

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

16 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, 24 February 2021 at 7.00pm and you are summoned to attend to transact the following business.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Partridge
Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 28 JANUARY 2021

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Special meeting of the Council held on 28 January 2021.

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3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications that the Mayor may wish to put before Council.

4. MAIN DEBATE - 2021/22 COUNCIL TAX AND GENERAL FUND AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

To approve the Council's Final General Fund and Capital Budgets for 2021/22, projected 2020/21 General Fund and Capital Budgets, and final proposals for the 2021/22 Council Tax and Council Tax Support Scheme.

Reports and appendices attached.

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5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Standing Orders, written answers to these questions will be tabled at the Council meeting.

(A) Question from David Healey

What is the Council doing to make electric car charging spaces and facilities accessible in town and residential areas, noting the government requirement for all electric and hybrid cars by 2030? Will a task team be appointed to see the rollout for facilities in the residential areas, on request, for those without off street parking? There are extensive Government grants available for up to 75% and even more funding has just been added. A joint team from the environmental and transport portfolios should work on a master plan.

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, the Leader of the Opposition shall be given the opportunity to raise one matter relevant to the Borough that has arisen since the last meeting of the Council. The Leader of the Council shall then have the opportunity to advise the Council of matters relevant to the Borough that have arisen since the last meeting.

9. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2021/22

To consider an Officer report that recommends the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 including the Annual Investment Strategy and the prudential indicators.

Report and Appendices attached

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10. UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS

To receive updates from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees on the recent activities of those Committees.

11. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

(i) **SBC communications with new residents**

To consider the following motion submitted by Councillor Stephen Booth.

“That the Council ensures that new residents, whether new to Stevenage or moving from other parts of the town, in addition to their Council Tax demand, receive a leaflet welcoming them to the area, explaining who their ward

representatives are and how to contact them, their access to local facilities, what town wide facilities are available to them and useful information of these services and other essential services via web addresses and phone numbers."

12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

In accordance with Standing Orders, written answers to the following questions will be tabled at the Council meeting:

(A) Question from Councillor Stephen Booth

"Why has it taken so long for the Council to apply planning enforcement proceedings to a house under construction at 8 Magellan Close, despite repeated and detailed e-mails to the Planning Department from local residents and councillors recording blatant breaches of planning permission?"

(B) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness

'What updates have the Council been given about progress on the commencement of works to the Gresley Park Development?'

(C) Question from Councillor Robin Parker CC

'The 7 replacement Stevenage 'town entry' signs recently appeared at the main entrances to the town, and my investigations reveal that the cost to Stevenage Council Tax payers is £5,240, which includes paying an artist to design them, and that the decision to spend funds on this project was that of the Leader alone.

- a. Why was such an important and publicly visible symbol of Stevenage not allowed to be discussed with other councillors or the tax paying public?
- b. How many complaints about the old signs were received, and from whom?
- c. What was wrong with the old signs?
- d. Why has the information contained on the old style of signs been omitted?
- e. Why was this project imperative at a time when, largely as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, SBC's finances are in a precarious position and savage service cuts are being made by the Labour Executive Members?'

(D) Question from Councillor Graham Snell

'At the last Planning and Development Committee meeting, on the 3rd of February, an item was discussed about various options regarding dramatic changes to Lytton Way and the area around it in the Town Centre. This included a list of options for long term redevelopments including a new Railway Station, Leisure Centre, Theatre and various other new buildings.

A very detailed report was discussed in brief and noted at the P&D meeting which was produced in part by David Lock Associates, described as 'Stevenage Connection, Area Action Plan'.

- a. How long has this project been in the planning stage?
- b. How much did the David Lock Report actually cost including an estimate of the cost of officer involvement?
- c. Has the Public Consultation timetable taken into account the long-term implications of the Covid-19 pandemic and the widely projected changes to work practices, particularly on much of the Retail Industry?

(E) Question from Councillor Tom Wren

'According to the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership 2019/2020 Annual Report, the percentage of household waste recycled in Stevenage has now declined to less than 40%. Stevenage has also had the lowest recycling rate of all the ten local authorities in Hertfordshire for the past 5 years and with very little improvement in this time.

What action does the Council plan to take to improve this rate?

The Annual Report can be found here:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/waste-and-recycling/residual-waste-treatment-contracts/hwp-annual-report-2019.20.pdf>

13. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2021/22

To agree a proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021/22.

Report and appendix attached.

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14. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

To consider an officer report recommending the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2021/22.

Report and Appendix attached

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15. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions –

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 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.

16. THE FORMATION OF A WHOLLY OWNED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY - RENEWED BUSINESS PLAN APPROVAL AND FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

To approve recommendations relating to a revised Business Plan for the Wholly Owned Housing Development Company.

[Recommendations 2.2.1 to 2.2.4 in the report are referred to Council for approval.]

Report and Appendix attached.

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