

# Public Document Pack

Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
Hertfordshire

14 May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage on Thursday, 22 May 2025 at the conclusion of the Special Meeting and you are summoned to attend to transact the following business.

Yours faithfully

Tom Pike  
Chief Executive

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## AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**2. MINUTES - 22 FEBRUARY 2025**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 February 2025.

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**3. ELECTION OF MAYOR**

To elect the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

**4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

To elect the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH MAYOR**

To appoint a Youth Mayor for 2025/26, as nominated by the Stevenage Youth Council.

**6. RESOLUTION TO EXTEND 6 MONTH RULE - SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

To seek Council's approval, in accordance with section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, of Councillor Barr's non-attendance at meetings of the Council for a period of 6 months.

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**7. APPOINTMENT OF LEADERS AND DEPUTY LEADERS OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL**

To note the appointment of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Political Groups on the Council for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

**8. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

To note the appointment of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

**9. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES**

To consider various issues concerning the Council's political management structure and the Constitution for 2025/26.

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**10. CONSTITUTION REVIEW - PHASE 1**

To consider a report outlining amendments to ensure that the Constitution remains up to date and fit for purpose.

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**11. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

- A. To appoint Members to the Standing Committees of Stevenage Borough Council for the Municipal Year 2025/26; and
- B. To appoint to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for each of those Committees.

REPORT TO FOLLOW

**12. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

To appoint Council representatives onto various outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

SCHEDULE TO FOLLOW

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 26 February 2025

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

**Present:** Councillors: Jim Brown (Mayor), Nazmin Chowdhury (Deputy Mayor), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Robert Boyle, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Alistair Gordon, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Lin Martin-Haugh, Conor McGrath, Andy McGuinness, Sarah Mead, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater CC, Tom Plater, Ceara Roopchand, Loraine Rossati, Simon Speller, Jeannette Thomas, Carolina Veres, Nigel Williams, Jade Woods and Tom Wren

**Start / End**      Start Time:    7.00pm  
**Time:**            End Time:       8.45pm

### 1      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Sandra Barr, Leanne Brady, Lynda Guy, Mason Humberstone, Anne Wells and Tom Wren.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2      **MINUTES - 22 JANUARY 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 February 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

The Mayor congratulated and welcomed Councillor Peter Wilkins who had been elected in the Manor Ward at the recent By-Election. Councillor Richard Henry, Leader of the Council welcomed Peter on behalf of the Labour Group. Councillor Stephen Booth, Leader of the Opposition also welcomed Peter as a fellow Liberal Democrat and as a worthy successor to Graham Snell who had sadly passed away at the end of 2024. Councillor Wilkins thanked everyone for their warm welcome.

The Mayor then referred to a list of events he had supported since the last meeting and provided a verbal report on a number of events including his upcoming Ceilidh Dance on Saturday 1 March. He also thanked all those involved in the success of his recent Mayor's Ball held at the Cromwell Hotel.

At this juncture, the Mayor paid tribute to the Council's Chief Executive Matt Partridge who would be leaving the Council next month to start his well-deserved retirement. The Mayor thanked Matt for his support and guidance particularly

throughout both of his Mayoral years.

Councillor Richard Henry, the Leader of the Council thanked Matt for his work in many leadership positions he had held throughout the County and Country. He also paid tribute to the relationship between them both which had been a great support to him particularly since becoming Leader of the Council.

A number of other Members spoke to thank Matt for his service to Stevenage Borough Council and to wish him well in his upcoming retirement.

In response, Matt spoke of his long local government career and advised that his time at Stevenage Borough Council had reflected his values as a place where the Members and Officers cared greatly for the Town and its residents. He advised that throughout the time he had spent as Director and then Chief Executive there had been challenging and rewarding times and that he was proud to have made a contribution to Stevenage. He thanked the Leader of the Council for his support and friendship and the other Group and Opposition Leaders for their trust. He also thanked both current members and those who were no longer part of the Council. He then spoke of the support he had received from his Senior Leadership Team, his PA and secretaries and also his wife and family for their support.

### **3 GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2025/26**

The Mayor advised that Item 3 and Item 4, Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2025/26 and Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29 would be taken together. Council was advised that the motion including the Formal Council Tax Resolution with the increases agreed by the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets was attached as an appendix to the report.

Councillor Richard Henry, Leader of the Council, introduced the proposed 2024/2025 General Fund Budget and Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2028/29, together with final proposals for the 2024/25 Council Tax. In his introduction, Councillor Henry was pleased to announce that the Council would be setting another balanced budget for the forthcoming year which would be key to make Stevenage an Even Better place for everyone. He then shared a number of his highlights throughout the year including:

- The General Election, resulting in a new Labour Government and a new Labour MP for Stevenage who he thanked for the work he was undertaking to support and promote the Town;
- The Council's agreement to support the Government's plans for Local Government Reorganisation which would deliver real devolution both locally and across the County and the Country;
- The commencement of a 50:50 Joint Venture agreement with MACE for the development of the former Swingate House with 261 homes along with a café at ground level known as Claxton House. This was in addition to 561 Council homes already built with the aim to deliver 1,000 properties by 2028;
- The expansion of Co-Space bringing a further 150 desks into the space which was also home to the UBS Banks Graduate Training Programme;

- Working closely with the University of Hertfordshire and North Herts College to drive the Stevenage Works programme and the £1million skills programme with Sir Lewis Hamilton's Mission 44 Charity;
- The planned £45million development of the new Sports and Leisure Centre; and
- The transformation of the underpasses throughout the Town.

Councillor Jeannette Thomas, Deputy Leader of the Council, then moved the motion, including the recommendations regarding the General Fund Budget 2025/26 and Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29 and the formal Council Tax Resolution, which had been circulated to Members.

Councillor Thomas highlighted the following points:

- She was presenting a balanced budget with no use of any balances for next year;
- The Council would not be cutting any services and the Commercial Strategy was bringing in income contributing to the budget;
- The Council's target to further reduce anti-social behaviour, including clearing up even more graffiti on council owned and managed property;
- The launch of a brand new corporate Apprenticeship programme to boost talent, skills and work opportunities for local people;
- The increase in Council Tax for residents in a Band D property would equate to £4.74 or for single resident properties £3.55 per week. For residents receiving full benefit they would pay 8.5% of their Council Tax bill and for pensioners on maximum benefit the cost would be zero;
- Councillor Thomas thanked her fellow Cabinet Members, the Overview and Scrutiny Members and the Council's Financial Services priority Group alongside the Strategic Director and Chief Financial Officer and her Team for their work in developing the budget

Councillor Henry then formally seconded the recommendations from the Cabinet on the General Fund and Capital Budgets, together with the formal Council Tax resolution, as set out on the paper circulated to Members.

Councillor Stephen Booth, Leader of the Opposition advised that although his Group had welcomed many of the initiatives over the past 12 months which had been taken by the Council, he questioned the efficiency savings proposed, along with the assumption that the move of the indoor market would improve town centre business. He also queried why there was no evidence to reduce the headcount which in his opinion would enable the increase to local residents to be kept at under 1.99%. Councillor Booth thanked the Council's Section 151 Officer for her help and advice.

A number of members took part in the debate on the motion and raised the following points:

- The budget would ensure there were new homes built in the Town including different types of tenures of ownership for residents along with people wanting to come and live in Stevenage;

- Assumptions within the budget relating to current inflation figures and the Union's request regarding the staff pay award could affect the budget;
- The increase of 2.99% would be difficult for residents to absorb during a cost of living crisis;
- The budget demonstrated the Council's commitment to its services including Planning, Environmental and Direct Services;
- The vast majority of traders within the indoor Market welcomed the move to the new space;
- Most Councils throughout Hertfordshire were increasing Council Tax by the full amount of 2.99% which was prudent and gave the best financial position for this and future years.

