

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

1 March 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage on Wednesday, 9 March 2022 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. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

3. MAIN DEBATE

There is no Main Debate.

4. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

In accordance with Standing Orders, written response to the following questions submitted by the Youth Council will be sent out on a supplementary agenda.

- (A) What are the plans for the Youth Centre at Bowes Lyon House? Will this affect the Youth Council?
- (B) Are the Council supporting Young People to get a house or learn more about housing?
- (C) The Youth Council have noticed a high amount of litter in Stevenage. How are the Council looking to resolve this? The Youth Council would love to support a campaign on this subject.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A written answer to this question will be published on a supplementary agenda.

(A) Question from Mr Jim Borchers

“It has recently come to my attention that some secondary schools in Hertfordshire may not be recycling their waste paper due to cost.

Please could you let me know if there are any schools within the Stevenage District that Stevenage Borough Council does not currently collect waste paper for recycling from?

If there are any schools that do not recycle their paper with Stevenage Borough Council please could you provide a list of those that do and those that do not.”

7. 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.

8. UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS

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

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

In accordance with Standing Orders, the following motions have been received for consideration:

1. Bus Services in Stevenage

To be moved by the Labour Group

Bus services in Stevenage are vital to so many of our residents providing them with a vital link to work places, shops, medical services, social & leisure activity, access to education and so much more.

That is why it is so disappointing to see a deterioration in our bus services in town with residents reporting many bus services cut at short (or no) notice meaning they have long waits for their bus. For some time now we have experienced some areas left with no bus service from early evening or no service at all.

This Council is working towards our net zero carbon by 2030 target and with the County Council on our Sustainable Travel Town status. A key part of this will be to encourage more use of public transport rather than private cars. Our new bus interchange is part of building an integrated public

transport system. However this depends on regular, reliable, sustainable and affordable bus services.

Therefore this Council resolves:

1. To convene a bus summit with the bus operators to explore the opportunities and address the challenges of delivering better bus services
2. To lobby the County Council, as transport authority, to work with us and bus operators to ensure every area of Stevenage has a bus service
3. To seek reassurance from the County Council that there will be no further cuts to bus subsidies for Stevenage bus routes
4. To explore with the County Council better ways of providing up to date travel information to passengers
5. To ensure we do all we can through the planning process to ensure bus routes are planned with new neighbourhoods and maximum use is made of CIL & Section 106 to incentivise bus use.
6. To encourage the County Council as the Local Transport Authority and Arriva to continue to work with SBC concerning the ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Area) bid for Stevenage.

2. Council Meetings

To be moved by the Conservative Group.

Council notes that in the interests of democracy, it is important to continue to encourage and allow all political parties represented in Council to table motions but, to ensure all Council meetings are conducted in a timely fashion, thus facilitating the continued attention and interest of both our members and the public, there is a need to limit the time spent in debate. This can be achieved by limiting the number of motions and the time allowed for both debate and individual speakers.

Also, Council notes that the main debate has not taken place for some while, so could be regarded as no longer necessary. However, it is appreciated that members may benefit from presentations on matters of interest to the community, as appropriate and, therefore, we should provide for this in Standing Orders.

The Council therefore moves that Standing Orders, 19. Rules of Debate, is amended, as follows:

A new point c. (i) is added, 'Each political party is allowed 1 motion per Council meeting'.

Point c (i) becomes point c (ii).

Point c (ii) becomes point c (iii)

Point c (iii) now becomes point c (iv), and is amended thus;

'Time limits for speakers during debates, unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the Standing Orders are as follows:

- Mover of a motion - four minutes
- Secunder of a motion - four minutes
- Leader of the Council - four minutes
- Leader of the Opposition - four minutes
- All other speakers - two minutes
- Right of reply - two minutes'

Point c (iv) becomes point c (v).

A new point c (vi) is added, 'If debate on all motions exceeds 1 hour 30 minutes in total, the Chair shall guillotine such debate, and instruct Council to move straight to the vote on the motion then being debated'.

The Council also moves that Standing Orders, 9. Main Debate is re-written, as follows:

'At any ordinary meeting of the Council there may be a presentation on a matter of interest to the community.

- a. Such presentation can be from a Councillor, officer and / or other invited person(s). If the presentation is from a Councillor or officer, it should last no longer than 10 minutes. If another person or persons are making the presentation, it should last no longer than 20 minutes. Collectively, no presentations should last longer than 30 minutes.
- b. At the Mayor's discretion, Councillors and members of the public may ask questions, but the total period for such questions should be no longer than 20 minutes.

