

NOTICE OF DECISIONS

Meeting:	Executive	
Date:	Wednesday, 7 February 2024	
Place:	Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Richard Henry (Chair), Jeannette Thomas (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Lloyd Briscoe, Jackie Hollywell, Loraine Rossati and Simon Speller.

THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS FRIDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2024. SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2024.

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	<p>The Chair welcomed Adrian Hawkins OBE (Chair of the Stevenage Development Board) to the meeting. He stated that Adrian would be addressing the Executive in relation to Item 4 on the agenda – Stevenage Works Skills Framework: Unlocking Jobs, Skills and Opportunities for Local People.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2	MINUTES - 17 JANUARY 2024	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 17 January 2024 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
3	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	
	<p>In respect of Minute 3 of the minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 8 January 2024, the Portfolio</p>	

	<p>Holder for Housing & Housing Development confirmed that she would be responding to the recommendations of the Housing Repairs scrutiny review by the prescribed deadline.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –</p> <p>Community Select Committee – 8 January 2024 Environment & Economy Select Committee – 16 January 2024</p>	
4	<p>STEVENAGE WORKS SKILLS FRAMEWORK - UNLOCKING JOBS, SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL PEOPLE</p>	D. Jedowski
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the consolidation of the ongoing work around skills development into a skills framework approach involving key sectors in the town, building several tangible actions to help further support the work that was underway, and co-ordinating key internal resources to further aid delivery.</p> <p>The Executive was supportive of the Stevenage Works Skills Framework, and thanked the Portfolio Holder for Co-operative Council & Neighbourhood Communities, officers and Adrian Hawkins for driving forward the Skills agenda for the Council and the town.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the proposed 'Stevenage Works Skills Framework' be approved for implementation and publication. 2. That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (TP), having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Communities, Co-operative Councils & Young People and the Leader of the Council, to make any final changes to the Skills Framework and to oversee the continued development of the associated 'Stevenage Works Skills Framework Action Plan'. 	

	<p>3. That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (TP), having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Communities, Co-operative Councils & Young People and the Leader of the Council, to make any structural or other organisational changes which may be necessary to support the implementation of the 'Stevenage Works Skills Framework'.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
5	<p>FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2024/25</p>	<p>C. Fletcher B. Moldon</p>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the Council's final General Fund, Council Tax Support Scheme and final proposals for the 2024/25 Council Tax.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 21 February 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the 2023/24 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £13,571,480 be approved, as set out in Paragraph 4.10.1 of the report. 2. That the draft General Fund Budget for 2024/25 of £12,762,310 be approved, with no contribution from balances and a Band D Council Tax of £239.26 (assuming a 2.99% Council Tax increase), and as summarised in Appendix G to the report. 3. That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as summarised in Section 4.12 of the report, be noted. 4. That the minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,537,794, in line with the 2024/25 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to the report, be approved. 5. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 	

2024/25 (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).

6. That the 2024/25 Balancing the Budget options, as set out in Section 4.7 and Appendix A to the report, totalling £1,223,852 and £95,063 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) respectively, be approved.
7. That the events options, as set out in Paragraph 4.7.4 of the report, be approved for 2024/25.
8. That the Growth options included in Section 4.8 of the report be approved for inclusion in the 2024/25 General Fund (£167,120) and HRA (£47,265) budgets.
9. That the pressures identified in Sections 4.2 and 4.9 of the report be noted.
10. That the use of £200,000 of Business Rates in the base budget be approved, and any gains above that be used only once realised, and be ring fenced for use to maintain the Council's financial resilience.
11. That the use of 'pooling gains' of £220,000, as set out in Paragraph 4.4.9 of the report, be approved
12. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Section 4.16 of the report, be noted.
13. That the Equalities Impact Assessment appended to the report at Appendix D be noted.
14. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views considered as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6	FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2023/24 - 2028/29	C. Fletcher B. Moldon
The Executive considered a report in respect of the final Capital Strategy for 2023/24 – 2028/29.		

