



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday, 19 June 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Location: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Stephen Weaver (01438) 242332 Stephen Weaver (01438) 242332

Members: Councillors: L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), S Barr, J Brown, L Chester, M Downing, ME Gardner, S-J McDonough, A McGuinness, J Mead, S Mead, A Mitchell CC, R Parker CC and C Parris.

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 16 MAY 2019

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 May 2019.

Pages 3 – 4

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

To note the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as agreed at Annual Council on 22 May 2019.

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4. PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

To consider the following Part I Decisions of the Executive taken on 12 June 2019.

Executive Agenda Item		Page No.
2	Minutes of the Executive – 14 May 2019	3
3	Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees	7
4	Appointment of Committees of the Executive	35
5	Decent Homes Refurbishment Contract Procurement Options Appraisal (Investment)	43
6	Hertfordshire Home Improvement Agency – 12 Month Review	51

5. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

To receive an update on the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20.
Pages 7 – 12

6. EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF SBC SICKNESS MANAGEMENT

To receive the Executive Member response to the Committee's review of SBC Sickness Management.
Pages 13 – 18

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

None.

8. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve 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. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

10. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

To consider the Part II decisions of the Executive taken on 12 June 2019.

Executive Agenda Item	Page No.
9. Stevenage Bus Interchange	89
10. Town Centre Regeneration – The Town Centre Square and North Block	109

11. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 16 May 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Jim Brown, Michael Downing, Michelle Gardner, Lizzy Kelly, Sarah-Jane McDonough, John Mead, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC and Robin Parker CC.

Also Present: Councillor John Gardner (Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration).

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 6.07pm

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sandra Barr and Jodie Hanafin.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 30 APRIL 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30 April 2019 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee had before it the agenda and reports from the meeting of the Executive held on 14 May together with the Notice of Decisions as published after the meeting.

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 period of time left before the end of the call-in period on 21 May 2019, it be considered on this occasion.

Minutes of the Executive – 30 April 2019

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive.

Stevenage Borough Local Plan: Pre-Adoption Draft

The Committee was advised that the Executive were grateful for the comments

provided from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30 April.

The Committee thanked Officers for the details provided in respect of the costs associated with the Holding Directive.

In reply to a question it was confirmed that the letter referred to in the Executive Notice of Decisions from a local resident was the one that had been received by all Members. It was further confirmed that the Council's response to that letter would be circulated to all Members.

There were no further comments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Part I decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 May 2019 are noted:

- Minutes of the Executive 30 April 2019.
- Stevenage Borough Local Plan: Pre-Adoption Draft

4 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

5 **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 SI2006 No.88.
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.

6 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Membership - 14 (Not to be Members of the Executive but to include the Chairs of the 2 Select Committees)
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
 - 3.1. To consider the activities of the Executive and to have responsibility to reconsider any executive decision that has been subject to call-in, in accordance with the provisions of the Scrutiny provisions as set out in the Council's Constitution.
 - 3.2. Responsibility for the scrutiny of all initial proposals for the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework provisions in the Council's Constitution.
 - 3.3. To determine a Scrutiny work programme to examine the spending, policies and administration of the Council's services within the direct purview of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services & Transformation), Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) and Assistant Director (Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology) and those of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature and relationships with partners and external agencies involved with these areas, together with a timetable and method of study for each topic.
 - 3.4. To determine formal recommendations in relation to scrutiny studies undertaken for reporting to the Council, Executive, other Committees, Officers and / or partner agencies as appropriate.
 - 3.5. To review the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in relation to services within the direct purview of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services & Transformation), Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) and Assistant Director (Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology) and those of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature, considering if it wishes to make any input to policy issues contained in the Plan and if so, how. In undertaking this work the Committee may call upon the relevant Executive Member and/or the Assistant Director to provide a briefing or take part in discussion.
 - 3.6. That in respect of policy development of matters that fall within the remit of this Committee, to meet with the relevant Portfolio Holder to comment on individual draft policies that are scheduled to be considered to the Executive.

- 3.7 To work with other Select Committees, as appropriate when considering cross-cutting scrutiny studies and policy development when both Committees have so agreed.
- 3.8 To consider matters referred to the Committee under the procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in relation to matters within the direct purview of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services & Transformation), Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) and Assistant Director (Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology) and those of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.
- 3.9 In accordance with the Petitions Scheme, consider Petitions, Petition Reviews and interview Senior Council Officers (as requested by a Petition) in relation to matters within the direct purview of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services & Transformation), Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) and Assistant Director (Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology) and those of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.
- 3.10 In conjunction with the Select Committees, responsibility for the on-going development of the Scrutiny function of the Council.
- 3.11 To report to the Executive, other committees or Council, as appropriate.