A recorded vote\* was then taken on the motion, and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the following be approved:
  - a. the revised working revenue estimates for the year 2024/25 amounting to £12,251,910 and the revenue estimates for 2025/26 amounting to £10,753,540;
  - b. the contribution to balances totalling £596,801 in 2024/25;
  - c. the contribution to balances totalling £6,053 in 2025/26.
2. That it be noted that at its meeting on 11 December 2024 the Cabinet calculated the amount of 28,571.8 Band D equivalent properties as its council tax base for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011.
3. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:
  - a. £90,151,990 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act, less the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d)
  - b. £83,111,480 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act.
  - c. £7,040,510 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3a above exceeds the aggregate at 3b above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

d. £246.41 Being the amount at 3c divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year

e. Valuation

Bands

A	£ 164.27
B	£ 191.65
C	£ 219.03
D	£ 246.41
E	£ 301.17
F	£ 355.93
G	£ 410.68
H	£ 492.82

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 3d. above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. a. That it be noted that for the year 2025/26 Hertfordshire County Council have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

	Basic Amount of Council Tax	Adult Social Care Charge	2025/26 Council Tax
A	£995.18	£184.73	£1,179.91

B	£1,161.04	£215.52	£1,376.56
C	£1,326.91	£246.31	£1,573.22
D	£1,492.77	£277.10	£1,769.87
E	£1,824.50	£338.68	£2,163.18
F	£2,156.22	£400.26	£2,556.48
G	£2,487.95	£461.83	£2,949.78
H	£2,985.54	£554.20	£3,539.74

- b. That it be noted that for the year 2025/26 Hertfordshire Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and amended by Section 27 of the Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£ 176.67
B	£ 206.11
C	£ 235.56
D	£ 265.00
E	£ 323.89
F	£ 382.78
G	£ 441.67
H	£ 530.00

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e. and 4a. and b. above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts for council tax for the year 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£1,520.85
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B	£1,774.32
C	£2,027.81
D	£2,281.28
E	£2,788.24
F	£3,295.19
G	£3,802.13
H	£4,562.56

6. To determine in accordance with Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992 that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2025/26 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e.
7. The 2024/25 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of **£12,251,910** is approved as set out in paragraph 4.8.1 as summarised in Appendix B.  
2.2 The draft General Fund Budget for 2025/26 of **£10,753,540** is proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution to balances of **£6,053** and a Band D Council Tax of **£246.41**, (assuming a 2.99% Council Tax increase), as summarised in Appendix B and included in the Council tax resolution in Appendix F.
- 8 The updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as summarised in section 4.10 be noted.
9. The minimum level of General Fund reserves of **£3,421,625**, which is in line with the 2025/26 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to this report, is approved.
10. The contingency sum of **£500,000** within which the Cabinet can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2025/26, (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
11. The 2025/26 Balancing the Budget options as set out in section 4.5 and Appendix A, totalling **£275,907** and **£29,651** for the General Fund and HRA respectively, be approved.
12. The use of the Business Rate reserve to fund a Graduate and Apprentice scheme as set out in section 4.6 is approved for inclusion in the 2025/26 General Fund (**£202,760**).
13. That a first call on underspends of **£150,000** (in total from the General Fund and HRA) is approved to support the Graduate and Apprentice scheme as set out in section 4.6.

14. That the growth bid for graffiti removal of **£75,000** as set out in section 4.6 is approved.
15. That the pressures identified in sections 4.2 and 4.7 to this report are noted.
16. That Members approve the Council Tax Support scheme for 2025/26 as set out in paragraphs 4.3.8-4.3.9
17. That the Section 25 Statement on Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserve as set out in Appendix D is approved.
18. That Members note the Equalities Impact Assessment appended to this report for the Council Tax increase (Appendix E).
19. That Members note the feedback on the budget from Overview and Scrutiny as set out in Para.4.13.1 and public consultation in Para. 4.13.2 onwards
20. That the Final General Fund Capital Budget for 2025/26 of £52Million, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
21. That Revisions to the 2024/25 General Fund Capital Budget for 2024/25 of £244k, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
22. That the Final HRA Capital Budget for 2025/26 of £51.4Million, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved.
23. That the forecast of resources and approach to resourcing the capital programme as outlined in the report (General fund Paragraph 4.4 and HRA paragraph 4.10) be approved.
24. Final General Fund growth bids identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (paragraph 4.2 and Appendix A to the report) be approved.
25. To enable the use of Community infrastructure levy of up to £5Million, to fund future infrastructure projects as outlined in paragraph 4.6.3. be approved.
26. The approved capital de-minimis expenditure limit of £10,000 be noted.
27. The approved revenue surplus in any year of up to £500K that can be allocated to the capital reserve to support capital expenditure be noted.
28. That the comments from Council Financial Security Group set out in section 4.14 be noted.

[ \*Recorded Vote on Substantive motion:

For – Councillors Myla Arceno, Robert Boyle, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Jim Brown, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Nazmin Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elokolusi, Alistair Gordon, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Conor McGrath, Lin Martin-Haugh, Sarah Mead, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, Tom Plater, Ceara Roopchand, Loraine Rossati, Simon Speller, Jeannette Thomas, Carolina Veres, Nigel Williams and Jade Woods - 27

Against – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Phil Bibby, Stephen Booth, Andy McGuinness, Robin Parker and Peter Wilkins - 6

Abstentions – 0

Not present – Councillors Sandra Barr, Leanne Brady, Lynda Guy, Mason Humberstone, Anne Wells and Tom Wren - 6]

4 **FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25 - 2028/29**

This item was considered together with Agenda Item 3.

5 **ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024-25**

The Council considered a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26, including its Annual Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy following consideration by the Audit Committee and Cabinet.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 be approved.

6 **PAY STATEMENT POLICY 2025/26**

The Council considered a report in respect of the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26.

The Chief Executive and Strategic Directors left the Chamber during consideration of the item as the report addressed proposed changes to senior officer pay.

In moving the report, Councillor Jeannette Thomas, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Transformation advised that the pay scales for senior officers were set in accordance with the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC). The Appointments Committee had met to consider Senior Officer pay and had recommended an increase in the Chief Executive's salary which had been ratified by Council in December 2024. Following this, further benchmarking had been undertaken in relation to Senior officer roles. After consideration of an independent report and a number of other factors, the Appointments Committee agreed to recommend to Council the proposals in the report.

Councillor Jeannette Thomas also advised that the Leader of the Council , in conjunction with Cabinet Members had considered the pay of the current Chief Executive following the changes for the incoming Chief Executive and a decision to recommend to Council that the incumbent Chief Executive should also be paid at the revised rate was agreed to ensure the pay was equitable.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Richard Henry seconded the report.

A Member expressed concern that the decision taken by Council in December had agreed the new Chief Executive's salary and was not relevant for the current postholder. The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Transformation advised that the changes had been made to ensure pay was equitable and justified and in line with corporate practice. Benchmarking had shown that the current Chief Executive had been paid at a lower rate than counterparts within the County and beyond. Legal

advice had been sought and advice received allowed the backdating of the increase to when the decision had been taken by Council in December 2024.

In response to a question regarding how the change to the salary would affect the pension of the current Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer advised that the impact on the pension was referred to in the report at paragraph 5.1.2.

