



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date: Monday, 17 February 2020**

**Time: 6.00pm**

**Location: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete**

**Contact: Lisa Jerome (01438) 242203**

**committees@stevenage.gov.uk**

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.

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### AGENDA

#### PART 1

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

**2. MINUTES - 14 JANUARY 2020 AND 28 JANUARY 2020**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2020 and 28 January 2020.

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**3. PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

To consider the following Part I Decisions of the Executive taken on 12 February 2020.

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2	Minutes of the Executive – 22 January 2020	5
3	Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees	15
4	Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document: Public Consultation	23
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6	Licensing Act 2003 – Review of Statement of Licensing Policy	113
7	Household Waste Management Policy	163
8	Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2020/2021 – BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEM	179
9	Final Capital Strategy 2019/20 – 2024/25 – BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEM	211

Notice of Decisions to follow

**PLEASE BRING YOUR AGENDA AND REPORTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2020**

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

None.

**5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

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

**6. 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.

**7. PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28 JANUARY 2020**

To approve as a correct record the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2020.

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

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Notice of Decisions to follow

**PLEASE BRING YOUR AGENDA AND REPORTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2020**

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

None.

**10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

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

Agenda Published 7 February 2020

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## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - SITTING AS A SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 14 January 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Laurie Chester, Michael Downing, Andy McGuinness, John Mead, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris.

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 6.00pm  
End Time: 8.05pm

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michelle Gardner.

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 2 **MINUTES - 11 NOVEMBER 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 November 2019 be noted subject to Councillor Margaret Notley being added to the attendance for the meeting.

#### 3 **POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE FUNCTION**

The Committee considered the report from the Scrutiny Officer which set out a number of possible recommendations for the review derived from the self-evaluation scoring matrix comments.

The following recommendations were agreed:

##### **Work Programming:**

- (i) Use the Customer Service Centre & Satisfaction Surveys data as a source to generate local issues to scrutinise;
- (ii) Work with Scrutiny Members to capture their ideas – possibly with a one day event to gather ideas rather than relying on the current survey;
- (iii) Address the problem of the lag in the system – describe as a rolling work programme that items can drop off and be added to during the year but still be published in the spring
- (iv) The process must be Member led with Scrutiny Members having the last word on subjects to scrutinise
- (v) The Communications Team should be asked to advise on what is

trending on social media.

**Scoping:**

- (i) That prior to a review starting, a short introductory background presentation detailing the issues around the scrutiny be brought to Members, this would help all Members but especially new Councillors who may not be familiar with the issues and process
- (ii) An updated scoping document identifying the changes, should be provided at strategic points during a review, reflecting on any changes of focus or additions and what has been achieved so far
- (iii) That all Scrutiny Members be given the chance to comment on the scope

**Evidence Gathering/site visits/interviews:**

- (i) Promote ways to engage more with the public in the evidence gathering process
- (ii) Provide a range of options including some evenings for Member site visits
- (iii) Provide opportunities to engage with all Scrutiny Members on a Committee and acknowledge Members who take a lead role in a specific issue the review.

**Final Reports and recommendations**

- (i) Final reports should incorporate fewer, SMART, recommendations relevant to the objective of the Scrutiny, to maintain the review's impact (where possible these could be grouped together)
- (ii) That a process be drawn together to invite comment from all Scrutiny Members regarding the final report and recommendations – (possibly an item on an agenda with draft recommendations for comment and amendment prior to the publishing of the final report)

**Monitoring Recommendations:**

- (i) That officers are expected to adopt recommendations that are in scrutiny reports once agreed with the relevant Portfolio Holder, but that this should be acknowledged in responses and not passed off as being current practise when it is actually in response to the review.
- (ii) Executive responses should be displayed prominently on the Council's web site (in addition to just being published with an agenda on the web site).
- (iii) Following a review the loop should be closed by providing feedback to witnesses and with any tenants or members of the public who have contributed via a satisfaction survey.

