

NOTICE OF DECISIONS

Meeting:	Executive	
Date:	Wednesday, 10 February 2021	
Place:	Virtual (via Zoom)	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.
Also Present:	Councillors:	Phil Bibby CC, Robin Parker CC and Simon Speller (observers)

**THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS 19 FEBRUARY 2021.
SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM 22 FEBRUARY 2021.**

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	<p>There were no apologies for absence.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2	MINUTES - 20 JANUARY 2021	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 20 January 2021 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
3	MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 13 January 2021 be noted.</p>	

4	COVID-19 UPDATE	R Protheroe x2938
<p>The Executive considered a presentation providing an update on the Covid-19 pandemic from the Strategic Director (RP), assisted by other officers.</p> <p>In reply to Members' questions, officers replied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it was understood that there were sufficient supplies of the various vaccines in the UK to allow for second doses to be administered to all; • it was currently illegal for the use of unpaid volunteers to deliver election material on behalf of political parties ie. only paid delivery services could be used, although it was noted that lobbying was taking place to seek to change this position; • Although electors would be encouraged to attend polling stations to vote using their own writing implements, pencils would be provided should they arrive without them; and • Although electors would be asked to wear face masks within polling stations, there was no legal power for Presiding Officers to enforce the wearing of such masks. <p>Officers were requested to progress the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide Members with more detailed information, when received, of the Government's indemnity to Election Returning Officers for running safe elections during the Covid-19 pandemic (it was also noted that a number of Returning Officers' questions regarding the holding of safe elections in May had yet to be answered by the Government); • To advise Members of the results of data gathering in relation to the surge testing for the South African Covid-19 variant carried out in Broxbourne and other locations across the UK; • To prepare a Surge Testing Plan should it be required for Stevenage; and 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To submit information to the next Coronavirus Emergency Committee meeting with regard to the types of Covid-related initiatives/projects supported financially by Members over the past year through the use of their Local Community Budgets. <p>It was RESOLVED that the Covid-19 update be noted.</p>	
5	DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2021 - 2024	S Pateman x2458
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the draft Community Safety Strategy 2021 – 2024.</p> <p>It was agreed that consideration be given to inclusion in the Strategy of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In view of the frequency of the matter being raised by the public and at Police Priorities meetings, a reference to the concerns about traffic speeding throughout the Borough; and The work on hate crime referred to in the Strategy should link in with the work of the SBC Equalities Commission. <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the draft Community Safety Strategy (the Strategy) accompanying this report be approved noting its focus on the work of the SoSafe partnership. That the decisions taken in Resolution 1 above be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules in the Council’s Constitution. That, once the Final Strategy has been recommended for adoption by the Executive and reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it be referred to Council for consideration, in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules in the Council’s Constitution. That the Chief Executive, in his capacity as Chair of the SoSafe Partnership, following consultation with the Portfolio 	

	<p>Holder for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities, be authorised to make changes to the Strategy post consideration by the Executive.</p> <p>5. That it be noted that implementation of the Strategy (once approved in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules) will be achieved through co-operative working with communities and key partners through the activities of the Joint Action Group and overseen by the Responsible Authorities Group.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
6	<p>STEVENAGE CONNECTION AREA ACTION PLAN: ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION</p>	<p>L Claridge x2158</p>
	<p>The Executive considered a report with regard to the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and options consultation.</p> <p>Members requested Officers to give consideration to the following proposals as part of their further work on the Area Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised recommendation stipulating a minimum 8 week period for consultation on the draft Plan was supported, although two separate 6 week consultation periods was suggested above the minimum level; • The consultation process should take advantage of innovative consultation methods, including online/digital formats, with appropriate publicity/advice on how to respond to the consultation exercise; • There should be specific consultation with Borough Councillors and the County Councillor in whose Ward/Division the Station area was situated; • A recognition should be given to the high-tech traditions of Stevenage by ensuring that high-powered digital access was 	

available for those arriving in the town at the Railway Station;

- Clear signage should be provided in the Station area, in order that those arriving were shown exactly where they were in the town to allow them to swiftly orientate themselves;
- Access to the Station for all modes of transport, as well as pedestrians and the disabled, should be promoted; and
- The impact of the possible narrowing of Lytton Way on nearby traffic routes (such as St. George's Way) would need to be modelled.

The Chair pointed out that the references in the recommendations in the report to the "Assistant Director: Environment and Regeneration" should be changed to the correct designation of "Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation".