Upon the motion being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the pay policy statement set out in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved.
2. That the proposed changes to Senior Officer salary scales from 1 April 2025 in line with the Appointments Committees Recommendations be noted and approved.
3. That a payment be made to the retiring Chief Executive of £9,140, the reasons for which are set out in paragraph 4.8 and 4.9 in the report.
4. That the pay policy statement be placed on the Council's website once approved.

## 7 **LICENSING ACT 2003 POLICY REVIEW**

The Council considered a report in respect of the Council's proposed Statement of Licensing Policy as required under the Licensing Act 2003 (the Act).

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

1. That the report be noted and that the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Licensing Act Statement of Licensing Policy 2025-2030 (attached at **appendix A**) be approved.
2. That the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Statement of Licensing Policy be adopted.
3. That the Licensing Officers, the Licensing Manager and the Head of Environmental Health and Licensing, in their capacity as 'The Licensing Authority', be approved to act on behalf of the Council as a Responsible Authority as prescribed in the Licensing Act 2003 (13.4 & 69.4).
4. That it be noted that sections 6.3.1 and 16.6.5 of the draft policy have been amended accordingly to remove any wording which conflicts with the above proposed recommendation.
5. That it be noted that if the decision is made to agree for the Licensing Authority to act as a Responsible Authority, amendments to the Council's Constitution may be required, specifically Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions.

## 8 **GAMBLING ACT 2005 POLICY REVIEW**

The Council considered a report in respect of the Council's draft Statement of Principles as required under the Gambling Act 2005.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

1. That the report be noted and the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act Statement of Principles 2025-2028 (attached at appendix A) be approved.
2. That the Stevenage Borough Council draft Statement of Principles be adopted.

## 9 **SO SAFE (COMMUNITY SAFETY) STRATEGY**

The Council considered a report presenting a final version of the draft Community Safety Strategy 2025-28, outlining the emerging priorities of the SoSafe partnership for the next three years.

In moving the report, Councillor Conor McGrath, the Portfolio Holder for Stronger Communities advised that the work culminating in the Strategy had ensured a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour alongside much needed support for the Town's most vulnerable residents. The Strategy built on the progress made so far and highlighted the strength of the Council's partnerships.

In seconding the report, Councillor Hollywell thanked Councillor McGrath for continuing the work on the Strategy alongside the Head of Community Advice and Support and her Team. She advised that she was particularly pleased with the work and recommendation relating to violence against women and girls.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. the duty placed on the Council and other responsible authorities to publish and implement a Community Safety Strategy that addresses the reduction of crime and disorder be noted.
2. the feedback from Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted and that the Community Safety Strategy be approved.
3. delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (RP) after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the So-Safe Partnership, to agree and publish an annual Community Safety Action Plan and to make minor amendments to the Strategy.

## 10 **MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2025/26**

The Council considered a report in respect of the proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2025/26, as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).

It was moved by Councillor Richard Henry and seconded by Councillor Jeannette Thomas that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel set out in the report be agreed.

Following debate, and upon the motion being out to the vote, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted and, subject

to Members' consideration, that the findings of the report form the basis of the formal Members' Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 onwards, including:

- the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, and all other Discretionary Allowances remained unchanged from 2024/25 for 2025/26, and
  - That for 2026/27 and 2027/28 the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, and the Co-optees' Allowances increase in line with the Retail Price Index [RPI].
2. That, in the light of Recommendations 2.1 above, the draft formal Members' Allowances Scheme, as shown at Appendix B to this report, be approved for 2025/2026 onwards.
  3. That an Independent Remuneration Panel be convened in the Autumn of 2027 to consider the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2028/2029 onwards.
  4. That the Democratic Services Manager undertakes a campaign in advance of 2027 to recruit new members to form the Independent Remuneration Panel

## 11 **CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES**

The Council considered a report in respect of the Revision to Contract Procedure Rules 2025.

In moving the report, Councillor Veres, Chair of the Audi Committee advised that the key improvements included enhanced transparency, greater efficiency and value for money and compliance with national regulations.

It was then seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Revised Contract Procedure Rules be approved.

## **CHAIR**

Part I – Release to Press



Agenda item:

**Meeting** Council

**Portfolio Area**

**Date** 22 May 2025



## RESOLUTION TO EXTEND 6 MONTH RULE – SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

**Author** Victoria Wilders Monitoring Officer  
Lisa Jerome Senior Democratic Services Officer

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To seek Council's approval, in accordance with section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, of Councillor Barr's non-attendance at meetings of the Council for a period of 6 months.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Council agree, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, to approve Councillor Barr's non-attendance at meetings for six months, until 22 November 2025, on the grounds of ill health, and that the Council's best wishes be conveyed to her.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Councillor Barr has been unable to attend any qualifying meetings on ill-health grounds, having last attended at the Licensing Committee on 19 December

2024. In the circumstances, it is requested that Council approve her continuing absence for a period of 6 months.

- 3.2. If approved this extension would not prevent Councillor Barr from returning to meetings at any time within the 6 month extension period.
- 3.3. An extension is permitted under section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 but must be approved within 6 months of Councillor Barr's last qualifying meeting to prevent her from being disqualified.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1. Unless Council approve Councillor Barr's continued absence she will be disqualified from serving as a Councillor on 19 June 2025, her last qualifying attendance being at the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 19 December 2024.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Financial Implications**

- 5.1. None

##### **Legal Implications**

- 5.2. Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides:

*Subject to subsections (2) and (3) below, if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority.*

Council is therefore permitted to approve Councillor Barr's continuing absence under the above section. If Council does not approve Councillor Barr's absence she will cease to be a member of this Authority.

##### **Policy Implications**

- 5.3. None.

##### **Planning Implications**

- 5.4. None.

##### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.5. None.

##### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.6. None.



**Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL**  
**Date: 22 MAY 2025**



## CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Author – Lisa Jerome

Ext No.2703

Lead Officers – Richard Protheroe

Ext No. 2456 / 2938

Contact Officers – Luke Fattorusso / Victoria Wilders

Ext Nos. 2174 / 2331

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider various matters relating to the Member level decision making structure of the Council and the Council's Constitution for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Terms of Reference, as detailed in the appendices to this report; and the size and political composition for the following bodies that form the non-Executive Member level decision making structure of the Council be approved, subject to the rules of proportionality where appropriate for 100 Committee places where applicable (relevant Committees are identified thus\*) -
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee\* (Appendix A) – 14 Members (11 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Member, 1 Conservative Member)
  - Community Select Committee\* (Appendix B) – 10 Members (8 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
  - Environment and Economy Select Committee\* (Appendix C) – 11 Members (9 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
  - Planning & Development Committee\* (Appendix D) – 14 Members (12 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
  - Licensing Committee (Appendix E) – 14 Members (12 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
  - General Purposes Committee\* (Appendix F) – 14 Members (12 Labour Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members)

- Appointments Committee\* (Appendix G) - 8 Members (7 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
- Standards Committee\* (Appendix H) – 8 Members (6 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member, 1 Conservative Member)
- Audit Committee\* (Appendix I) – 10 Members (8 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member, 1 Conservative Member) + 1 Co-opted non-elected member
- Statement of Accounts Committee\* (Appendix J) – 8 Members (7 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
- Joint Consultative Committee\* (Appendix K) – 3 Members (2 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member)

\* Indicates where those bodies covered by the rules of proportionality for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups), Regulations 1990 – total Committee places being 100

