

**NOTICE OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART I - FOR PUBLICATION)**

**MEETING:** Executive – Tuesday 22 July 2014 – 14.00 hrs.  
Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors S Taylor OBE CC (Chair), J Gardner (Vice Chair), H Burrell, Mrs J Lloyd, R Raynor, S Speller and A Webb

**The deadline for Call-in of any of the decisions below is 31 July 2014.**

**Subject to there being no call-in the attached decisions may be implemented with effect from 1 August 2014.**

<b>ITEM / TITLE</b>	<b>ACTION/LEAD</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	J Cansick Ext 2216
An apology for absence was received from Councillors R Henry CC and J Thomas.  There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>2. MINUTES – 17 JUNE 2014</b>	J Cansick Ext 2216
It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2014 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.  Arising from an action requested at the last meeting concerning the number of contacts made to the Council a briefing paper had been produced and was discussed in Part 2 at which point it was agreed that the paper should be made available as a Part 1 document.	

### 3. MINUTES - DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

J Cansick Ext 2216

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the following meetings are noted:

- A. Environment & Economy Select Committee – 18 June 2014
- B. Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 23 June 2014

### 4. NEW HOMES BONUS – 2013/14 SCHEME ALLOCATIONS

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That an allocation of £1,142,000 from the 2014/15 New Homes Bonus grant are approved for the implementation and delivery of following schemes :

- (a) Town Centre Walkway Improvements Project (Initiative 1) additional sum- £40,000;
- (b) Town Centre Regeneration (initiative 2) - £800,000;
- (c) Apprenticeship Scheme 2014/15 (Initiative 3) - £121,000;
- (d) Skate Park (Initiative 4) - £125,000;
- (e) Environmental Spring Clean (Initiative 5) -£20,000;
- (f) World War 1 Memorial (initiative 6) -£10,000;
- (g) A premium park/play area at Ridlins (consultation to be undertaken with users as to the equipment to be provided) - £26,000

2. That it is noted that the Apprenticeship scheme is the cost over two financial years (2014/15-2015/16).

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and 1 (g) to replace and improve the facility that was to be moved due to the development of the GP Surgery and in response to priorities voiced by the community.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

**5. STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL: MAKING A DIFERENCE – ANNUAL REPORT 2014**

R Protheroe Ext. 2938

It was **RESOLVED**

1. That the content of the Council's draft Annual Report 2014, attached as Appendix A is agreed.

2. That delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director (Resources), in consultation with the Leader, to agree the final arrangements for publication.

*Reason for Decision As contained in the report.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

**6. REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT STRATEGY**

L Baldock Ext 2083

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That an updated Corporate Procurement Strategy for 2013-2016 is adopted subject to

- the Portfolio Holders for Resources and Economy and Transport working with Officers to consider how best to increase the value of contracts being awarded to local businesses;
- Working towards provisions to best ensure that all contracts let are to businesses that pay at least the living wage to all staff

- Further consultation, particularly with local small and medium sized businesses in the Town and umbrella agencies such as WENTA to best aide those businesses to have an opportunity to be successful in tendering for Council contracts.

2. That Strategic Director (Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Resources and Economy and Transport, is granted delegated authority, to approve the final version of the Strategy following the further work detailed in 1 above.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and too attempt to increase the opportunities for locally based businesses and ensure that contractors used pay the living wage to staff.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

## **7. REVISED STEVENAGE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

R Javes Ext. 2962

Officers were requested to provide all Members with a briefing note to update them on current policies and guidance in relation to the proportion of affordable homes required to be provided in housing developments.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the results of the first consultation on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, as set out in the Statement of Consultation (attached as Appendix 1), is recorded.
2. That on-going events within the planning system, including the findings of recent local plan examinations (as summarised in Appendix 2), is noted.
3. That a revised Local Development Scheme for Stevenage ("the revised LDS" attached as Appendix 3) is agreed and approved as the statutory timetable for the continued preparation of the local plan.
4. That, subject to recommendation 2.3, the revised LDS has effect from 11 August 2014.
5. That delegated powers are granted to the Strategic Director (Environment), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment

and Regeneration, to make such amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the revised LDS.

6. That the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration write to Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, bringing to his attention how critical it is to undertake the widening of the A1(M) and that sufficient funding for these major infrastructure works should be provided by Government. The letter should also emphasise the Council's frustration that it will take 6 years to put a Local plan in place before any major housing projects can be started.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and 6. To bring these issues to the attention of the Minister.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

## **8. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME**

R Protheroe Ext. 2938

The Executive placed on record its thanks to Richard Protheroe, Sue Waller and Rosey Notley for the work they and the members of the Steering Group had undertaken on this review, particularly the comprehensive consultation undertaken and the information provided to Members.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Housing Allocations Scheme in Appendix 1 is agreed, noting that it is compliant with all current legislation and codes of guidance, including the Localism Act 2011 and Code of Guidance on Allocations dated June 2012 and December 2013.