Lead AD	SD Tom Pike
Deputy	
Chair	Cllr Lin Martin-Haugh

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019-20
(Including review items, statutory Budget and Policy Framework items, and policy development items)

Scrutiny Review items 2019/20: (Priority of potential scrutiny review items High/Medium/Low and suitability in 2019/20)	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting & (iv) other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy	SD/AD Comment - Likelihood of being delivered in 2019/20?	Chair/ Vice-Chair Preference & Priority
(High) Complaints/Feedback Handling	SD Richard Protheroe. The Leader	This review began in 2017 - scope agreed at Select Committee meeting 28 June 2017, interviews 26 Sep 2017, draft recommendations. Completion	(i) remainder of the review likely to be covered in 1 or 2 meetings (ii) Full Scope (already completed) (iii) Presentation & Officer report test cases (already provided) (iv) Completion of review now in 2019.	This review was not completed due to the priority given to the Sickness Management review and the consideration of the diversity of SBC staff in 2018-19.	Yes, this will be completed.	As this was deferred from 2017, the Chair is keen to get this review completed.

Scrutiny Review items 2019/20: (Priority of potential scrutiny review items High/Medium/Low and suitability in 2019/20)	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting & (iv) other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy	SD/AD Comment - Likelihood of being delivered in 2019/20?	Chair/ Vice-Chair Preference & Priority
		of the review to be scheduled				
(High) Scrutiny of the Scrutiny function at SBC Page 8	SD Tom Pike, Interim SD, Rich Protheroe. The Leader	To be scheduled.	A Special Meeting of the Committee be convened, to which all Scrutiny Members be invited, looking at the outcomes from the Parliamentary Select Committee. Further to this one off meeting a review of the function would need scoping and consideration about how this could be undertaken whether by a third party peer review etc.?	Scrutiny Officer approached the Uni of Birmingham INLOGOV (Institute of Local Gov) to undertake a 2-3 day visit to the Council to interview CE, Leader, SD/ADs, Chair/VC, & Scrutiny Members	Questions were raised regarding the cost benefit of carrying out a review for circa £2-£3k. It was agreed to hold off reviewing until the Gov. Office for Housing Communities & Local Gov. published their renewed guidance which would complement and inform an internal review. The Guidance was published in May 2019 and can now feature as the main document to compare SBC's performance against.	Item deferred. Now that the Government Guidance has been published. Members and officers will be invited to comment on local implications for SBC as part of the review of SBCs Scrutiny arrangements.

Statutory Budget & Policy Framework Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details
(High) The 2019/2020 HRA and Rent Setting	Clare Fletcher AD/Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd	December 2019	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	
(High) Financial Security Budget Options	Clare Fletcher AD/Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd	October 2019	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	
(High) Council Tax Support Scheme (refresh of scheme reviewed annually by Exec)	Clare Fletcher AD/Su Tarran HoS/Cllr Joan Lloyd	January 2020	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	

Statutory Budget & Policy Framework Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details
(High) General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting	Clare Fletcher AD/Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd	January 2020	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	

Portfolio Holder Advisory Group - Policy Development Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item covered in?	Expectation/ Style of meeting	Scope details	Other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/ Deputy
<u>(i) Council Tax Support Scheme and Universal Credit –combined session with (ii) ICT Strategy &</u>	(i) Clare Fletcher AD/Su Tarran HoS/Cllr Joan Lloyd for CT Support	23 July 2019	One	Opportunity for Executive Portfolio Holder to meet with officers and Scrutiny Members to discuss the content and shape of a Policy document		From 2018-19 it was agreed that these Portfolio Holders Advisory Group (PHAG) meetings would be clerked by	In 2018-19 due to problems with the software, it was not possible to carry out successful

Portfolio Holder Advisory Group - Policy Development Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item covered in?	Expectation/ Style of meeting	Scope details	Other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/ Deputy
<p><u>Investment Programme</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>	(ii) SD Richard Protheroe, ICT Programme Management Office Manager Dawn Hollyoak, & Strategic ICT & Partnership Manager CTO Simon Russell.			before it is completely finalised in order to shape the final outcome		Constitutional Services	modelling for the new discount scheme and therefore a planned Portfolio Advisory Group policy development meeting to consider the Council Tax Discount Scheme was not held. Therefore officers continued with the existing scheme for 2019/20.

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Executive Member Response To Sickness Management Scrutiny Review

Date Recommendations agreed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 18 /03/ 2019
(circulated 28/03/2019)

Date responses should be made by:

Executive response on behalf of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources, Cllr Joan Lloyd; should be received by 10/05/2019

Recommendations:

1. That a comprehensive staff communication plan be developed and implemented prior to the introduction of First Care which, amongst other points, will highlight that this process has been introduced to improve employee wellbeing which in turn should reduce sickness levels.