- 2.2 The Housing Development and Regeneration Working Group be separated into two stand alone Working Groups
- 2.3 That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make consequential amendments to the Constitution to reflect the proposal set out in Recommendation 2.2 above.
- 2.4 That the membership of the Cabinet and the individual Portfolios, as set out in the document tabled at the meeting, be noted.
- 2.5 That the various Cabinet bodies appointed by the Leader, detailed in Paragraph 4.4 of the report and the relevant Terms of Reference for each body set out in Appendix L to the report, be noted.
- 2.6 That Council approves the dates for Council meetings for the Municipal Year 2025/26, as shown at Paragraph 4.7 of the report, and notes the calendar of formal meetings shown at Appendix M to the report.
- 2.7 That Council approves the appointment of Richard Protheroe, Deputy Chief Executive, as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The appointment and the terms of reference of Scrutiny, Regulatory and Advisory Committees that have no Executive functions are matters to be determined by Council.
- 3.2 Additionally, it is for the Council to agree the dates of Council meetings and changes to the Constitution.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTIONS AND OTHER OPTIONS**

##### **Council's Committees and Panels - Terms of Reference and Composition**

- 4.1 The proposed Terms of Reference for each of the bodies to be appointed by Council are set out in Appendices A - K. With the exception of the Licensing Committee, the political composition of those Committees is directed by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

##### **Cabinet**

- 4.2 The Leader will be appointing Members to the Cabinet (with Portfolios). This information will be tabled at the Annual Council meeting.

##### **Appointment of Cabinet Bodies**

- 4.4 The Leader of the Council has agreed to retain the following Committees of the Cabinet –

Appeals, Grievances and Litigation Committee  
Housing Development Working Group  
Regeneration Working Group  
Commercial and Investment Working Group  
Housing Working Group  
Stevenage, North Herts., East Herts. and Hertsmere Joint CCTV Committee  
Stevenage and East Herts. Joint Executive Revenues and Benefits Shared Service Committee  
Stevenage and East Herts Joint ICT Executive Committee

- 4.5 The terms of reference for these Committees / Working Groups may be found at Appendix L.
- 4.6 Membership of these bodies is limited to only Members of the Cabinet. Details of the memberships of these Committees will be set out in the schedule circulated with the Supplementary Agenda.

##### **Dates of Council meetings**

- 4.7 To comply with Standing Orders the Council should approve its programme of meetings annually. The approval of dates for Council meetings for the year does not preclude extraordinary or special meetings being called by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Mayor; nor for the date, time or place to be altered in accordance with the Regulations or where a material change of circumstances makes it necessary. The dates proposed for Council are as follows:
- Wednesday, 16 July 2025
  - Thursday, 24 July 2025 (Special Meeting)
  - Wednesday, 15 October 2025
  - Wednesday, 17 December 2025

- Wednesday, 21 January 2026 (Regular meeting, to include HRA and Rent Setting)
- Wednesday, 25 February 2026 (Special Meeting – Budget only)
- Wednesday, 20 May 2026 (Annual Council)

- 4.8 A provisional calendar of formal meetings is also appended to this report at Appendix M. This calendar will be subject to change and any alterations to dates of meetings, additions and cancellations will be notified to Members. Previous draft versions of the calendar should be discarded.
- 4.9 It should be noted that the draft calendar includes some dates for ‘Select Committees’ details of which specific meetings will be held on those dates will be notified to Members as we go through the year.
- 4.10 The calendar of formal meetings appears on the Council's website and is regularly updated. Furthermore, following Council appointing to each body, Members will be sent ‘Outlook’ calendar invitations to the meetings that are relevant to them.

### **Deputy Electoral Registration Officer**

- 4.11 That, following the appointment of the new Deputy Chief Executive by the Appointments Committee on 7 May 2025, and in accordance with section 52(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, it is recommended that Council approves the appointment of Richard Protheroe, Deputy Chief Executive, as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Council’s Constitution.

## **APPENDICES**

- Terms of Reference
  - Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Appendix A)
  - Community Select Committee (Appendix B)
  - Environment and Economy Select Committee (Appendix C)
  - Planning and Development Committee (Appendix D)
  - Licensing Committee (Appendix E)
  - General Purposes Committee (Appendix F)
  - Appointments Committee (Appendix G)
  - Standards Committee (Appendix H)
  - Audit Committee (Appendix I)
  - Statement of Accounts Committee (Appendix J)
  - Joint Consultative Committee (Appendix K)
- Terms of Reference – Cabinet Bodies (Appendix L)
- Provisional Calendar of Meetings 2025/26 (Appendix M)

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

1. Membership - 14 (Not to be Members of the Cabinet but to include the Chairs of the 2 Select Committees)
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
  - 3.1. To consider the activities of the Cabinet and to have responsibility to reconsider any executive decision that has been subject to call-in, in accordance with the provisions of the Scrutiny provisions as set out in the Council's Constitution.
  - 3.2 Responsibility for the scrutiny of all initial proposals for the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework provisions in the Council's Constitution.
  - 3.3 To determine a Scrutiny work programme to examine the spending, policies and administration of the Council's services within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature and relationships with partners and external agencies involved with these areas, together with a timetable and method of study for each topic.
  - 3.4 To determine formal recommendations in relation to scrutiny studies undertaken for reporting to the Council, Cabinet, other Committees, Officers and / or partner agencies as appropriate.
  - 3.5 To review the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in relation to services within the direct purview for services of a corporate and/or Council wide nature, considering if it wishes to make any input to policy issues contained in the Plan and if so, how. In undertaking this work the Committee may call upon the relevant Cabinet Member and/or Assistant Director to provide a briefing or take part in discussion.
  - 3.6 That in respect of policy development of matters that fall within the remit of this Committee, to meet with the relevant Portfolio Holder to comment on individual draft policies that are scheduled to be considered to the Cabinet.
  - 3.7 To work with other Select Committees, as appropriate when considering cross-cutting scrutiny studies and policy development when both Committees have so agreed.
  - 3.8 To consider matters referred to the Committee under the procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in relation to matters

within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.

- 3.9 In accordance with the Petitions Scheme, consider Petitions, Petition Reviews and interview Senior Council Officers (as requested by a Petition) in relation to matters within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.
- 3.10 In conjunction with the Select Committees, responsibility for the on-going development of the Scrutiny function of the Council.
- 3.11 To report to the Cabinet, other committees or Council, as appropriate.

**COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE**

1. Membership - 10 (not Members of the Cabinet)  
Observer – Stevenage Youth Mayor
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
  - 3.1 To determine a Scrutiny work programme to examine the spending, policies and administration of the Council's services within the purview of the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), the Assistant Director (Communities and Neighbourhood) and the Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services (repairs and caretaking)) and relationships with partners and external agencies involved with these services, together with a timetable and method of study for each topic.
  - 3.2 To determine formal recommendations in relation to scrutiny studies undertaken for reporting to the Council, Cabinet, other Committees, Officers and / or partner agencies as appropriate.
  - 3.3 To review the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in relation to services within the Committee's remit, considering if it wishes to make any input to policy issues contained in the Plan and if so, how. In undertaking this work the Committee may call upon the relevant Cabinet Member and/or Assistant Director to provide a briefing or take part in discussion.
  - 3.4 To act as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee, meeting in that capacity a minimum of once each year (by including Crime and Disorder on the agenda at least once each year).
  - 3.5 That in respect of policy development of matters that fall within the remit of this Committee, to meet with the relevant Portfolio Holder to comment on individual draft policies that are scheduled to be considered to the Cabinet.
  - 3.6 To work with the other Select Committee or the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as appropriate when considering cross-cutting scrutiny studies and policy development when both Committees have so agreed.
  - 3.7 To consider matters referred to the Committee under the procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in relation to matters within the purview of the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) and the Assistant Director (Communities and Neighbourhood).

