

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 14 June 2023

Time: 2.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Richard Henry (Chair), Jeanette Thomas (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jackie Hollywell, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Loraine Rossati and Simon Speller.

Start / End Start Time: 2.00pm

Time: End Time: 3.00pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Lloyd Briscoe.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 15 MARCH 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 March 2023 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –

Environment & Economy Select Committee – 22 February 2023

Community Select Committee – 9 March 2023

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 21 March 2023

Environment & Economy Select Committee – 23 March 2023

Community Select Committee – 29 March 2023

In response to questions, the following answers were given to Members:

- Wates had been appointed on a short-term basis to undertake some void work whilst the scrutiny review was being carried out;
- The decision of Arriva not to progress with the Zero Emission bus scheme in Stevenage was disappointing;
- The Scrutiny Officer along with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be giving consideration to the prioritising of the suggested scrutiny review options.

The Leader on behalf of the Executive thanked all of the Scrutiny Committees for their valuable work on the topics they have focussed on.

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF BUILDING SAFETY ACT 2022

The Executive considered a report which provided an update on the Council's implementation of the Building Safety Act 2022 and were presented a draft policy for approval. Members noted that the Act applied to High Rise Residential Buildings (flat blocks over 18 metres). Officers advised that given the risk profile of some Independent Living Schemes, the council had also included these within the same policy and framework, although there was no legal requirement to do so.

Members were pleased to note that the Council was making good progress, with all the buildings registered and that a comprehensive implementation plan was in place. The report also highlighted other related matters which were being progressed to date and further outlined areas of focus for next steps.

Members also noted the need for an "accountable person" to be appointed through the Building Safety Act and that it was proposed that the Council would be the accountable body (Corporate Person) in line with the building safety regulations.

Officers advised that governance arrangements would include oversight from the Corporate Compliance Group and that compliance performance measures would be included in the corporate performance suite and reported to Executive quarterly.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the draft Building Safety policy and the roles and responsibilities set out within the policy at Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. That the progress against the Building Safety Act Implementation plan be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

5 DLUHC FUTURE COUNCILS GRANT AWARD

The Executive considered a report summarising the proposals to utilise the £750k Governments Future Councils Grant Funding provided by the Department of levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUCH) following the Council's successful bid.

Members were advised that Stevenage was one of only eight Councils to successfully apply to the scheme in March and had been awarded £750k of funding to modernise services and improve cyber resilience. The scheme also provided opportunities to work collaboratively with the Future Councils Team and other participant authorities on common problems. It was noted that the Future Councils scheme also required the Council to self-assess its cyber security resilience through the new Cyber Assessment Framework which was being developed for local

authority use by DLUHC.

Officers set out the case to use the funding to support three core projects, and requested delegation of the final decision making to officers. The core projects included:

- Migration of the NEC Housing and Resourcelink;
- HR and Payroll systems to the cloud;
- Improvements to the Council's Cyber Security position through the Cyber Assessment Framework.

Members agreed that the issue of cyber security was a huge ongoing challenge and would require continued investment to help the Council reduce the associated risks.

In response to a question, Officers advised that legacy technology referred to those systems which were no longer supported or that no longer carried out the functions the Council required.

Members thanked the Officers for their work and foresight in identifying the opportunity and realising the funding which would enable the Council to reduce the risk of cyber security.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Council's success in bidding for and being awarded one of the eight pilot grants that support the Council in delivering its Transformation Programme by enabling more reliable, digital and flexible services for its customers be noted.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (CF) following consultation with the portfolio Holder for Resources and Transformation and portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Information Technology, to make changes to the proposals for the Future Councils grant if further work identifies an alternative use for the grant which provides a greater customer and financial benefit.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

7 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**:

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.

8 PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 15 MARCH 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 March 2023 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

9 APPOINTMENT OF DEVELOPER AT BRENT COURT GARAGES AND SHEPHALL VIEW DEVELOPMENT SITES

The Executive considered a Part II report regarding the appointment of a developer at Brent Court Garages and Shephall View Development Site.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

10 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR