

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 6 April 2016

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

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

Start / End Time Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
 End Time: 6.40 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 MARCH 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 March 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 13 April it be considered on this occasion.

New Homes Bonus

The Committee was advised that the Executive were very grateful for the level of scrutiny that this item had received at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 4 April.

The Committee wished to record its thanks to the Head of Environmental Services for the prompt circulation of the play equipment details as requested at the meeting held on 4 April.

Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placements Policies 2016/2017

In reply to a question about groups at risk of needing of temporary accommodation, the Committee was advised that young people becoming homeless as a result of parental evictions was a concern for the Council.

Members then asked a number of questions about out of area placements from other Local Authorities into Stevenage and in reply to a request the Assistant Director (Housing Services) undertook to circulate details of such placements as far as they were known.

Annual Report of the Housing Management Board

The Committee was advised that an increase in the number of tenant representatives on the Housing Management Board was under consideration for 2016/2017. Any new members to the Board would receive the same level of training as existing members.

In response to a comment the Committee was advised that the title page of the Annual Report would be amended to read 'Housing Management Board' rather than 'HMB'.

In response to a request the Resident Involvement Manager undertook to email Members a link to the on-line report when published.

Fraud Prosecution Policy

The Committee was advised that the fraud policy considered by the Executive would be presented to all Authorities in the Shared Anti-Fraud Partnership.

The Committee was further advised that authority to make minor changes to the policy had been delegated to the Assistant Director of Finance in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder. Any significant change would result in the policy being presented back to the Audit Committee and the Executive.

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

- Executive Minutes – Tuesday 8 March
- Overview and Scrutiny Minutes
- New Homes Bonus
- Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placements Policies 2016/2017
- Annual report of the Housing Management Board
- Fraud Prosecution Policy

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

None.

5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

7. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part II decision is noted:

- Write Off of Housing Benefit Overpayments and Disabled Facilities Grant Greater than £10,000

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part II decision authorised by the Chair is noted:

- Acquisition of a Town Centre Property.

9. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

Chair