- 3.8 In accordance with the Petitions Scheme, consider Petitions, Petition Reviews and interview Senior Council Officers (as requested by a Petition) in relation to matters within the purview of the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) and the Assistant Director (Communities and Neighbourhood).
- 3.9 In conjunction with the other Select Committee and Scrutiny Overview Committee, responsibility for the on-going development of the Policy Development and Scrutiny function of the Council.
- 3.10 To report to the Cabinet, other committees or Council, as appropriate.



**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE**

1. Membership - 11 (not Members of the Cabinet)
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
  - 3.1 To determine a Scrutiny work programme to examine the spending, policies and administration of the Council's services within the purview of the Assistant Director (Regeneration), Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services (except caretaking and repairs)), Assistant Director (Housing Development) and Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) and relationships with partners and external agencies involved with these services, together with a timetable and method of study for each topic.
  - 3.2 To determine formal recommendations in relation to scrutiny studies undertaken for reporting to the Council, Cabinet, other Committees, Officers and / or partner agencies as appropriate.
  - 3.3 To review the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in relation to services within the Committee's remit, considering if it wishes to make any input to policy issues contained in the Plan and if so, how. In undertaking this work the Committee may call upon the relevant Cabinet Member and/or the Strategic Director to provide a briefing or take part in discussion.
  - 3.4 To consider any policy issues within the remit of the Select Committee referred by the Cabinet and raising any other issues it considers appropriate.
  - 3.5 To work with the Community Select Committee or the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as appropriate when considering cross-cutting scrutiny studies and policy development when both Committees have so agreed.
  - 3.6 To consider matters referred to the Committee under the procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in relation to matters within the purview of the Assistant Director Stevenage Direct Services and Assistant Director Planning and Regulation.
  - 3.7 In conjunction with the Community Select Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, responsibility for the on-going development of the Policy Development and Scrutiny function of the Council.
  - 3.8 To report to the Cabinet, other committees or Council, as appropriate.

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**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

1. Membership – 14

2. Quorum - 4

3. Terms of Reference

3.1 To advise the Cabinet on the following:

- (i) Identification of consumer needs for services related to planning and development services and facilities functions of the Committee, and recommendations on the development of services and facilities to meet them, including:

Land use plans and policy, including local plans  
Employment and economic development  
Development management services

and advising the Leader / Cabinet / Council accordingly;

- (ii) Management and maintenance of planning and development related facilities and services in item (i), including employment and training facilities and services;
- (iii) Monitoring and review of performance in relation to the provision and development of planning and development services and facilities, including employment and training facilities and services, whether provided by the Assistant Director Planning and Regulation, other Council Service Delivery Units, or outside contractors and advising the Leader/Cabinet/Council accordingly;
- (iv) The promotion of the economic development of Stevenage, and of specific industrial/commercial land and premises within Stevenage, as to use and development and, where appropriate, about monitoring negotiations for development and redevelopment;
- (v) Development and encouragement of local businesses, employment and training initiatives, with co-ordination and implementation by the Leader / Cabinet as appropriate.
- (vi) The allocation and monitoring of grant aid and loans to local employment and training initiatives.

3.2 Responsibility for Development Management, including Listed Building Control - determination of planning applications, and enforcement matters under planning regulations.

- 3.3 Responsibility for Building Control - determination of applications under the Building Regulations, and enforcement matters under planning and building legislation.
- 3.4 Responsibility for the determination of Countryside Management and Tree Preservation matters, including the making of Tree Preservation Orders and related matters, and including consultation with appropriate outside bodies.
- 3.5 Matters imposed or permitted by legislation in relation to the functions of the Committee.
- 3.6 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those relevant powers set out in Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations as amended (see Table 2 of Part 3 of this Constitution); as clarified by regulations, subject to them being dealt with, as appropriate, by officers under delegated powers. This is to include the making of charges for any approval, licence or registration etc., in relation to the powers referred to.
- 3.7 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those local choice functions set out at Table 3 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.
- 3.8 Any other appropriate matter referred.

**LICENSING COMMITTEE**

1. Membership – 14
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
- 3.1 To consider and determine applications under the Licensing Act 2003 where representations have been made, in respect of the following cases.
  - (i) Personal Licences;
  - (ii) Premises Licences/ Club Premises Certificates;
  - (iii) Provisional Statements;
  - (iv) Variation of Premises Licences/ Club Premises Certificates;
  - (v) minor variations of Premises Licences/Club Premises Certificates;
  - (vi) Variation of Designated Premises Supervisors;
  - (vii) Transfer Premises Licences;
  - (viii) Interim authorities;
  - (ix) Review premises licences/club premises certificates;
  - (x) Issue of Counter Notice following Police or Environmental Health objection to a temporary event notices.
- 3.2 To consider and determine applications and variations under the Gambling Act 2005 (where representations have been made and not withdrawn) in respect of the following cases:
  - (i) Premises Licences;
  - (ii) Variation to a Licence;
  - (iii) Transfer of a Licence;
  - (iv) Provisional Statements;
  - (v) Review of a Premises Licence;

- (vi) Club Gaming / Club Machine Permit;
- (vii) Cancellation of a Club Gaming / Club Machine Permit.

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

1. Membership - 14
2. Quorum – 4
3. Terms of Reference
- 3.1 To consider matters in accordance with the Council's policies in respect of the following:
  - the grant, approval, review, refusal, revocation, renewal, transfer or variation of any licence, registration, certificate, consent, permit, approval or permission, except where such function falls within the terms of reference of another committee or where the matter has been delegated to officers of the Council.
  - consideration and determination of such applications for licences, registration, certificates and consents that the Head of Leisure, Community and Children's Services feels necessary, owing to the nature of the application concerned.
- 3.2 The designation of public places where the consumption of alcohol is to be prohibited.
- 3.3 To consider and determine certain matters where a right of appeal exists against the decision of a Members body or an officer, including:
  - Further reviews under the relevant Regulations by applicants for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefits.
  - Appeals in relation to housing needs assessment.

These terms of reference shall exclude the hearing and determination of:-

  - appeals by officers against dismissal or disciplinary action;
  - grievances from Officers under the final state of the grievance procedure;

which shall be dealt with either in accordance with the terms of reference for the Appeals/Grievance Panel or in accordance with the delegations to Officers.
- 3.4 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those relevant powers set out in Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations as amended (See Table 2 of Part 3 of the Constitution) (subject to them being dealt with as appropriate by Officers under delegated powers).
- 3.5 Insofar as they are not already referred to in these terms of reference, those 'local choice' functions set out at Table 3 of Part 3 of the Constitution.

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**APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

1. Membership - 8
2. Quorum - 3
3. Terms of Reference

The appointment and dismissal of the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors, subject to the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) Regulations 2001, and the Officer Employment Rules contained in the Constitution.

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**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**1. Membership** - 8 Members to include only one Member of the Cabinet

**2. Quorum**- 3

**3. Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council.
- 3.2 To consider and dispose of allegations that a member is in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct in accordance with the Arrangements adopted by the Council under Section 28 Localism Act 2011.
- 3.3 To depart from the Arrangements in the circumstances described in paragraph 12 of the Arrangements.
- 3.4 To consider and, if necessary, recommend changes to the Code of Conduct, the arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and decisions on allegations can be made or any other aspects of the Standards Regime to the Council.
- 3.5 To grant dispensations under Section 33 Localism Act 2011.

