

# Public Document Pack



## COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

**Date: Thursday, 3 July 2025**

**Time: 6.00pm,**

**Location: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete**

**Contact: [committees@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:committees@stevenage.gov.uk)**

Members: Councillors: E Plater (Chair), J Ashley-Wren (Vice-Chair), L Brady, K Choudhury, A Elekolusi, L Guy, M Humberstone, S Mead, C Veres and P Wilkins

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### AGENDA

#### **PART 1**

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

**2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To note the terms of reference for the Committee as agreed at Annual Council on 22 May 2025.

3 – 4

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Community Select Committee held on 26 March and 8 April 2025.

5 – 12

**4. COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26**

To consider the Community Select Committee's Work Programme for 2025-26.

13 – 22

**5. COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE ACTION TRACKER 2025**

To consider the Community Select Committee's Action Tracker for 2025 and for Members to indicate if they wish to receive an update on any previous reviews where they are not already covered in this year's Work Programme.

23 – 30

**6. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent

## **7. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

To consider the following motions:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

## **8. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent

## 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.

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 26 March 2025

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Sarah Mead (Chair), (Julie Ashley-Wren (Vice-Chair), Stephen Booth, Kamal Choudhury, Akin Elekolusi, Alistair Gordon, Lynda Guy and Mason Humberstone

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 6.00pm  
End Time: 7.03pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members, Councillor Leanne Brady and Jade Woods.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 5 February 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 3 CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE

The Chair welcomed Inspector Will Rogers-Overy from the Stevenage Neighbourhood Police Team, who presented the Committee with Crime and Disorder Data for the past 12 months.

It was noted that the Hertfordshire Constabulary underwent a Police Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection between 2023-2025, during which only 82.6% of reported crime was recorded. In response to the PEEL inspection there had been a renewed effort locally to improve their performance of recording crime, this will in turn result in higher crime figures across all metrics.

Key Crime Statistics for Stevenage (in the last 12 months):

- 7,233 crimes were recorded, representing an 8.7% increase from the previous year.
- Reductions were seen in specific crime categories including:
  - o Shopping-related crime: 8% decrease
  - o Residential burglary: 11.2% decrease
  - o Vehicle crime: 36.9% decrease

- Violence Against the Person (including stalking and harassment) increased by 20%.
- Public Order Offences rose by 38.3%.
- Eight Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) were issued.

A question was raised regarding the age profile of offenders, and the Inspector confirmed that this information would be sought and provided to the Committee at a later date.

Further questions were raised about the high levels of domestic abuse. The increase in reported incidents was considered a positive outcome of efforts to raise awareness and encourage victims to come forward. Police officers had received specialist training to recognise signs of domestic violence. The Head of Community Advice and Support noted that incidents of domestic abuse had not decreased since the COVID-19 lockdown and highlighted the expansion of Safe Spaces from two to 38 locations, all operating at full capacity.

In response to a question regarding accurate reporting, the Committee and public were encouraged to report incidents to facilitate data collection. It was agreed that further clarification would be sought regarding the percentage of unreported crimes.

The Committee was informed about Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) levels from January 2024 to March 2025. A total of 1,908 incidents were recorded, representing a 15% decrease compared to the previous year. It was noted that these figures only accounted for formally reported incidents, and public perceptions of ASB could differ.

Peak reporting times for ASB were identified as:

- Monday to Friday: 2 – 6pm
- Saturday: 4 – 11pm
- Sunday: 6 – 9pm

The Herts Connected System was highlighted as an essential community engagement platform that provided crime prevention advice and gathered input from the community. It was noted that 2,648 users, including businesses and schools, were registered.

The Committee raised concerns about nuisance driving in Stevenage, such as loud exhausts, speeding and heavily tinted windows. Residents often expressed frustration over the lack of visible policing. It was explained that Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras were used to monitor vehicles, however enforcement required officers to be present at the time of the offenses.

