

NOTICE OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART I - FOR PUBLICATION)

Agenda Item: **3**

MEETING: Executive – Tuesday 18 March 2014 – 14.00 hrs.
Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors S Taylor OBE CC (Chair), J Gardner (Vice-Chair), S Batson MBE DL CC H Burrell, R Henry CC, Mrs J Lloyd, R Raynor and A Webb.

**The deadline for Call-in of any of the decisions below is 27 March 2014.
Subject to there being no call-in the attached decisions may be implemented with effect from 28 March 2014**

ITEM / TITLE	<u>ACTION/LEAD</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	J Cansick Ext 2216
There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.	
2. MINUTES – EXECUTIVE – 11 FEBRUARY 2014	J Cansick Ext 2216
Due to a number of typographical errors in the version of the Minutes circulated the document was withdrawn. A corrected version of the Minutes would be submitted to the next meeting.	
3. MINUTES – OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	J Cansick Ext 2216
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the following meetings be noted: A. Community Select Committee – 28 January 2014 B. Housing Select Committee – 30 January 2014	

4. 3rd QUARTER MONITORING REPORT GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

A Thomas Ext 2430

Members were informed of a typographical error in the numbering of the recommendations with '2.5' quoted twice.

Having noted that Housing Building Maintenance Budgets had increased in part due to additional demands following the bad weather, storms and flooding the Executive took the opportunity to record its thanks to all the staff involved in responding to the problems experienced across the Town.

In response to questions from Members, officers indicated that they would clarify the situation regarding the re-branding of Housing from 'Stevenage Homes' to 'Stevenage Borough Council' and the progress of work on the Leisure Centre Walkway improvements.

Members expressed the view that the level of balances currently held was adequate to meet the Council's reserve requirements and they were of the view that it should not be increased.

The Assistant Director (Finance) confirmed that the recommendation relating to setting a de-minimis level for carry forward approvals meant that no carry forwards under £5,000 would be approved

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the 2013/14 3rd quarter net expenditure adjustments to the General Fund revenue budget of £230,230 (favourable variance) be approved.
2. That the 2013/14 3rd quarter net expenditure adjustments to the HRA revenue budget of £35,430 (favourable variance) be approved.
3. That the progress of the 2013/14 approved savings and growth items be noted.

4. That a transfer back to the Capacity Building Reserve of £30,000 be approved.
5. That the setting of a £5,000 de-minimus limit for carry forward approvals be approved.
6. That new General Fund budget carry forwards requests totalling £75,320 be approved.
7. That new HRA budget carry forward requests totalling £99,780 be approved.
8. That net budget adjustments to the 2014/15 General Fund revenue budget of £48,900 (favourable variance) be approved.
9. That net budget adjustments to the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account revenue budget of £36,590 (adverse variance) be approved.
10. That the progress of the 2013/14 New Homes Bonus funded schemes be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in the report

Options Considered: As contained in the report.

5. 2013/14 CAPITAL STRATEGY QUARTER THREE OUTTURN REPORT

A Thomas Ext 2430

The Assistant Director (Finance) apologised for inconsistencies in the numbering of paragraphs in the report. In addition she circulated a revised table showing unused New Build Receipts and Required HRA Funding.

The Executive expressed the view that necessary work to former warden accommodation in sheltered units should be undertaken quickly in order that they were returned to the general housing stock.

Councillor Gardner requested that the Audit Committee be provided with training on Capital Budgets, particularly the use of Capital Receipts and financing costs.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That spend against the 2013/14 General Fund Capital Budgets Expenditure as detailed in Appendix A be noted.
2. That the updated forecast of General Fund capital resources as summarised in Appendix A be approved.
3. That the revised cost of borrowing for the General Fund outlined in paragraph 4.6.1. be noted.
4. That the changes to the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix A be approved.

Reason for Decision: As contained in the report.

Options Considered: As contained in the report.

6. STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL BALANCED SCORECARD FOR QUARTER THREE 2013/14

E Wright Ext 2192

The Chief Executive presented the 2013/14 quarter three Balance Scorecard results. He stated that there had been an improvement both on the 2013/14 quarter two and in comparison to the 2012/13 quarter three.

The presentation focussed on the measures that had improved from the previous quarter and those that remained red.

There was general consensus that the measure regarding the number of organisations supported by Local Community Budgets was not appropriate as the measure should focus on the impact of the projects in relation to the needs of the community rather than the spread of support.

It was noted that the measure concerning the percentage of abandoned calls to the Customer Services Centre (CSC) remained red. Calls had risen by around 22 % compared to the same period last year, probably due to the welfare reforms. Additional staff had been recruited but it did take time for training to be provided. However it was also notable that the score for the level of satisfaction for services in the CSC was much higher than the target set and this was due to the hard work of the staff.

Following on from the discussion regarding the level of calls to the CSC the Chief Executive indicated that it was important that the

Council made every effort to ensure that correspondence sent to residents was clear and comprehensive and in turn this would allay the need for many of the calls.

In noting that the measure for the supply of ready to develop housing sites was red the Leader expressed the view that a meeting should be requested with counterparts in North Herts as it is anticipated that the Government's household projections for Stevenage will significantly increase when data is released by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the latter part of 2014 and with the requirement for the 'Duty to Cooperate' to be a continuous process it would be appropriate for the Council to seek a meeting with North Hertfordshire at the earliest opportunity.

It was **RESOLVED:**

That the overall performance results for Stevenage Borough Council Balanced Scorecard for quarter three 2013/14 and the performance management activity outlined in paragraph 3.6 (and summarised in Appendix A) be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in the report.

Options Considered: As contained in the report.

7. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None

8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED:**

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 involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.

2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

PART II

9. PART II MINUTES – 11 FEBRUARY 2014

J Cansick Ext 2216

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10 . URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None