

## SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN PART I

**MEETING:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Tuesday 22 September 2015, 6.00pm, Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors: L Martin-Haugh (Chair), L Bell, P Bibby, L Briscoe, J Brown, M Downing, M Gardner, E Harrington, M Hurst, C Latif, S Mead and P Stuart.

**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>	
An apology for absence was received from Councillor R Parker CC.  There were no declarations of interest.	G Moody Ext 2203
<b>2. MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JULY 2015</b>	
It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 July 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	G Moody Ext 2203
<b>3. PART 1 DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE</b>	
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 time left before the end of the call-in period on 29 September 2015, it be considered on this occasion.

### **ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF 2014/2015**

The Committee was advised that the report had been recommended by both the Audit Committee and the Executive for approval by Council at its meeting on 7 October.

In reply to a question concerning the level of the Council's balances the Committee was advised that monies were being held against known future expenditure.

### **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)**

The Committee raised a number of queries about the report especially with regard to the potential for a negative label to be attached to areas attached to PSPOs, the role of the police and council officers in enforcement, the consultation process, the possible outlawing of legitimate fund-raising activities and the evidence base used to determine the proposed zones.

The Committee was advised that once established PSPO zones could be extended, or revoked, after further consultation.

In reply to specific questions Officers undertook to provide feedback on the following topics:

- The use of CCTV footage as evidence
- The evidence considered by the Responsible Authorities Group to determine the proposed PSPO areas
- The role of Police and Council Officers in enforcement

C Fletcher  
Ext 2933

M Partridge  
Ext 2456

R Protheroe  
Ext 2938

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL: ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015**

The Committee was advised that the format of the report had been designed as a 'quick read' for residents.

The Committee was positive in its feedback for the report.

**2015/2016 CAPITAL BUDGET – FIRST QUARTER CAPITAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee was advised that the number of Right to Buy applications was expected to exceed 100 by the end of 2015/2016.

Members asked a number of questions about Right to Buy receipts which were answered by the Officer.

**FIRST QUARTER REVENUE MONITORING REPORT – GENERAL FUND AND HRA**

Clarity was sought about the level of the Council's outstanding debts, especially the level of Housing Benefit Overpayments. In response the Officer advised the Committee that the Council had limited recovery options where clients remained on benefits.

Members asked a number of detailed questions about deposit advances and Right to Buy entitlements which were answered by the Officer.

**GENERAL FUND BUDGET – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) (2015/16 – 2019/20)**

The Committee was advised that the MTFS had been rewritten with the intention of the Council reducing its reliance on the Government's Revenue Support Grant (RGS).

Some questions were expressed at the merit of this approach and the pressures it would place on the Council to meet its budgets. The Committee then discussed the options of realising consistent underspends and the need to regard making savings as an ongoing process.

R Protheroe  
Ext 2938

C Fletcher  
Ext 2933

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## **2015/2016 BALANCED SCORECARD – QUARTER 1**

The Strategic Director Community presented the balanced scorecard.

The Committee was advised that the scorecard and its measures would be updated in line with a new Corporate Strategy which was due to be launched early in 2016.

A Member expressed concern that the measure concerning staff performance reviews could be lost in the reformatting and stressed its importance for the Council.

In reply to a question concerning data provided against measure NI15b – rate of violence against the person – the Strategic Director Community undertook to clarify the situation and feedback to the Member concerned.

## **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

The Committee welcomed the Leader's statement concerning the Syrian refugee crisis.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part 1 decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 21 September 2015 be noted:

- Minutes – 14 July 2015
- Minutes – 24 July 2015
- Minutes – Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees
- Annual Treasury Management Review of 2014/2015
- Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)
- Stevenage Borough Council: Annual Report 2014/2015
- 2015/2016 First Quarter Capital Strategy Update
- First Quarter Revenue Monitoring Report – General Fund and HRA
- General Fund Budget – Medium Term Financial Strategy (2015/16 – 2019/20)

M Partridge  
Ext 2456

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2015/2016 Balanced Scorecard – Quarter 1</li> <li>• Urgent Part 1 Business – Leader’s statement on refugees.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS SCRUTINY REVIEW</b>	
<p>Members were requested to volunteer for questioning topics and to feedback any comments on the Scoping Document to the Scrutiny Officer by Wednesday 7 October.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Scoping Document be noted and that the Scrutiny Officer incorporate any comments made by Members into the next version of the document for presentation at the next meeting.</p>	S Weaver Ext 2332
<b>5. URGENT PART 1 DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	
None.	
<b>6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS</b>	
None.	
<b>7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>	
Not required	
<b>PART II</b>	
<b>8. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE</b>	
None	

<b>9. URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	
None.	
<b>10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS</b>	
None.	