The Committee was presented with the Neighbourhood Policing Team's community engagement initiatives which included:

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - Ward Surgeries           | - Street Meets              |
| - Door to Door Engagements | - Community Involvement Day |
| - Coffee with a Cop        | - Crucial Crew              |
| - Mini Police              | - Sporting Events           |

A question was raised regarding the nature of community engagements and the types of interactions involved. It was noted that demographic data was collected to understand which parts of the community were being reached and to identify areas requiring additional engagement.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team conducted 73 school engagements over the past year, covering topics such as ASB, E-Scooter use and road safety.

At this juncture, an explanation of Cuckooing was provided, highlighting indicators such as increased vehicle activity, particularly involving taxis or hire cars, and signs of drug use. Four tagged cuckooing investigations were identified in Stevenage in the past year, and it was suggested that taxi drivers could receive additional training to recognise and report these signs.

Further discussion focused on drug possession and trafficking, with 186 reports of drug possession and 39 reports of drug trafficking over the past year.

The Committee commented on the positive impact of the Police reports shared on social media.

The Committee were updated on the progress from the Build a Better Bedwell Project:

- 53 arrests were made.
- Nine local drug lines were disrupted.
- One organised crime group dismantled.
- £30,000 was seized.
- Seven machetes were seized.
- A total of 41 years in sentencing.
- Two house closures were completed.
- Violent crime in Quarter 3 2023/24 decreased by 47% (alcohol/weapons related).
- A multi-agency delivery group and enhanced partnership working group were established.
- Target hardening was implemented on tower blocks, including door entry and CCTV.

It was noted that funding for the project had been secured through the Safer Streets Fund, enabling additional wardens and external partners to operate outside of standard hours. Clear Hold Build training was provided to staff, equipping them with the skills needed to support the scheme.

The Committee received an overview of the Stevenage Neighbourhood Policing Team's structure, which consisted of an Inspector, three Sergeants (North/Central/South), 14 Constables, and nine PCSOs. The team also included a Community Safety Unit Sergeant, an ASB officer, a Licencing Officer and a Hate Crime Officer.

Inspector Will Rogers-Overy stated that the Police very much appreciated the support from SBC Members and from officers and the joint working they carried out together.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the Inspector and Officers for their contributions to the meeting.

4 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

5 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

6 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

**CHAIR**

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 8 April 2025

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

**Present:** Councillors: Sarah Mead (Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren (Vice-Chair), Leanne Brady, Kamal Choudhury, Alistair Gordon, Lynda Guy and Jade Woods

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 6.00pm  
End Time: 6.56pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members, Councillor Stephen Booth, Akin Elekolusi and Mason Humberstone.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2 COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - 2025-26

The Chair invited the Scrutiny Officer to provide detail on the 2024/25 work programme and the emerging work programme options for 2025-26.

One key area of focus for the Committee was the Equalities and Diversity Review. The next steps involved presenting a draft report to the Committee, providing members with the opportunity to give feedback ahead of the final version. Both versions of the report were scheduled to be brought forward in the next municipal year.

The Committee had received updates on the one-off reviews of the Housing Allocations Policy, Housing Investment – Asset Management, and Damp and Mould, with further discussions noted for the future. A one-off scrutiny review of the Neighbourhood Wardens was also undertaken, during which officers outlined their roles and recent work across the town. Additionally, the Committee reviewed the new Leisure Contract and the Crime and Disorder item.

The Committee reviewed the suggested items for the Work Programme 2025-26:

#### (1) Progress Report on Housing Allocations

The Scrutiny Officer provided an overview of the new Housing Allocations Policy, and members discussed the ongoing challenges in managing expectations related to the housing waiting list. It was noted that the Committee would revisit the policy in

Autumn 2025, one year after its implementation, ahead of a scheduled update to Cabinet.

## (2) Damp and Mould

The Chair advised that it would be beneficial to develop a written process to support both Members and Tenants in understanding the Council's approach to managing Damp and Mould cases. It was noted that the use of flowcharts to illustrate these processes would be a useful tool for improving understanding and accountability.