**Additional Recommendations:**

- (i) That an action tracker be reported to each Committee meeting to enable the monitoring of outcomes and recommendations from previous reviews;
- (ii) That the Portfolio Holder Advisory Groups be Chaired by Scrutiny Members as a Pre Scrutiny Advisory Group, which could include the Executive Portfolio Holder as a key contributor answering questions along with the relevant Assistant Director, prior to the Policy being considered at the Executive.

#### 4 **SURVEY OF HERTS SCRUTINY NETWORK**

The meeting considered the responses received from the County Council and 2 District Authorities regarding a short survey about their response to the Statutory Scrutiny Guidance and the way scrutiny was conducted in their authority.

Members agreed that the Scrutiny Officer should include an agenda item for all meetings incorporating an action plan to enable members to monitor outcomes or scrutiny recommendations made previously. This would enable Members to keep informed about progress and help any new Members appointed to the Committee after the Annual Meeting.

The possibility of appointing opposition members as chairs of scrutiny was discussed although it was agreed that the importance of those Chairs having the necessary skills, commitment and knowledge was of more importance.

It was also considered that the feedback was not clear on the way other authorities undertook pre-scrutiny work. In terms of the Portfolio Holder Advisory Groups (PHAG's) established, Members were pleased to note that a recommendation would be included under item 3 to suggest that the Groups be chaired by a Scrutiny member rather than the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder. Some Members were of the view that on occasions they had prepared extensively their own research for PHAG meetings but that their input did not appear to be included in the Policy report to Executive.

Officers agreed to circulate to Members the original report establishing the Portfolio Holder Advisory Groups.

A number of Members were interested in a scrutiny review of those authorities who had returned to the pre-2000 committee system and how it was working within those Councils.

It was **RESOLVED** that the responses be noted.

#### 5 **CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY (CFPS) SUMMARY OF STATUTORY GUIDANCE SYMPOSIUM**

The Committee considered the notes from the summary of the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Symposium on the Statutory Scrutiny Guidance.

The committee considered and debated the guidance relating to the appointment of

scrutiny chairs in particular the appointment being made by non-executive members only or by secret ballot. Members noted that the Guidance recommended that each authority should consider selecting their Chairs by secret ballot, but reiterated that this was ultimately a matter for each authority to decide.

Following further discussion it was agreed to look at this issue further at the next meeting.

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

6 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

7 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**



# STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 28 January 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair) , Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Laurie Chester, Michael Downing, Michelle Gardner, Andy McGuinness, John Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris.

**Start / End** Start Time: 6.00pm  
**Time:** End Time: 6.54pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Mead.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2 MINUTES - 18 DECEMBER 2019

In relation to Minute 3 – Part I Decisions of the Executive (Community Centres Review), the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) undertook to follow up the issue of the ongoing determination of the lease for the Old Stevenage Community Association and respond to the Member who had raised this matter at the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 December 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

### 3 PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive meeting held on 22 January 2020:

#### **Minutes of the Executive – 16 December 2019**

Noted.

#### **Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees**

Noted.

#### **Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Rent Setting Report 2020/21**

The Committee was advised that the Executive had requested the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) to submit a report to the Executive in the Autumn of 2020 in respect of the outcome of Housing Service Charges Review to be conducted in

the Summer, prior to the charges being built into the 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account Budget.

The Committee was further advised that the Executive had approved an additional recommendation requesting officers to write to the Secretary of State (MHCLG) to request that new build right to buy receipts that are projected to be returned in the last quarter of 2019/20 (estimated at £790,000) are not returned to the Government, but used to increase funding for the Council's ambitious house building programme, such as Kenilworth or other pipeline programmes.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) commented:

- After a number of years of rent reductions for Council tenants, the Government had reverted back to its previous policy of rent increases of CPI +1% for the next five year period; and
- In relation to the retention of 1 for 1 right to buy receipts, it was confirmed that the eligibility criteria required the use of these receipts for replacement homes. At present, the funds needed to be spent within 3 years, but officers would be writing to the MHCLG to request that the time period be extended to five years, as suggested in the Government's consultation on "Use of Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts".