3. Housing and Direct Services Departments

To be moved by the Liberal Democrat Group.

This Council calls for a thorough review of the housing and direct services departments to focus particularly on:

- (a) Improving the response to tenants requesting attention to repairs and other property problems.
- (b) Ensuring that all incoming calls are dealt with promptly, are recorded and tenants do not have to wait longer than 30 minutes maximum during normal working hours to speak to someone. Where this is impossible, a proper call-back system to tenants is initiated.
- (c) Maintaining a detailed register of outstanding housing maintenance works and reporting same to councillors on a weekly basis.
- (d) Ensuring that tenants are properly informed by phone, text or email when access to their properties is needed for work and visiting times are agreed.
- (e) Compensating tenants when Council trade persons fail to turn up for previously agreed appointments.

- (f) Ensuring that councillors are kept informed of the initiation and progress of refurbishment and upgrade programmes, especially in the wards they represent.

4. Communications and Stevenage Chronicle

To be moved by the Liberal Democrat Group.

Calls upon Council to properly manage its Communications & Media unit and those responsible for the publication of Stevenage Chronicle and other publications from time to time issued by the Council; particularly to ensure:

- (a) That the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity published by the Department for Communities Local Government is properly observed.
- (b) Editorial oversight is under the control of an Assistant Director.
- (c) There is close attention to detail and checking of dates and other facts.
- (d) That any featured events are to take place at least 14 days ahead of general publication and circulation.
- (e) An editorial schedule of contents is published for circulation to councillors.
- (f) A schedule of dates for potential contributors including copy dates, proofing and to press is published.
- (g) That there is a balance of editorial material between wards and Council groups without party political favour.
- (h) That photos are relevant and correctly captioned.

5. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Policy

To be moved by the Liberal Democrat Group.

This Council commits to considering and in due course implementing a ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) policy to apply to the Council's financial investment counterparties.

10. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS / PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

In accordance with Standing Orders, written answers to the following questions will be circulated on a supplementary agenda.

- (A) Question from Councillor Nicholas Leech

'Why are Stevenage Borough Council recycling rates so far below our neighbouring councils according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS)*?'

* See [Table 1: Local Authority Collected and Household Waste Statistics 2014-15 to 2020-21, England](#)

(B) Question from Councillor Julie Ashley-Wren

‘Even before recent storms damage, we were receiving numerous reports about SBC owned fences not being repaired for months, sometimes years, after having been reported.

- a. What was the reason for this?
- b. What actions has the Council taken to put the matter right?’

(C) Question from Councillor Stephen Booth

‘Which of the following has been the cause of the additional funding necessary to complete the new Bus Interchange:

Was it a failure by the contractor to include the additional works in their tender?; or

Was it a failure by the Council to properly scope the works before inviting tenders?’

(D) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness

‘What steps are the Council taking to alleviate the impact on local residents of the unwelcome and unnecessary development at Gresley Park?’

(E) Question from Councillor Robin Parker

Reference the recent traffic difficulties along Lytton Way, and acknowledging that HCC are the highway authority:

- a. What part did SBC play in the arrangements implemented?
- b. In retrospect, what should have been done better?
- c. What further disruption to traffic on Lytton Way is expected as a result of future town centre regeneration works?’

(F) Question from Councillor Graham Snell

‘On the recently installed hoarding around the now closed Swingate car park in Stevenage Town Centre, there has been a number of information boards telling the story of Stevenage, which are very interesting.

- a. Are these the same boards that were previously around the new bus station?
- b. What was the cost of (i) supplying them (ii) installing them and (iii) who paid?’

(G) Question from Councillor Tom Wren

‘Supplementary question to the question submitted by Cllr. Wren to Council for the 15th December 2021 meeting. Were any Government grants or funding schemes available for the Council to use for insulation or other works as part of the Major Refurbishment Contract?’

11. GAMBLING ACT 2005 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The report circulated at Item 11 was considered by the Executive on 9 February 2022 when the following recommendation to Council was agreed:

“That the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act Statement of Principles 2022-2025, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be adopted.”

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12. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2022/23

To agree a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022/23.

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13. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

To consider a report recommending the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2022/23.

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14. AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

To note the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 8 February 2022.

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