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## **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**1. Membership** – 10 (+ 1 Co-opted Independent non-elected member) to include -

- Chair - A Member who is neither a Member of the Cabinet nor who serves as a Scrutiny Member
- 1 Member of the Cabinet only

**2. Quorum** - 4

**3. Terms of Reference**

3.1 To advise or comment as appropriate on –

a) Internal Audit matters, including:-

- The Annual Internal Audit Plan
- The adequacy of management responses to Internal Audit reports and recommendations
- The Audit Partnership Manager's Annual Report and Opinion
- To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports, as requested

b) External Audit matters, including-

- External Auditors plans for auditing and inspecting the authority
- The Annual Audit & Inspection Letter from the External Auditor
- The report to those charged with governance
- Proposals from the National Audit Office over the appointment of the External Auditor
- The scope & depth of External Audit work

c) Arrangements made for the co-operation between Internal Audit, external audit and other bodies.

d) Anti-Fraud & Corruption issues including the Council's policies on Anti-Fraud and Corruption, "whistle-blowing".

e) The Council's Annual Governance Statement.

f) The Council's Constitution in respect of Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations.

g) The Council's Risk Management arrangements.

h) The Council's arrangements for delivering value for money.

i) The Statement of Accounts and related Capital Determinations.

j) The Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

k) The Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy.

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**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

1. Membership - 8

2. Quorum - 3

3. Terms of Reference

To approve the Statement of Accounts and related Capital Determinations in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

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### **JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC) (EMPLOYER SIDE)**

Membership - 3

Quorum – 2

Terms of Reference - To meet jointly with the Staff Side, Joint Consultative Committee to consult with employees, via their representatives, on developments affecting them; and on matters not resolved by the Strategic Management Board.

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## **CABINET BODIES – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Appeals, Grievances and Litigation Committee**

Membership: Chairman - Portfolio Holder for Resources and three members of the Cabinet

Quorum - three

Terms of Reference –

Except where matters fall to be considered by any other body -

1. To hear and determine appeals against dismissal or disciplinary action in the case of Officers employed on Chief Officer Terms and Conditions.
2. To hear and determine grievances under the final stage of the grievance procedure in the case of Officers employed on Chief Officer Terms and Conditions; or, in the case of other officers, where no Strategic Management Board is able to hear the grievance.
3. To receive reports and opinions on litigious and potentially litigious matters whether or not the matter under consideration has been referred to the courts or any tribunal.
4. To authorise the Borough Solicitor to commence legal proceedings or defend or settle, if so required in any case on terms, any litigation matter or potentially litigious matter.

### **Housing Development and Regeneration Working Group**

Membership: Chair - Leader of the Council  
Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People  
Portfolio Holder for Resources  
Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration  
Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Council

To advise and make recommendations to the Cabinet on the following -

#### **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

1. Documents relating to Development Strategy, Design Standards and a Pipeline of schemes that will form the strategic core of the Council's Housebuilding Programmes.
2. Financial resources of the programme in light of the individual schemes being delivered and their outputs in relation to:
  - a. Scheme Design & Unit mix
  - b. Scheme Quality

- c. Scheme Mile stones
- d. Consultation programme &
- e. Scheme Costs & financial appraisals

3. Funding for officers to bid for and complete on new sites and development opportunities that will enhance the Council's pipeline for new housing or form part of the land assembly required to deliver approved schemes.

4. Outline designs, individual scheme concepts and scheme appraisals on which to approve the submission of detailed planning applications, and/or if more appropriate outline planning applications, by the Council's appointed contractors, consultants or officers .

5. To invite Ward Members to attend meetings of the Committee, or other consultation events noted in the consultation programme when potential development sites in their ward are under consideration, and to provide an opportunity for Ward Members to provide comments on proposed developments.

6. The commencement of the procurement of delivery partners/contractors for sites that have achieved planning permissions and are considered to be contributing towards a viable development programme.

7. Appointment of contractors to deliver approved schemes.

8. Financial appraisals and the use of the following sources of funding for the development of individual sites within the Council's Housebuilding Programme:

- (a) The agreed Housing Capital Programme Budget for the Housebuilding Programme;
- (b) Capital receipts made available through the Council's Agreement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government allowing the use of Receipts from additional Right to Buy (RTB) sales as a result of the Government's increase in the maximum RTB discount to be spent on House Building;
- (c) Financial contributions received from developers or other sources for the provision of Affordable housing within the borough, in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision, in compliance with Section 106 Planning Agreements; and other eligible grant from new sources
- (d) Grant funding received from Homes England (HE)
- (e) Development support income generated through private sale homes, land disposals and shared ownership homes on schemes and land identified in the programme.

9. The progress with the Council's Housebuilding Programme; and expenditure on the Housing Capital Programme Budget for the Council's Housebuilding Programme,

ensuring the use (within the required Deadlines) of the capital receipts made available through the Council's Agreement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government allowing the use of receipts from additional Right to Buy (RTB) sales as a result of the Government's increase in the maximum RTB Discount to be spent on house building.

10. Applications to HE (or any successor body) to obtain Investment Partner Status (or similar), in order to enable the Council to seek funding from HE, and to approve funding bids to HE for development within the Council House Building Programme.

11. The future use of any potential development site previously identified by either the Committee or Cabinet as having possible development potential for Council House Building where it either does not gain planning consent, is deemed inappropriate to develop by the Committee for whatever reason or where the development appraisal identifies that the site is economically undevelopable.

12. The names of developments undertaken through the Council House Building Programme, following consultation with Ward Members.

13. The name of the Council's wholly owned Housing Development Company [WOC].

14. The annual summary and accounts of the WOC's performance against key performance measures

15. The annual revised versions of the first Business Plan produced by the WOC, and any subsequent Business Plans for additional housing schemes, and to make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to them.

16. Requests from the WOC to acquire any property or otherwise trade outside the Council's administrative area and to make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to them.

## REGENERATION

17. Projects relating to Stevenage Central Framework, and any further opportunities or schemes that will support the strategic vision for the regeneration of Stevenage Town Centre.

18. The communication and marketing strategy for the regeneration of the town and consultation and engagement arrangements for different regeneration schemes.

19. Commencement of procurement of delivery partners/ contractors for schemes that are considered to be contributing to the vision for the town centre.

20. The progress within the Council's overall regeneration programme; including project progress, future planning and commissioning of projects, funding options and future bidding rounds.

21. Schemes being progressed via Development Partnerships or joint ventures with commercial partners and individual scheme concepts or schemes to be brought forward through these commercial arrangements.

22. The annual report regarding the Queensway regeneration scheme from the Queensway LLP ("the LLP"), consider and approve the LLP's Business Plan and hold the Council's officer representatives on the LLP to account for delivery of the Business Plan. To authorise an operational expenditure cap of up to £100k per annum for LLP spend which is supplementary to the agreed Business Plan. To receive a regular progress report from the Council's officer representatives on the LLP and delegate the signing off of LLP accounts, appointment of auditors and change of representatives to the Chief Executive having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.

23. Bidding opportunities which will aid delivery of the Stevenage Central Framework vision for the town centre.

24. Additional strategies and concepts which will support the regeneration of Stevenage Town Centre.

### **Commercial and Investment Working Group**

Membership: Portfolio Holder for Resources  
4 other Cabinet Members

To advise and make recommendations to the Cabinet on the following -

1. New income streams and commercial business cases (including those that are key decisions).
2. Financial resources where necessary to progress commercial projects.
3. Individual Schemes within the Programme.
4. The development of new opportunities through establishing a risk appetite that stimulates the evaluation of new emerging markets and opportunities.
5. Documents relating to the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy and regularly review the Strategy.
6. The delivery of approved business cases and all aspects of the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy.
7. Strategic leadership to build a robust commercial culture.
8. Key performance indicators of all income generating functions.

9. Key commercial arrangements including contracts, contract and performance management processes and major service developments and track the progress of such developments.