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the content of the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report be noted.
2. That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report prior to publication for consultation.
3. That the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report, as attached at Appendix A, be approved for consultation for a minimum 8 week period following the Executive meeting, consultation dates to be determined by the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation.
4. That the comments of the Planning & Development Committee be invited regarding the content of the report.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7	FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2021/22	C Fletcher x2933
<p>The Executive considered a report with regard to the final General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2021/22.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 24 February 2021:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the 2020/21 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £11,056,840 be approved. 2. That a draft General Fund Budget for 2021/22 of £1,165,480 (as adjusted for the transfer from S31 grant allocated reserve to the General Fund of £8,395,960 to allow for the repayment to the Collection Fund of that amount) be proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £326,067 and a Band D Council Tax of £220.57 (assuming a 2.32% increase). 3. That the Risk Assessment of General Fund balances of £3,650,000 be approved. 4. That the contingency sum of £400,000, within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2021/22 (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount). 5. That the 2021/22 Fees and Charges increase of £131,700 be noted, as approved at the January 2021 Executive (Appendix I to the report). 6. That the 2021/22 proposed Financial Security Options of £1,703,728, of which £1,462,182 relates to the General Fund (Appendix C to the report), be approved. 7. That the Growth bids of £260,365, of which £166,966 relates to the General Fund share (Appendix E to this report), be approved in principle, as set out in the report, and the priority order of implementation be approved, as set out in Paragraph 4.3.2. of the report. 8. That the General Fund pressures of £656,540 be noted, (Appendix E to the report). 		

9. That the 2021/22 Council Tax Support scheme be approved, as set out in section 4.8 of the report.
10. That use of New Homes Bonus be noted (section 4.4 of the report refers).
11. That the Financial Security targets for the General Fund, as set out in section 4.11. of the report, be approved.
12. That the use of the additional COVID grants, as set out in sections 4.5 and 4.6 of the report, be approved.
13. That the Strategic Leadership Team be requested to identify further options totalling £500,000 which could be implemented if the impact of COVID and other recessionary pressures are worse than projected (Paragraph 4.1.5 of the report refers).
14. That the Strategic Leadership Team be requested to bring forward a Productivity Focused Transformation Programme by June 2021 to set out the plan for future savings (Paragraph 3.9 of the report refers).
15. That, in accordance with the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council continues with the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022 (Paragraphs 4.16.4 - 4.16.5 of the report refer).
16. That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny, Leaders Financial Security Group and all Member group (as set out in Paragraphs 4.1.2-4.1.4 of the report) be noted.
17. That the Equalities Impact Assessments, as appended to the report in Appendices G and H, be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

8	FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2020/21 - 2024/25	N Penny x2033
The Executive considered a report in respect of the Final Capital Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25		

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 24 February 2021:

1. That the final General Fund Capital Growth Bids for 2021/22 only, as detailed in Appendix A (and incorporated into Appendix D) to the report, be approved.
2. That the final General Fund Capital Savings and Slippage for 2020/21 – 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix B (and incorporated into Appendix D) to the report, be approved.
3. That the final HRA Capital budget requests for 2020/21 – 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix C (and incorporated into Appendix E) to the report, be approved.
4. That the updated forecast of Capital resources 2020/21, as detailed in Appendix D (General Fund) and Appendix E (HRA) to the report, be approved.
5. That the final 2021/22 General Fund Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix D to the report, be approved.
6. That the final 2021/22 HRA Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix E to the report, be approved.
7. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets, as detailed in Appendix F to the report, be approved.
8. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund Capital programme, as outlined in the report, be approved.
9. That the progress on Locality Reviews, as outlined in the report, be noted.
10. That the actions taken to ensure the General Fund Capital programme is funded, as outlined in paragraphs 4.2.2 - 4.2.3 of the report, be noted.
11. That the 2021/22 de-minimis Capital expenditure limit (Section 4.10 of the report) be approved.
12. That the 2021/22 Capital contingency allowances, set out in Paragraphs 4.11.1 and 4.11.2 of the report respectively, be

	<p>approved.</p> <p>13. That the Executive delegation set out in Paragraph 4.11.3 of the report, allowing approval for increases to the Capital programme for grant funded projects, be approved.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: as contained in report.</i></p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2021/22</p>	<p>N Penny x2033</p>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy including Prudential Code Indicators 2021/22.</p> <p>The Executive supported the amendments to the report proposed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 9 February 2021, set out by the Strategic Director (CF) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 4.5.3 – the actual operational boundary limits should be included in this paragraph; • Paragraph 4.6.1 – the date in the bottom row of the table should read “31 December 2020”; • References to “Queensway Properties LLP” be changed to “Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP”; and • Paragraph 4.3.3 – the colours in the table on projected external investment balances contained in this paragraph to be changed to make the table easier to read. <p>In response to a Member’s question, the Strategic Director (CF) confirmed that the Council’s investments were all placed with established banking institutions.</p>	

	<p>It was RESOLVED that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 24 February 2021:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be approved. 2. That the prudential indicators for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved. 3. That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, as set out at Appendix B to the report, be approved. 4. That an increase to counterparty limits for short term investments (invested for up to one year) from £8Million to £10Million, when cash balances are higher than £30Million, be approved. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: as contained in report.</i></p>	
10	URGENT PART I BUSINESS	
	None.	
11	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That under Section 100A 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 the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the 	

	information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.	
12	PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 20 JANUARY 2021	
	It was RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of Executive held on 20 January 2021 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
13	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	None.	