

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**

**Date: Monday 14 March 2016**

**Time: 6.00 p.m.**

**Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage**

Present: Councillors L Martin-Haugh (Chair), L Bell, P Bibby, L Briscoe, J Brown, L Harrington, M Hurst, C Latif, S Mead and P Stuart.

Start / End Time      Start Time: 6.00 p.m.  
                                 End Time: 8.10 p.m.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Downing, M Gardner and R Parker CC.

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 17 FEBRUARY 2016**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 February 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**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 time left before the end of the call-in period on 16 March it be considered on this occasion.

**Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)**

The Committee was advised that following the meeting of the Executive discussions had taken place with the appropriate Heads of Service concerning enforcement. It was anticipated that resourcing for enforcement would be co-ordinated through a collaborative plan managed by the SoSafe Partnership on which the Council was the lead partner.

In reply to a question the Committee was advised that front-line SBC staff were

supportive of this approach to enforcement.

Members then asked a number of detailed questions concerning finance, day to day enforcement of the PSPOs and the review process, which were answered by the Officer.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Monitoring Report General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

The Committee received a revised section 3.5 of the report which had been appended to the Supplementary Agenda.

### **2015/2016 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Capital Strategy Update**

The Committee was advised that 'Right to Buy' had continued to outstrip expectations which had led to concerns about the Council's ability to fully utilise the receipts from those sales, despite significant efforts being made at all levels to seek a policy change from Central Government.

The Committee was further advised that a revised HRA Business Plan was under development which would incorporate the issues of rent reduction, Right to Buy receipts and further borrowing. The revised plan would be presented to the Executive in September.

Members then asked a number of questions concerning project slippage and disposal of assets which were answered by the Officer.

### **Future Town Future Council – Outcomes and Resources**

The Committee received a presentation from the Strategic Director (Community).

Members asked a number of questions about the role of Member Champions, the concept of Financial Security and funding for the programme, which were answered by the Officer.

### **Stevenage Borough Council Balanced Scorecard for Quarter Three 2015/2016.**

The Strategic Director (Community) reported that there was a slight improvement in quarter 3 with 66 measures achieving green status, 7 yellow/amber and 10 red.

In response to a question concerning the causes of tenant dissatisfaction with the Homes Improvement Service, specifically the reinstatement of highways and footpaths following home improvement works, the Strategic Director (Community) undertook to provide further details to interested Members after the meeting.

The Committee was advised of the emergence of a digitisation plan designed, in part, to improve measures in the Customer Service Centre. It was suggested that the Committee could have input to the plan as part of its Policy Development remit and the Scrutiny Officer undertook to include the idea as part of the 2016/2017 Scrutiny

Workplan. (Item 4 on this agenda).

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part 1 decisions of the Executive be noted:

- Executive Minutes – Tuesday 16 February 2016
- Minutes – Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees
- Public Spaces Protection Order
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Monitoring Report General Fund and Housing Revenue Account
- 2015/16 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Capital Strategy Update
- Future Town Future Council – Outcomes and Resources
- Stevenage Borough Council Balanced Scorecard for Quarter Three 2015/2016.

#### **4. 2016/2017 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report.

Members made a number of suggestions for scrutiny reviews, policy development items and follow-ups which were discussed by the Committee.

The Committee did not wish to review any recommendations from previous studies.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The feedback from Scrutiny Members as detailed at section 4 of the report be noted.
2. The following be added to the Committee's work programme:
  - a. Continuation of the review into communications
  - b. Success of Shared Services
  - c. The transfer of various responsibilities and agency agreements to the County Council (resource permitting)
3. The following be noted as Policy Development work for the Committee:
  - a. The Council's Digitisation Plan,
  - b. Design of the 2017/2018 Council Tax Support Scheme
  - c. CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)
  - d. Potential Article 4 Direction for Houses in Multiple Occupation\*
  - e. HRA Business Plan\*

\* - subject to confirmation in relation into which Committee's remit this falls.

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

None.

**6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

The Committee extended their condolences to the family and friends of Colleen Bennett (nee Murphy) who had sadly recently passed away.

It was suggested that the Council consider the erection of a commemorative plaque in Daneshill House for Colleen in recognition of her outstanding work in the community.

**7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

**8. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

None

**9. URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**Chair**