### **Housing Working Group**

Membership: Portfolio Holder for Housing & Housing Development  
2 other Cabinet Members

1. To provide strategic oversight of Council Housing Management Services and Roles.
2. To support the ongoing improvement and delivery of services to residents.
3. To review, monitor and scrutinise on a regular basis:-
  - a. Housing Service Performance data including (Tenant Satisfaction Measures)
  - b. Complaint Handling
  - c. Regulatory Compliance
  - d. Housing Risk Management
  - e. Health and Safety across all housing services
  - f. Resident Engagement
  - g. HRA Business Planning
4. To consider and review relevant strategies, policies and processes to help deliver clarity and structure to improve service delivery.
5. To consider and respond to feedback from residents as part of the Council's emerging Resident Engagement Strategy
6. To undertake detailed reviews of key services, considering performance, service standards, feedback, learning and improvements.
7. To provide challenge, drive learning and improvement, ensure the voice of residents is heard and acted upon and to ensure that regulatory and Statutory standards are understood and achieved.

### **Stevenage, North Herts., East Herts. and Hertsmere Joint CCTV Committee**

SBC Membership: Lead Member - Portfolio Holder for Community, Community Safety and Equalities (serving as Chair when appropriate) and two Members of the Cabinet

Quorum - four Members (one from each constituent Authority)

## Terms of Reference -

1. To agree the strategy and policy relating to the jointly operated CCTV Control and Monitoring service.
2. To receive the CCTV Annual Report, Independent Inspector's Report and other relevant reports.
3. To deal with all matters defined under the code of practice as the responsibility of the Executive Board.
4. To consider expansion and contraction proposals for the control room monitoring service.
5. To consider and agree minor changes to the Code of Practice.
6. To consider and recommend significant changes in the Code of Practice.
7. To ensure that the Independent Inspection regime is set up and maintained.
8. To consider complaints regarding breaches of the Code of Practice and recommendations for disciplinary action and actions, or changes to prevent reoccurrence.
9. To deal with any matters as identified under the Joint Agreement as requiring the actions of the Executive Board; in particular:
  - To require reports from the Authorising Officer on management and operational matters
  - To consider matters referred to the Authorising Officer under the Joint Agreement disputes procedure
  - To consider proposals to incur additional control and monitoring room cost as a result of expansion within the allocated camera expansion capacity of one party.
10. To make recommendations on any of the above to the Officer Management Board.

## **Stevenage and East Herts. Joint Executive Revenues and Benefits Shared Service Committee**

SBC Membership: Lead Member – Portfolio Holder for Resources (serving as Chairman when appropriate) and the Portfolio Holders for Housing, Health and Older people and one other.

Quorum - three Members (at least one from each constituent Authority)



## Terms of Reference -

1. To approve the annual Service Plan for the Shared Revenues and Benefits Service.
2. To receive explanations of variances in service performance against the agreed Service Plan.
3. To approve the budget of the Shared Service and where so delegated determine requested virements within that budget.
4. To give initial consideration to future development of the Shared Service and any changes in legislation that may affect service delivery and make recommendations thereon to the Cabinet or Officers.
5. Where it is considered appropriate, report to the Cabinets/Executives of the Constituent Councils.

## **East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Information Communication Technology Committee**

### Purpose

This is a joint committee of the Cabinets/Executives of Stevenage Borough and East Hertfordshire District Councils, under the provisions of section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 all regulations made thereunder.

The terms of reference of the committee are as follows:

- a) To recommend the ICT Strategy to the constituent Councils;
- b) To approve the annual service plan for the Shared ICT Service;
- c) To receive explanations of variances in service performance against the agreed service plan;
- d) To approve the expenditure within the budget of the shared service and where so delegated determine requested virements within that budget;
- e) To give initial consideration to future development of the shared service and any changes in legislation that may affect service delivery and make recommendations thereon to the Executive or officers; and
- f) Where it is considered appropriate, provide reports to the constituent councils.

### Constitution of the Committee

The Joint Information Communication Technology Committee is constituted as a joint committee of the partner councils. Each partner council shall nominate three elected Members to the Committee. It shall be for each partner council to determine the mechanism for making these appointments.

## Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the Joint Committee will be three elected members, with at least one from each council.

## Chairman

The Joint Committee shall at its first meeting each year, elect one of its Members to be Chair and one of its Members to be Vice- Chair, with the chair from one Council and the Vice Chair from the other. These positions shall be rotated annually. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall, unless they resign or cease to be Members of the Joint Committee, continue in office until their successors have been appointed.

## Voting

A matter can only be passed by the Joint Committee if no fewer than half of the Members present from each authority vote in favour.

## Administration

The Access to Information Rules (as set out in the Constitutions of the constituent councils) to apply to all meetings.

Each constituent council will act as host for the meeting in alternate years and the hosting council will ensure the convening those meetings, distributing the agenda, clerking the meetings and producing the minutes.

Meetings to be held, as a minimum, in January (service planning for coming year) and October for budgets and mid-year service plan review. Should the Committee deem it appropriate, for example to respond to a new regulatory duty or service, or to consider the response to a significant performance issue, additional meetings may be held. Constituent councils are to liaise to confirm mutually suitable times/dates.

## Review

The constituent councils will review the Joint Committee's terms of reference annually.

## APPENDIX M

### Members Calendar May 2025 - April 2026

	Committee	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
1	Council	22		16 & 24			15		17	21	25			20
2	Cabinet		4	9	6	17	8	12	10	14	11	11	1	
3	Planning & Development		5 & 25	21	5	2	9 & 28		2	6	12	12	7	
4	Audit		3			3 & 24		4			3	24		
5	Overview and Scrutiny		10	15	12	23	14	19	16	20	17	17	8	
6	Select Committees		9	3 & 8		1 & 16	7 & 21	3 & 11	11	7 & 13 & 28	4 & 26	19 & 25		
7	Standards		24					25						
8	Statement of Accounts					24								
9	General Purposes						23							
10	Joint Revenues and Benefits			1										
11	Joint ICT Committee			29				17				23		
12	Joint CCTV Executive						20							
13	Housing Development & Regeneration Cabinet Working Group		13 & 27	25	8	5 & 19	17 & 31	28	12	9 & 23	20	6		
14	Commercial & Investment Cabinet Working Group		19				1				18			

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**Meeting** Council  
**Portfolio Area** Transforming Stevenage  
**Date** 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025