The Committee discussed the ongoing challenges posed by Damp and Mould and the importance of tracking repeat cases. Officers explained that emergency removal was carried out as an immediate response, followed by necessary remedial works, including improvements to ventilation and heating systems. While relevant information was available, the need for face-to-face engagement by surveyors and repairs teams was emphasised as key to reinforcing important messages.

Members were informed that a new Head of Repairs had been appointed who would lead on Damp and Mold issues, with the expectation of improved performance and greater consistency. It was also noted that Awaab's Law would come into legislation in October 2025.

Officers proposed that the Damp and Mould programme be brought back to Committee in the autumn, with Members invited to submit specific questions in advance to ensure key concerns were fully addressed.

## (3) Tenant Enforcement and Audits

Officers explained that the programme item would cover trends identified in enforcement actions taken against tenants. Audits were highlighted as a valuable tool for improving the Council's understanding of its housing stock and occupancy levels.

The Committee discussed the need for continued improvement in data accuracy and consistency and Officers confirmed that steps were being taken to refine the audit policy and ensure outcomes were clearly communicated.

It was noted that the Tenancy Audit procedure had been reviewed, it had identified that a formal policy for staff with a clear accessible Tenancy Audit Policy and associated guide for tenants was needed.

## (4) Public Health

It was also noted that Public Health remained a priority and the Chair suggested inviting a representative from the Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny to speak to the Committee about health and wellbeing statistics specific to Stevenage.

In addition, officers confirmed they would invite the Director of Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council to attend a future meeting to further explore this topic. The importance of promoting health and wellbeing awareness across Stevenage

was emphasised, and the Chair highlighted that increasing awareness could support residents in making more informed decisions about their health.

(5) Older People

The Chair outlined the challenges faced by older people in relation to digital exclusion. It was noted that there would be a focus on improving community transport, alongside greater consideration for individuals who are partially sighted or have sensory needs. It was suggested that the original Cultural Strategy could be revisited, with a renewed emphasis on diversity and inclusivity.

(6) Scrutiny of ASB

Officers explained that the new policy had been approved, but the Committee had the option to revisit the policy in one years' time for a review.

(7) Community Centres

The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods would liaise with the Section 151 Officer regarding the status of the policy and would provide feedback to members.

Members also requested an update on the future of Community Centres, specifically regarding the Play Centre and Pavilion at St Nicholas Park.

(8) Pre-Scrutiny of HRA Business Plan

The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods explained that a formalised HRA Business Plan was required by July 2025 and confirmed it would be brought to the Committee if feasible.

(9) Resident Engagement

The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods confirmed that an update on the Resident Engagement Strategy would be provided.

(10) Community Cohesion

The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods advised that a briefing note would be circulated to Members, outlining the Council's Resettlement Strategy.

At this juncture, it was noted that this item could be referred to a future meeting of the Modern Member Programme (MMP) for further discussion.

A question was raised regarding the role of the police in addressing social media issues affecting community cohesion. The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods confirmed that this matter would be raised at the upcoming multi-agency resettlement meeting.

The Chair invited Members to provide any further items for future work plan

programme. Members expressed concern over the number of flats being developed and their suitability for older and disabled residents. Specific concerns were raised about the adequacy of evacuation plans for vulnerable residents, and it was noted that the Council's policy on this matter would be reviewed.

Members also raised concerns of accessibility at the Stevenage Train Station, particularly with the lift, and it was noted that this issue was being addressed by the Environment and Economy Committee.

**3 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business

**4 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

**5 URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

**CHAIR**

<b>Lead AD</b>	<b>AD Housing &amp; Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford</b>
<b>Deputy</b>	<b>AD Building Safety &amp; Housing Property Services, Denise Lewis</b>
<b>Chair</b>	<b>Cllr Ellie Plater</b>
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	<b>Cllr Julie Ashley-Wren</b>

## Community Select Committee Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26

**(Including main review items, one-off meetings, statutory and standing items, review revisits and policy development items)**

The work programme is the main guide to the Committee's work throughout the year. However individual items can be raised at Committee meetings and consider as one-off items on a case-by-case basis at future meetings.

