion.

#### **Under Occupancy Report**

In reply to a question concerning the Council's debt policy for tenants falling into rent arrears the Committee was advised that the Council was considering a raft of measures, including a monitor to enable potential issues to be identified and dealt with proactively.

The Committee was further advised that it was the intention of the Council to recover debts wherever practicable.

#### **Welfare Reform – Impact on Residents and the Council's Response**

The Committee was advised that the timescale for the implementation of Universal Credit was unknown, but that the Council had taken a number of preparatory steps for its introduction including the establishment of a Welfare Reform Group and creation of a 'performance dashboard' to enable the early identification of potential issues.

In reply to a question concerning feedback to the Executive the Committee was advised that the next report to the Executive was scheduled for July 2014, however an earlier report would be made should the performance dashboard identify any issues which required Executive level intervention.

A Member commented that the Council should liaise with other authorities to bring pressure on the Government to highlight issues including the reduced ability of the Council to fulfil its duty of care and inequalities issues raised as a result of the Welfare Reform Act. It was agreed by the Committee that this comment should be reported back to the Executive.

M Partridge  
Ext 2456

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the following Part 1 Decisions of the Executive taken on 4 November 2013 be noted:

- Licensing Act 2003 – Licensing Policy Review
- Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Convictions Policy
- Under Occupancy Policy
- Welfare Reform – Impact on Residents and the Council’s response
- Treasury Management Strategy and Mid-Year Review
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Monitoring Report – General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

2. That the following comment be reported to the Executive:

‘This Committee recommends that the Council liaise with other like-minded authorities to make the strongest possible representations to the Government concerning the negative impacts of the Welfare Reform Act on the residents of the town.’

**4. URGENT PART 1 DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

<b>5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS</b>	
None	
<b>6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>	
<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b>:</p> <p>1. That, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by SI2006 No. 88.</p> <p>2. That, having considered the reasons for the following report being in Part II, it be agreed that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.</p>	
<b>PART II</b>	
<b>7. PART II MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 OCTOBER 2013</b>	
It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Part II Minutes from the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2013 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	G Moody Ext 2203
<b>8. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE</b>	
This report had not been circulated to Members five clear days before the meeting. The Chair determined however that given the short period of time left before the end of the call-in period on 12 November 2013, it be considered on this occasion.	

<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the following Part II Decisions of the Executive taken on 15 October 2013 be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Fund Budget and HRA Proposals 2014/15, 2015/16 Savings Options, Forward Plan and Updated Financial Strategy</li> <li>• OFSTED Inspection of Children's Centres.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>9. URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b></p>	
<p>None.</p>	
<p><b>10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p>None.</p>	