## CONSTITUTION REVIEW – PHASE 1

**AUTHOR – VICTORIA WILDERS**

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Constitution is to set out the principles for Council decision making and the procedures governing the conduct of Council business. The purpose of the Constitution Review and the amendments proposed in this report is to ensure that the Constitution remains up to date and fit for purpose.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree and adopt the proposed revisions to Part 1 Summary and Explanation of the Constitution as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.2 To agree and adopt the proposed revisions to Part 2 the Articles as detailed in Appendix B.
- 2.3 To agree and adopt the proposed revision to Part 3 Responsibility of Functions as details in Appendix C.
- 2.4 To agree and adopt the proposed revisions to the Community Presentation in Part 4 Rules of Procedure as detailed in Appendix D.
- 2.5 To agree and adopt the addition of a new Members' and Officers' Planning Code of Good Practice to Part 5 Codes and Protocols as set out in Appendix E.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that they are efficient, transparent, and accountable to local people. The council has a legal duty to publish an up-to-date Constitution which should be reviewed annually with any necessary changes being considered at a full Council meeting.
- 3.2 The responsibility to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution is currently set out in Article 13 and belongs to Council to approve save for minor and inconsequential amendments which may be authorised by the Chief Executive.
- 3.3 The Constitution is organised into 5 parts: -
- Part 1 – Summary and Explanation
  - Part 2 – Articles of the Constitution
  - Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions
  - Part 4 – Rules of Procedure
    - Standing Orders
    - Access to Information Procedure Rules
    - Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules
    - Executive Procedure Rules
    - Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules
  - Part 5 – Codes and Protocols
    - Member/Officer Protocol
  - Part 6 – Members Allowance Scheme
  - Part 7 – Organisational Chart
- 3.4 At the beginning of 2024, the Association of Democratic Services was commissioned by the Council, in collaboration with a Cross Party Working Group, to conduct a comprehensive review of its Constitution. The goal was to assess legal compliance and ensure the Constitution remains effective in serving the Council's objectives. The Association's recommendations provided a foundation for officers to reflect on and proposed necessary changes to keep the governance framework relevant and fit for purpose. The Council's Monitoring Officer is currently working through these recommendations and has identified bringing proposed changes forward to Council in several different phases:-
- Phase 1 – initial clarification amendments and tidying to identified parts of the Constitution including amending the policy framework in line with legislation and the adoption of a new Member and Officer Planning Code of Good Practice.
  - Phase 2 – statutory health check and review and update to Part 3 and Part 4.

- 3.5 The recommendations listed in this report are linked to Phase 1 of the Constitution Review only. The relevant Portfolio Holder and the Leader have been consulted on the proposed changes as part of the Phase 1 review. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will come forward later this year during Quarter 3.

#### **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Council is asked to note and agree the recommendations in the Phase 1 stage of the Constitution Review to ensure the Constitution is up to date and legally compliant and best serves the objections of the Council.

#### **5 IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

##### **Legal Implications**

- 5.2 A local authority is under a duty to prepare and keep up to date its Constitution under section 9P Local Government Act 2000 as amended. The Constitution must contain:-
- a) The Council's standing orders and procedure rules.
  - b) The Members Code of Conduct.
  - c) Such information as the Secretary of State may direct.
  - d) Such other information (if any) as the authority considers appropriate.

#### **APPENDICES**

- A Proposed changes to Part 1 - Summary and Explanation.
- B Proposed changes to Part 2 – Articles.
- C Proposed changes to Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions.
- D Proposed changes to Part 4 – Rules of Procedure.
- E Proposed changes to Part 5 – Codes and Protocols.

## **Appendix A**

### **Part 1 - Summary and Explanation**

#### **Paragraph 3**

- 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph should read “then appoints a Deputy Leader and between 1 and 8 other councillors who will, together with the Leader and Deputy Leader comprise the executive...” (currently reads “ who then appoints a Deputy Leader and an Executive of between 2 and 9 councillors”).
- Add the words Non-executive business is decided upon by “Council and/or” Committees ....”or by officers acting under delegated powers”

#### **Paragraph 4**

- The word “personal” is deleted and replaced by the term “exempt”. The phrase also appears elsewhere in the constitution but does not have any legal meaning.
- 4th paragraph should read “executive decisions may also be made by committees of Cabinet ....”

#### **Paragraph 7**

- Penultimate line substitute “set “ for “sets”



## **Appendix B**

### **PART 2 Articles**

#### **ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

2.4 b. First line there appear to be words missing in the first line. Suggest add confidential “or exempt”.

3.1 should read “to” vote, “to” petition etc.

4<sup>th</sup> paragraph uses term “personal” information delete and replace by the term “exempt” information.

Final bullet point to include “or misuse of personal data”.

#### **ARTICLE 4 – THE COUNCIL**

##### **4.1 Meanings**

###### **a. Policy Framework**

Policy Framework should include the following to comply with Schedule 3 of the Functions and Responsibilities Regulations 2000:-

- Best Value Performance Plan
- Crime and disorder reduction strategy
- Licensing authority policy statement
- Community Safety Strategy
- Housing strategy

##### **4.2 Functions of the Council**

The following should be added:-

t. “except where the Council has delegated this function to a committee, sub committee or officer”.

#### **ARTICLE 5 – THE MAYOR AND YOUTH MAYOR**

##### **5.2 Role of Protocol for the Youth Mayor**

Fifth bullet point the word “direct” is deleted replaced with “To be consulted on expenditure”.

## **ARTICLE 7 – THE EXECUTIVE**

As stated earlier, it would be preferable if the collective meetings of the executive were described as meetings of Cabinet.

## **ARTICLE 8 – THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE, REGULATORY AND OTHER COMMITTEES AUDIT COMMITTEE**

At article 8.3 third paragraph this should read “neither a member of the Cabinet nor a member who serves ....”

### **8.5 Public Participation**

Second paragraph, it should read “the Licensing and General Purposes Committees ... “ ( word Committees currently omitted) and last sentence should read “respective committees”.

## **ARTICLE 10 - OFFICERS**

### **10.1 Appointments of Staff**

Insert the word “Monitoring Officer” after Head of Paid Service

### **10.4 Functions of the Monitoring Officer**

f. partially repeats e. Suggest delete “and whether executive decisions are within the budget and policy framework”.

## **ARTICLE 11- DECISION MAKING**

At 11.5, first sentence, should include officers. Suggest reword to “executive decisions may be taken by the Leader, Cabinet, Cabinet committees, individual portfolio holders or officers in accordance with a Scheme of Delegation determined by the Leader from time to time.”

At 11.7 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph should read “except those taken ... “

## **ARTICLE 13 – MONITORING AND REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

13.1 the responsibility for monitoring the Constitution rests with the Monitoring Officer suggest adding “Monitoring Officer” after “upon the advice of” and adding “in consultation” before the Chief Executive.

## **Appendix C**

### **PART 3 RESPONSIBILITY OF FUNCTIONS**

#### **3.2 Executive Portfolios**

To add the following wording after the first sentence and before the last, “The Leader may allocate a portfolio area to be shared (joint portfolio) between two Cabinet Members, in which case, it remains a single portfolio and the allowance is shared between the Cabinet Members”.

## **Appendix D**

### **Part 4 – Rules of Procedure**

#### **Paragraph 9 – Community Presentation**

Delete paragraph 9 and replace with the below wording and revised paragraph numbers.

#### **9. Community Presentation**

9.1 At the discretion of the Mayor and subject to availability on the agenda, there may be a presentation on a matter of interest to the community (Community Presentation) at any ordinary meeting of the Council.

9.2 The Chief Executive may recommend to the Mayor whether to include the Community Presentation on the agenda or refer to another Committee.

9.3 The Council may receive a presentation, relevant to the subject matter of the debate may be, from a Councillor, officer and or other invited person(s)

- (i) if the presentation is from a Councillor or officer, it should last no longer than 10 minutes.
- (ii) if another person or persons are making the presentation it should last no longer than 20 minutes.
- (iii) collectively no Community Presentation should last longer than 30 minutes. c. At the Mayor's discretion Councillors and members of the public may ask questions of those providing the, or comment on the content of the, presentation subject to a maximum time allowance for questions of 20 minutes.

9.4 No Councillor or member of the public is permitted to speak for more than three minutes.

9.5. No debate or vote will take place on the content of the Community Presentation (not being a motion before Council).

9.6 The presentation is not subject to any other rules of debate as provided for within this Constitution.

9.7 The Mayor may exercise their discretion to cease the Community Presentation with immediate effect if the above provisions are not complied with and the Community Presentation deviates from the agreed subject.

## **Appendix E**

### **Part 5 Members and Officers Planning Code of Good Practice**

To adopt the proposed new Code on Members and Officers Planning Code of Good Practice

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