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<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
<b><u>Progress of the new Housing Allocations policy</u></b>	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, Head of	Meeting in the Autumn (Sep/Oct 2025) ahead of report to Cabinet	(i) This should be covered in a single meeting	A one-off update to CSC Members providing balance between affordability criteria and	

Agenda Item 4

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
Page	Community Advice, Sarah Pateman, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing, Cllr Jackie Hollywell.	in December 2025.  <b>Tuesday 21 October 2025</b>	(ii) No scope required.	the Council's statutory responsibilities as a Social Housing Provider.	
<u><b>Tenant enforcement/ tenancy Audits</b></u>	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing, Cllr Jackie Hollywell & Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Tenancy Involvement, Cllr Nigel Williams	<b>Tuesday 16 September 2025</b>	(i) This should be covered in a single meeting (ii) No scope required.	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods has suggested that there is a need for a Tenancy Audit Policy – to provide a procedure for staff and a policy for tenants so all parties know what is expected)	Vice-Chair, Tenancy Audits can throw up potential safeguarding issues.
<u><b>One-off update item on Housing Damp &amp; Mould</b></u>	AD Building Safety and Property Services, Denise Lewis, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for	<b>Tuesday 16 September 2025</b> – Officer Briefing ahead of legislation	(i) This should be covered in a single meeting (ii) No scope required.	Members to receive an update on Damp & Mould – AD Housing & Neighbourhoods suggested a briefing	If possible, Members have indicated they would like to receive information on:

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
Page 15	Housing, Cllr Jackie Hollywell.	changes in Oct 2025.		could be provided to Members in August/Sep ahead of Awabb's Law coming into effect Oct 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a flow chart as a reference point to see what stage case are in the process.</li> <li>• Info on repeat cases and the tracking of live cases.</li> <li>• Info on factors that affect damp and mould in properties such as cost of living; keeping heating on low and constant; better ventilation; overcrowding.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Equalities &amp; Diversity</u></b> (Initially a one-off meeting, but could lead to a main review)	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, SLT Lead for E&D, Corp Policy and Business Support Manager, Daryl	<b>Draft report 11 November 2025 - Final Report - tbc</b>	(i) Final meetings of the review – It is likely that the review would be brought to 2 Committee meetings, (i) a	A Member briefing and written briefing note is being prepared to be shared with CSC Members on Community Cohesion.	<b>Ongoing</b> – bring the final report to CSC in 2025-26 Municipal Year  The Chair asked if the review could receive an update on the Council

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii)Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
Page 16	Jedowski, Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities including Equalities, Cllr Coleen De Freitas.		draft report and receive an update on the Council's cultural strategy; and (ii) Final report.	Officers can bring an update on the existing cultural strategy to a future meeting. Which could include an invitation to the new Cabinet Portfolio holder, Cllr Simon Speller. Beyond this a more detailed piece on the Council's Cultural Strategy (2018-2028) could be included in a future CSC work programme/Municipal Year as the Strategy is in need of a refresh.	<p>Cultural Strategy and following this Members could make recommendations on the strategy with a renewed emphasis on diversity and inclusivity.</p> <p>Take on the offer from the partially sighted community to walk around the town – this is in hand with the Cabinet Portfolio for Equalities.</p> <p>Members are looking forward to receiving an all-Member seminar on Community Cohesion – including details of the emerging Resettlement Action Plan.</p>

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
<p><b><u>Older People</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, Health & Sport Strategy Manager, Ryan Ansell, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Neighbourhoods and Older People, Cllr Myla Arceno	To be advised.	This could be the focus of one meeting of the Committee.	Officers can provide a session focusing on Older People – including the Council’s policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age Friendly Community &amp; Age Friendly Conference</li> <li>• Dementia Friendly Community</li> <li>• Digital exclusion</li> <li>• How older people access our services</li> <li>• Housing for Older People (this could be a separate larger piece of work to a future work programme/Municipal Year)</li> </ul>	The Chair has previously outlined the challenges faced by older people in relation to digital exclusion.