Executive Response:

Recommendation agreed - a comprehensive communications plan is currently in development and there will be a least a 2 months of communications and engagement activity ahead of the service being launched. The communications plan will focus on the benefits the service provides in terms of supporting employee health and wellbeing

<p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies, Corporate Communications Manager, Sandy Eaton</p>	
<p>2. That officers seek to measure the return on investment post implementation of First Care. If possible the First Care contribution to the Council meeting its sickness target should be quantified and measured noting also that the First Care service contract also included a target for demonstrating an improvement in staff wellbeing and that the performance of the First Care Contract be revisited in a year to evaluate its success.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – there will be quarterly contract review meetings with the account manager at First Care and at this meeting performance will be reviewed against the agreed KPI’s to measure the improvement.</p>
<p>3. That officers work with the Portfolio Holder to seek to reduce sickness absence which has been specifically associated with the undertaking of the Business Unit Reviews.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>There are a range of support packages in place to support our staff as they go through change, with the aim of trying to keep them engaged and reduce stress and anxiety (and any potential absence) wherever possible. However, we recognise that change impacts individuals differently. Absence will continue to be monitored and once change programmes are complete within Business Units, it will then be possible to measure sickness related to the reviews.</p>
<p>4. That the seasonal variations and peaks and troughs in certain Business Units sickness levels be recorded by officers and be provided to Members through the quarterly performance report.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed - This can be included in the quarterly performance information.</p>

<p>5. That the Portfolio Holder and officers continue to seek to identify specific interventions which might help reduce sickness absence associated with stress, anxiety and depression (Please see Appendix E – Time to Change Action Plan and Section 4 of the Report dated 14 November 2018).</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – Annually we renew our commitment to the Time to Change Pledge and develop a new action plan to try and reduce stress, anxiety and depression.</p>
<p>6. Approximately half of all staff has little or no sickness leave each year, the other half account for the remainder of the sickness figures (16-18 days a year). As such, Scrutiny Members support the Senior Leadership Team’s efforts and measures they have introduced to address this issue and request that an update report be provided in approximately one year to further consider performance in this regard.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – information will be provided at the appropriate time.</p>
<p>7. That the impact of ill health and pressures on staff who act as carers be acknowledged by the employer side as a genuine pressure and that the Council’s sickness policy and other Council policies addresses this issue and provides sufficient support for carers.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – The Council currently operates flexible working arrangements both through the flexi-time scheme and we also offer staff the opportunity to apply for flexible working arrangements (such as part time, compressed hours, annualised hours) and this is with the aim of supporting staff. Consideration will also be given to exploring emergency care leave for situations when usual care arrangements breakdown.</p>
<p>8. That the HR Team be invited to consider the suitability of a monthly wellbeing staff survey template to provide an example of the monthly staff survey undertaken in his workplace as part</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – soft market testing is already underway to explore the applications available on the market that could deliver this.</p>

<p>of the wellbeing policy with a view to potentially using a similar anonymous staff survey to gauge the wellbeing of SBC staff.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	
<p>9. That the Volunteer Policy be publicised and promoted amongst staff and that an evaluation of its success be brought back to Members.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – time off for volunteering is recorded on the HR System and we will promote and celebrate the success of the new policy during national volunteer week (1-7 June 2019)</p>
<p>10. That the Council seeks to identify the causes of sickness covering underlying “big picture” issues such as pay restraint and austerity, office ergonomics, problems with ICT etc.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>It is recognised that this may be challenging to report upon, as the reasons given for absence are usually medical. However, wherever we have this information we will look to bring this to the attention of SLT and Members, whilst ensuring we do not identify individual employees.</p>
<p>11. That from the information obtained from the two officers interviewed on the recommendation of HR (Supported Housing & Customer Service Centre), the following additional recommendation be considered: That a questionnaire/survey is undertaken with officers (in at least the two areas identified above, but this could be broadened to include other areas) to establish staff’s views of the current sickness management processes.</p>	<p>We welcome views from staff across the Council, however, we should also be mindful of the resources required to complete such surveys and survey fatigue by respondents. There will be the staff survey temperature check during 2019 and we will look to incorporate some questions on sickness absence in this.</p>

<p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	
<p>12. That officers consider amending the existing policy to address the issues raised by officers from Customer Service Centre and Housing Investment detailed at 4.1.14 to 4.1.26 in the report.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – the Sickness Absence Policy is currently being reviewed in preparation for the introduction of First Care, so the issues identified will also be fed into this review.</p>
<p>13. That (i) Managers be provided with flexibility to use discretion when managing sickness and inconsistencies across the organisation; and (ii) That planned medical operations/procedures and accidents be treated differently from other sickness reporting.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed – Manager discretion already exists within the current policy, so this may be a training need to remind managers that they can use their judgement.</p>
<p>14. That the offer from CSC and Housing Investment be tied in with the option of a wider staff questionnaire/survey at Recommendation 8.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>Recommendation noted and agreed</p>
<p>15. That managers have access to past Return to Work Interviews, sickness data and reasons for informal/formal meetings all in one place.</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed and this will be introduced as part of the First Care launch, where managers will be provided with access to a secure portal with access to sickness absence information for their team members.</p>

<p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	
<p>16. That officers consider clarifying the trigger points between formal and informal interviews.</p> <p>Action: Interim CE, Matt Partridge, Senior HR Manager, Clare Davies</p>	<p>This recommendation links with recommendation 14 (above). There is not set trigger between informal and formal, and this is to allow managers discretion to consider the individual circumstances on a case by case basis.</p>