2. That the Annual Lettings Plan in Appendix 2 is agreed and that the Executive reviews its effectiveness after 6 months from implementation.

3. That delegated authority is granted to the Strategic Director (Community) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing to agree an implementation date for the Housing Allocations Scheme subject to confirmation of system build requirements.

4. That delegated authority is granted to the Strategic Director (Communities), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to review and, if necessary, amend the Under Occupation Policy to ensure that it allows for appropriate downsizing based on need.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and 4. To ensure that larger properties may be made available.*  
*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

**9. 2013/14 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE OUTTURN**

Clare Fletcher Ext 2933

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the 2013/14 capital expenditure outturn of £23,802,074 is approved, as detailed in Appendix A to this report.
2. That the funding applied to the 2013/14 capital programme is approved as detailed in Appendix A to this report.
3. That the 2013/14 slippage of £1,231,630 is approved as detailed in the Appendix A to this report.
4. That the slippage in the Housing Capital Programme as a result of contract procurement issues is noted and the Chief Executive be requested to conduct a formal review of the contract procurement process and report back as quickly as possible with recommendations for improvements.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and 4. To ensure that the extent of slippage is not repeated.*  
*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

**10 4<sup>th</sup> QUARTER MONITORING REPORT GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

Clare Fletcher Ext 2933

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the 2013/14 actual net expenditure on the General Fund of £9,546,731 is approved, subject to the 2013/14 audit of the Statement of Accounts.
2. That the 2013/14 actual net in year surplus on the HRA of £1,472,316 is approved, subject to the 2013/14 audit of the Statement of Accounts.

3. That the new carry forward requests totalling £375,860 and £334,610, as detailed in Appendix B, is approved for the General Fund and HRA respectively.
4. That the General Fund base budget savings of £244,510 for 2013/14 is approved.
5. That the increase in the 2014/15 General Fund budget of £30,110 for the grass cutting savings option which has been reinstated is approved.
6. That the HRA net budget pressure of £133,830 for 2014/15 is approved.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

#### **11. GENERAL FUND MEDIUM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2015/16-2017/18)**

Clare Fletcher Ext 2933

The Executive was informed of a typographical error in the table at paragraph 4.3.2 - the Council Tax % increase for 2014/2015 should read '0%' not '1.9%' as quoted.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the revised five year General Fund (GF) Medium Term Financial Strategy is approved.
2. That the Council's GF current and projected financial position is noted.
3. That a GF savings target of £0.655 million is approved for the 2015/16 Budget Process, and a total savings target of £2.4 million is approved for the PBB2 period 2015/16 – 2017/18.
4. That the Integrated Financial Planning Process outlined in paragraph 4.4 is approved including the PBB2 process, target commercialisation approach and the establishment of the capital reserve as outlined in the report.

5. That all GF Growth for priority schemes are funded from within the existing baseline budgets or further savings in addition to the targets outlined in paragraph 4.4.7. of the report.
6. That the Strategic Director (Resources) works with the Council's Senior Management Team and Executive Portfolio Holders to deliver options that will achieve the saving targets identified within the Strategy.
7. That the Leaders Services Priority Group is re-convened to oversee the development of the 2015/16 – 2017/18 savings package.
8. That a minimum level of balances for the GF for 2015/2016 is set at £2.8 million and it be noted that these balances should be maintained at no less than £2.5 million.
9. That the Strategic Director (Resources) is requested to revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy and re-present to the Executive for approval, if material changes to forecasts are required following further Government announcements.
10. That public consultation be commissioned in line with the requirements of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy and as stated in paragraph 4.8 of the report.
11. That the Trade Unions and staff are consulted on the key messages contained within the Medium Term Financial Strategies and more specifically when drawing up any proposals where there is a risk of redundancy.
12. That officers be requested to work with the Portfolio Holders for Resources and Environment and Regeneration to examine the possibility of concessions for local residents across the range of fees and charges.
13. That officer liaise with North Herts College regarding training for managers on the commercialisation agenda.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the report and 12. and 13. To explore further options that might impact on the MTFS.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the report.*

## **12. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**



None

### 13. 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**

### 14 . URGENT PART II BUSINESS

#### **Customer Services Centre (CSC) – Review of Contacts**

This briefing had not been circulated to Members 5 clear days in advance of the meeting but the Chair determined that it be considered on this occasion due to the significant impact on resources if the matter is not addressed.

The Strategic Director (Resources) presented a paper to the Executive concerning review of customer contacts to the CSC that had been requested at the last meeting.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Briefing Paper is made Part 1 and made available to the public\*.

2. That the Strategic Director (Resources) work with the Portfolio Holder for Resources to bring proposals forward to make improve the on-line facilities for Customer Contact and consider the introduction of Apps to increase electronic contact and to consider how best to assist those customers in need of greater support.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in the briefing paper and to provide direct access to services on-line.*

*Options Considered: As contained in the briefing paper.*

*\* The Briefing paper has now been published with the agenda on the website and will be circulated on the Part 1 Supplementary agenda for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*