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii)Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, Strategic Director and Statutory Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher Cabinet Member with responsibility for Co-operative Council, Cllr Nigel Williams.	To be advised – possibly a briefing note that could be considered at a meeting of the Committee.	Possibly one meeting with potential to lead to further meetings.	The Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods has agreed to liaise with the Council's Section 151 Officer regarding the status of the current policy and would provide feedback to Members.	Members requested an update on the future of Community Centres, specifically regarding the Play Centre and Pavilion at St Nicholas Park.
<b><u>Statutory Item – Crime &amp; Disorder Committee</u></b>	AD Stevenage Direct Services, Lead Officer Sarah Pateman, Portfolio Holder for Stronger Communities – Cllr Tom Plater	Meeting to be scheduled for <u>March 2026</u> .	(ii) Yes, covered in one meeting (ii) No scope required (iii)Interviews with Chair of RAG, Herts Constabulary, Portfolio Holder with responsibility	The annual meeting this year could provide an opportunity to highlight the work of joint working with the Police and the strategies and work of the SoSafe Partnership.	The Chair has asked if there could be a profile on the Council's work regarding Anti-Social Behaviour.

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e.</b> <b>(i) Number of meetings item can be covered in?</b> <b>(ii) Whether scoping required?</b> <b>(iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp;</b> <b>(iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
Page 19			for Community Safety looking at past performance of the Community Safety Action Plan and future priorities		
<b><u>Standing Item - Public Health</u></b>	AD Housing & Neighbourhoods, Kerry Clifford, and Health & Sports Strategy Manager, Ryan Ansell, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing, Cllr Simon Speller	<u>Jan/Feb 2026.</u>	(i) Yes, covered in one meeting (ii) No scope required (iii) Interviews with the HCC Director of Public Health, SBC Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Public Health and the SD for Community. (iv) Other Members to be invited – SBC Rep	Members indicated that they previously valued the sessions with the HCC Director of Public Health and would like to reinstate these meetings with focus on general health and wellbeing and specifically on Health Inequalities for Stevenage.  The HCC Director of Public Health (or a	Public Health remains a priority. The Chair has suggested inviting a representative from the Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny to speak to the Committee about health and wellbeing statistics specific to Stevenage.  In addition, officers have previously confirmed they would invite a member of the Hertfordshire County

<b>Scrutiny Review items 2025/26:</b> (Main review, one-off updates, briefings etc.)	<b>Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) &amp; Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Provisional meeting date(s) identified</b>	<b>Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting &amp; (iv) other details</b>	<b>Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy</b>	<b>Chair/Vice-Chair Preference &amp; Priority</b>
Page 20			on HCC Health Scrutiny Cttee.	Member of the HCC Public Health Team) be invited to update Members on the NHS Integrated Care Boards (which have replacing Clinical Commissioning Groups) and on matters relating to Public Health and Stevenage (if possible including the “tartan rug” the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)	Council Public Health team to attend a future meeting to further explore this topic. The importance of promoting health and wellbeing awareness across Stevenage has been emphasised, and the Chair has highlighted that increasing awareness could support residents in making more informed decisions about their health.
<b><u>2026-27 Work Programme</u></b>		Feb/March 2026. To be arranged.	One off meeting		Scheduled for <b>Feb/March 2026</b>

**Monitoring of Previous Recommendations/Actions**

Scrutiny items: (Follow up in 2022/23)	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/ Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/ Deputy	Complete ✓ x
Action Tracker.	N/A	To be advised - <b>July 2025</b> ).	(i) <u>Covered in a single meeting</u> revisiting the previous review and seeing where we are today		N/A			✓

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Any monitoring of previous reviews will be agreed when the Committee considers the action tracker at a meeting of the Committee on 3 July 2025

Pre-Scrutiny Policy Development	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope)	Other details	Complete ✓ x