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 21 February 2024:

1. That the Revised General Fund Capital Budget for 2024/25 of £33.6Million, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved.
2. That the Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Budget for 2024/25 of £54.9Million, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
3. That the updated forecast of resources 2024/25 be approved (set out in the report at Section 4.4 – General Fund, and Section 4.10 – HRA).
4. That the General Fund capital budget re-profiling of £2.6Million from 2023/24 to future years be approved (as set out in Paragraph 4.1.4 of the report).
5. That the General Fund capital budget savings (as set out in Paragraphs 4.1.3 and 4.1.5 of the report) be approved.
6. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund capital programme, as outlined in the report (Paragraph 4.4), be approved.
7. That the General Fund growth bids identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (as set out in Paragraph 4.2 and in Appendix A to the report) be approved.
8. That the HRA budget increases identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (as set out in Section 4.9 and Appendix C to the report) be approved.
9. That the approach to resourcing the HRA capital programme, as outlined in the report (Paragraph 4.10), be approved.
10. That HRA capital budget re-profiling of £1.45Million from 2023/24 to future years be approved (as set out in Paragraph 4.9.3 of the report).
11. That the HRA growth bid (IT £21,000) identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (as set out in Paragraph 4.9.4 of the

	<p>report) be approved.</p> <p>12. That the 2024/25 de-minimis expenditure limit (set out in Section 4.11 of the report) be increased from £7,500 to £9,999.</p> <p>13. That up to £500,000 of any revenue surplus in any year can be allocated to the capital reserve to support capital expenditure be approved.</p> <p>14. That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Paragraph 4.13.4 of the report, be noted.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
7	<p>ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25</p>	<p>C. Fletcher B. Moldon</p>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy, including Prudential Code Indicators for 2024/25, for onward recommendation to Council.</p> <p>The Strategic Director (CF) referred to two corrections to the report, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 4.1.1 - the sentence should read that the returns on investments had averaged 5%, not 3.48%, and the total interest earned was £1.9Million and not £1.29Million; and • The table in Paragraph 4.15.1 should read that the total Housing Revenue Account (HRA) loans equalled £233.231Million and not £234.231Million, and the total Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) debt at 31 December 2023 equalled £234.987Million and not £224.987Million. <p>It was RESOLVED that the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	

8	STEVENAGE CYCLE HIRE SCHEME - REPORT AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	L. Claridge S. Martins
<p>The Executive considered a report providing an overview of the work undertaken, including public consultation, to develop a Stevenage Cycle Hire Scheme.</p> <p>In reply to a series of Member questions, officers commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions would be ongoing with the operator regarding the programme/timescales for Phases 1A and 1B of the Scheme, with the intention of both phases being implemented as soon as practicably possible; and • Officers were requested to liaise with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) officers with a view to HCC providing a financial contribution to support the Scheme through use of Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy funds. <p>A discussion ensued regarding the locations of the bike storage units and electrical charging points, and it was agreed that Ward Members should be consulted about these before any works commenced. It was suggested that it might be appropriate for an event to be held after the May 2024 Elections, in order that the views of newly-elected Members could be taken into account. This could take the form of an all-Member overview meeting, followed by individual area/ward meetings (similar to the Policing Priority meetings).</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the progress made in the Stevenage Cycle Hire Scheme and work undertaken by officers up to September 2023 (as set out in Appendices A, B, C, D, E and F of the report) be noted. 2. That the ongoing strategic direction and final steps for the Cycle Hire Scheme, to further develop the proposal for a scheme in Stevenage, be approved. 3. That it be noted that the comments of the Environment & Economy Select Committee have been sought and considered on the content of the report. 4. That it be noted that engagement with key stakeholders will continue, ahead of incorporating the Cycle Hire Scheme. 		

	<p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
9	URGENT PART I BUSINESS	
	None.	
10	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. 	
11	PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 17 JANUARY 2024	
	It was RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 17 January 2024 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	

12	STEVENAGE CYCLE HIRE SCHEME - REPORT AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	L. Claridge S. Martins
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of the procurement process undertaken and recommended chosen supplier to implement a cycle hire scheme in Stevenage; and seeking agreement to the progression of the contract award for the Scheme.</p> <p>Members asked a number of questions, which were responded to by officers.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations set out in the report 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>	
13	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	None.	