

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Thursday 15 September 2016

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby (Vice Chair), J Brown, M Downing, M Gardner, E Harrington, J Hollywell, C Latif, S Mead, A Mitchell and R Parker CC

Start / End Time Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
 End Time: 7.40 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Saunders and P Stuart.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 14 July 2016 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK – STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN FUTURE TOWN FUTURE COUNCIL

In introducing the report, the Head of Service (Chief Executive's Unit) advised the meeting that the Council's key drivers, vision and values had changed since the Corporate Plan was approved in 2013, and this will operate as a strategic policy framework for the Council, ensuring that services consider the Council's key priorities when undertaking planning and resource allocation.

In response to a question on how Council's priorities are to be measured, the Officer informed Members that most of the objectives are to be supported by key corporate performance targets and indicators to ensure performance is monitored on delivery.

It was suggested that in the section 'Housing Development' the word 'houses' should be substituted with the word 'homes' – to read 'to increase the number of homes in the town'.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report is noted.

4. 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 21 September 2016, it be considered on this occasion.

Minutes – Overview & Scrutiny Committee & Select Committees

With reference to the Minutes of the Community Select Committees, Members were concerned with the minimum requirement of £100 within the LCB (Local Community Budget) guidelines as it precluded small bids.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendation be added to the conclusion of the review of Local Community Budgets to be forwarded to the Executive Portfolio Holder for consideration – That where a Councillor makes a direct bid for the work to be undertaken in their ward, the £100 minimum bid rule be waived.

Annual Treasury Management Review

Members were concerned with how Council balances was being depicted in the report, and that Officers should consider a better way of representing the information so as to avoid any misunderstanding by the public.

2016/17 First Quarter Capital Strategy Update

Consultation on an Article 4 Direction to Require New Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOS) to Gain Planning Permission

Members were advised that Article 4 Directions would not apply retrospectively, however future HMOs would require planning permission and that this would be considered in line with planning policies.

Members were informed of the consultation date had been extended to end at midday on Friday 21 October so as to take into account the publication date of the local newspaper.

1st Quarter Monitoring Report General Fund and Housing Revenue Account

An addendum that included revisions to figures in section 3 of the report was circulated at the meeting.

In response to question about the performance and productivity levels of the Repairs and Voids Service, the Assistant Director (Finance) acknowledged that although operating costs had successfully been reduced, income levels remained below target.

Stevenage Borough Council Corporate Plan Future Town Future Council

This report was discussed at item 3 above.

General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy – 2016/2017 -2020/2021

Members were advised that in light of the uncertainties with the Central Government's comprehensive spending review in the future. It had been recommended that the four year funding settlement be accepted.

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

- Minutes – Overview & Scrutiny Committee & Select Committees
- Annual Treasury Management Review
- 2016/17 First Quarter Capital Strategy Update
- Consultation on an Article 4 Direction to Require New Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOS) to Gain Planning Permission
- 1st Quarter Monitoring Report General Fund and Housing Revenue Account
- Stevenage Borough Council Corporate Plan Future Town Future Council
- General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy – 2016/2017 -2020/2021

5. URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that the following urgent Part I decision authorised by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is noted:

- A Review of Local Business Support and a Proposal for a Business Relationship Manager (BRM)

6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. Under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. Members having considered the reasons for the following report being in Part II and determined that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

8. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

This report had not been circulated to Members five clear days before the meeting. The Chair determined however that given the short time left before the end of the call-in period on 22 July 2016, it be considered on this occasion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part II decisions of the Executive taken on 12 July 2016 are noted:

- Decent Homes (Internal Works) Works Contract Award

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

None

10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None

Chair