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Review Title & Committee	Date added to the work programme	Scoping/ started complete/updated	Review start date (& follow-up dates)	Review Status (date if completed)	Key Recommendations	Executive Portfolio Holder Response	Date brought back to monitor
Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion	<a href="#">29/04/24</a>	<a href="#">Scoping Document - 08 01 25</a>	08 01 25	Ongoing - will be completed in 2025	To be advised when the review is complete	Not applicable yet	Not applicable yet
Housing Repairs	09/03/23 & 27/06/23	27/06/23	27/06/23	<a href="#">Final Report 08/01/2024</a>	<p><b>Rec 1- Development of a suite of Policies and Procedures for Housing Property Services</b> - Assistant Director Building Safety and Housing Property Services be recommended to develop a suite of policies, procedures and processes so that issues like quantifying the level of a repair into an agreed standard can be established which should help the authority manage repairs in a more planned way.</p> <p><b>Rec 2 – Improved Communication both internal and external</b> (i) AD Building Safety and Housing Property Services be recommended to improve communication both internal and external, ensuring that all team members communicate effectively with tenants and with colleagues to get repairs resolved quickly and efficiently; and (ii) the repairs service improve communications with tenants via direct engagement, social media and newsletters.</p> <p><b>Rec 3 – Make better use of technology</b> - this could include (i) encouraging tenants to send in digital photos and videos of the repair; (ii) using data on in year repairs against previous years to see trends and to profile the type of work that would be expected in different age/style housing stock; (iii) consider using remote diagnostic tools that are available in the housing sector or the development of an in-house housing App that tenants could use to report on repairs and general stock condition.</p> <p><b>Rec 4 – Work with the Customer Service Centre regarding training</b> - AD Building Safety and Housing Property Services (i) be invited to work with the Customer Services Centre to improve training to help them clearly identify if the work is a repair or planned investment and (ii) develop a checklist of questions for use with CSC Officers to ask the tenants to ascertain as much information to accompany the original request.</p> <p><b>Rec 5 – Review of the booking system</b> - That the scheduling system (DRS) be reviewed by the repairs team after the original booking and prior to sending out repairs operatives to ensure everything is in place to avoid the need for a future visit.</p> <p><b>Rec 6 – Streamline working between Investment and Repairs</b> - Even though they are now one team, there is still a need for the investment and repairs teams to have closer collaboration between them with a standardised process whereby the repair’s team are not relied upon to attend a job to discover it is investment team work, not a repair. Communication to be provided to the tenant to avoid the case appearing to fall into a ‘black hole’ and to avoid confusion and frustration.</p> <p><b>Rec 7 – Development of an audit trail via a tracker for each repair /enquiry</b> - That the process and journey of each tenant’s request for a repair (whether it be defined as a repair or housing investment) be able to be traced and the initial request is the start of the timeline for the resident.</p> <p><b>Rec 8 – Development of Customer Self-serve App</b> - That the booking hub that is currently under development be brought back to Community Select Committee Members to establish the efficacy of the booking system. While there are improvements in use of technology, it will remain the case that there will be residents who cannot access it and officers will need to resume a client facing approach.</p> <p><b>Rec 9 – Collecting feedback from all stakeholders</b> - To collect feedback on performance from all stakeholders.</p>	<a href="#">03/04/24</a>	The Chair has requested regular updates as matters progress

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Housing	16/03/22	11/10/22	05/09/22	<a href="#">Final report</a>	Rec 1- Carry out programmed Tenancy Audit of properties - Consideration would need to be given to how such an	<a href="#">27 06 23</a>	To be