### **Draft General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2020/21**

The Committee was informed that the report contained Financial Security Options approved by the Executive in November 2019, and included the recommendations of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LSFG).

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) referred to Appendix B to the report, which included a Risk-based Assessment of the level of General Fund Balances 2020/21, including 3 new risks, namely the increased cost of bed and breakfast for homelessness; increased revenue repair costs as a result of the stock condition surveys; and increased costs of capital works requiring funding as a result of re-phasing/deferring other capital works. In this regard, the Executive asked officers to arrange an All-Member seminar on Financial Risks, to ensure that Members were fully aware of the challenging General Fund position going forward.

The Committee was further informed that the Executive had agreed to an additional recommendation amending growth options G20 and G21 relating to the cost of managing the allotments for one year only (£22,000 full year cost) and implementing increased allotment charges from 1 October 2020 and not 1 April 2021, as included in the report.

Although the levels of 2020/21 fees and charges were to be noted, as they had taken effect from 1 January 2020, a Member raised doubts that the small increase in charges in the Old Town car parks would realise the level of additional income projected, as these car parks were invariably under-utilised. The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) confirmed that the options to reduce spend and maintain current level of services were becoming more difficult.

In reply to a Member's question as to why the graph at Paragraph 3.2 of the report, which referred to Annual Government Grant Loss, commenced on 2011/12, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) commented that this was the year that the then Government's "austerity" programme had commenced. The Chair added that it was useful for Members to be shown the Grant Loss over the last 10 years in order to appreciate its cumulative impact on the Council's budget since 2011/12.

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) confirmed that all the savings options recommended by the Leader's Financial Security Group had been accepted by the Executive with the exception of the proposal to cease hard copy production of the Chronicle magazine. However, this had been offset by savings identified as a result of managerial changes within Stevenage Direct Services.

### **Draft Capital Strategy 2019/20 – 2024/25**

The Committee was advised that the General Fund Capital Strategy included Health and Safety items totalling £1.8Million, as well as previous commitments, including the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management Programme, ICT Strategy and Vehicle Replacement Programme. All Capital bids scoring 1.5 or over in the scoring system were recommended for inclusion in the Strategy, the one exception being the Bedwell Community Centre boiler works (£100,000).

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) drew attention to the section of the report concerning locality reviews. The locality reviews were looking to future proof the Council's assets and buildings; identify infill sites for potential disposal; and bringing down the revenue and running costs of buildings. A report on locality reviews was scheduled to be submitted to the July 2020 Executive meeting.

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) explained that the capital balance at the end of 2020/21 was projected to be £56,000, which she considered to be unsustainable. She would therefore be investigating possibilities to provide a sustainable solution, including the options set out in Paragraph 4.9.5 of the report.

In respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Strategy, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) reported that the position was more sustainable, as evidenced by the HRA Business Plan approved by the Executive in December 2019.

In response to a Member's query regarding why capital bid C59 (Improving the environmental credentials of the build at the Kenilworth Close scheme) had not been recommended for inclusion in the Capital Strategy, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) explained that, though not agreed as an additional resolution, the Executive had requested that, should there be a financial overachievement of land and asset sales during the year, then priority should be given to some of this income being earmarked for improvement of the environmental credentials of the build at the Kenilworth Close scheme.

## **4 URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**5 URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

**6 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

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 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. 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.

**7 PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Part II decision of the Executive concerning the appointment of a Development Partner at Kenilworth Close.

The Assistant Director (Housing Development) answered a number of Members' questions regarding the report.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillors Robin Parker CC and Andy McGuinness wished their names to be recorded as not supporting the decision of the Executive in respect of the appointment of a Development Partner at Kenilworth Close.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II decision of the Executive made at its meeting held on 22 January 2020 be noted.

**8 URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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