

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Monday 24 October 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, R Parker CC, C Saunders and P Stuart

Start / End Time Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
 End Time: 8.05 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence nor any declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 September 2016 are approved 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 26 October 2016, it be considered on this occasion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part I decisions of the Executive taken on 18 October 2016 is noted.

Minutes-Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 15 September 2016

Members were informed that both the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council and the Chair of the Community Select Committee would be meeting to consider the Committee's request on waiving the £100 minimum requirement with regards to the Local Community Budget application.

Minutes – Community Select Committee - 7 September 2016.

Minutes – Environment & Economy Select Committee – 29 September 2016

Hertfordshire Shared Home Improvement Agency

In response to a Member's question it was explained that SBC provided an aids and adaptation service for Council tenants, the proposed shared service was for residents in private houses.

In highlighting the benefits of the proposed scheme, Members were advised that the Executive had agreed in principle to join the Agency from April 2018. A report with more detailed proposals would be brought back to the Executive at which Members would have a further opportunity to comment on the final proposals.

Town Centre Regeneration

Members received a presentation from the Strategic Director (Environment) on the activities that had been undertaken to move the Future Town Future Council Town Centre Regeneration priority forward. Members were advised that SG1 highlighted in the appendices of the report would be the first phase of development and that it covered an area around Southgate and the Town Square.

In response to a question regarding the ownership of land around the town centre, the Strategic Director (Environment) advised Members that the Land Registry had maps which set out clearly the ownership of land, which he could make available to Members. He reassured Members that when Council earmarked any area for regeneration, Officers would undertake checks on the deed and legal title.

Members were advised that discussions with prospective developers, regarding SBC's regeneration programme had been very positive.

In response to plans around the Stevenage Rail Station, Members were advised that the Local Enterprise Partnership had submitted a funding bid with a decision expected in due course. Members acknowledged that a new station rather than a revamped station would act as a catalyst for the future development of the town.

A suggestion to have a dedicated page on the Council website to help promote and publicise the regeneration plans and schemes in light of its magnitude and its impact on the town and residents, was noted.

Corporate Performance for Quarter one 2016/2017

The Strategic Director (Community) gave a presentation on the Q1 performance addressing the measures in relation to Future Town, Future Council (FTFC) and Corporate Performance.

In response to a question with regards to the amount of days lost due to sickness, Members requested that data should be broken down further to reflect long term sickness against short term illness and section by section.

Members were informed that staff on return to work received adequate support through initiatives such as the Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health Therapy, a staged return to work programme as part of the Health and Well-being Strategy.

In response to a Member's request, the Strategic Director (Community) agreed to provide a more detailed graph in future to that shown at paragraph 3.29 of the report, to include figures from zero on the Y axis with regards to the sickness absence figures. Officers also agreed to provide some analysis of why sickness figures were higher in the summer months rather than the winter months.

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

- Minutes-Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 15 September 2016
- Minutes – Community Select Committee - 7 September 2016.
- Minutes – Environment & Economy Select Committee – 29 September 2016
- Hertfordshire Shared Home Improvement Agency
- Town Centre Regeneration
- Corporate Performance for Quarter One 2016/2017

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

None

5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

6. 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.

7. PART II 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 26 October 2016, it be considered on this occasion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part II decision of the Executive taken on 18 October 2016 is noted:

- **Revised Disposal Programme**

Councillor M Gardner's request for a site visit was noted by Strategic Director (Environment)

- **Write Off Housing Benefit Overpayments and Council Tax Support Award Greater than £10,000**
- **Procurement of a Replacement Materials Contract for the Repairs & Voids Service**

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

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

- Write off Debts

9. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None

Chair