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<b>Voids</b>	& 07/07/22		11/10/22 13/10/22 (Site visit) 02/11/22 (site visit) 02/11/22 09/03/23	<a href="#">09 03 23</a>	<p><b>Rec 2 – Carry out parallel processes</b> (i) When a tenant has given the Council notice and hands in the keys early, the voids team will carry out works and administrative processes that are required to minimise the void loss period. (ii) In cases where it is clear that the tenant has abandoned the property, and where the Council is legally able to do so, that the works that are required in the property be carried out in parallel to the legal process of formally regaining the property via the notice to quit period and the repossession order.</p> <p><b>Rec 3 - Regular sharing of data on voids with Members</b> - (i) Provide data on all void properties for a twelve-month period. To see what the actual performance of Void properties with general needs had a standard target of 26 days, and some properties with major needs had a turnaround of up to 64 days. (ii) That until Members are confident that there are new robust monitoring procedures in place for the voids process then Members will be recommending that there should be regular monitoring of progress with voids which is shared with Members on a quarterly basis.</p> <p><b>Rec 4 – Recruitment</b> Provide periodic updates to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing and Housing Development, and in turn the Community Select Committee on the progress with recruitment and retention of DSO officers and with any temporary outsourcing of voids work to external contractors.</p> <p><b>Rec 5 - a revised Officer data capture of end-to-end void process</b> That officers provide Members with a detailed proposal of the end-to-end void process so they can make a view as to whether this process is likely to have the desired Impact of raising the current performance levels of the voids service.</p> <p><b>Rec 6 – investigate potential incentives and penalties to encourage tenants to maintain their rented properties in a reasonable condition</b> The Committee is keen for officers to explore ways to hold tenants to account for keeping SBC’s property/their home in good repair. Where there are rechargeable repairs identified in inspection activity or otherwise, throughout the term of the tenancy, that the tenant is charged, at discretion, to avoid leaving multiple repairs and a large bill at the end of the tenancy. This should include unauthorised modifications.</p> <p><b>Rec 7 - Pursue better benchmarking with similar local authorities</b> Officers saw the benefit of local, meaningful benchmarking discussions and future sharing of data compared with the current national benchmarking group – Housemark. Housing officers will continue to reach out to other similar sized authorities who have a retained housing stock to share experiences and where possible data.</p>		scheduled - suggested monitoring item early in the 2024-25 Municipal Year.
<b>Pre-scrutiny into the New Towns Heritage Centre</b>	<a href="#">16 03 22</a>	<a href="#">Scoping Agreed 11 11 22</a>	21 09 21 03 11 21 30 11 21 16 03 22	<a href="#">16 03 22</a>	<b>Rec 1 - Curation (Arts programme)/engagement with the community/ Governance structure</b> (i)That Stevenage Museum’s curation should continue to be led by the expertise of the Museum Curator and engage with local residents through co-curation projects to provide a mix of: aspirational, informative, inclusive, accessible and affordable museum and arts offers to Stevenage people.(ii) As well as a New Towns focus consideration should be given to having a unique selling point/exhibition, outside of the New Towns story, so could be worth considering – e.g. Mars Rover Space Exploration.	Not applicable as the report was pre-scrutiny	<b>To be scheduled</b>

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					<p><b>Rec 2 - Community Engagement</b> That it is important that, whatever is offered at the Museum or any public art that is provided within the Hub, that it is accessible to the whole of the community, so engagement with all members of the local diverse community should happen to see what would they like to have included?</p>	policy developm't	
				<p><b>Rec 3 - Management/Governance Structure</b> That serious consideration is given by the Executive to the New Towns Heritage Centre’s governance arrangements, setting up an independent culture body to provide autonomy for the Heritage Centre made up of a mix of stakeholders, similar to the model with the Regeneration Town Centre Board, this type of independent governance body could be supported by a panel of people who are outside of the Council and have a specialist arts and heritage expertise from Stevenage, Herts and/or the Eastern Region.</p>			
				<p><b>Rec 4 - Museum without walls – Use of technology virtual museum and QR codes around the town</b> (i) That the Executive consider, as well as a physical New Towns Heritage Centre as part of the new Civic Hub building in the regenerated Town Centre, pursuing the concept of “Museums without walls”. This could include providing funding from the Towns Deal fund or Members Local Community Budgets (LCB) towards a dedicated website for the Museum that is independent of the Council’s website. It was quoted that with the existing Council website to have compressed digital photos with the current provider would cost in the region of £8.5k....(ii) That the Executive considers approaching the City</p>			
				<p><b>Rec 5 - Building – design features – use of technology in the building</b> That the Executive consider as part of the New Towns Heritage Centre 21st Century design features. The building should have the highest possible environmental credentials and be a carbon neutral building and incorporate the use of technology in the building. (Members recommend 6 specific design features listed in the final report and recommendations) .</p>			
				<p><b>Rec 6 - Commercial activity /Funding/Cost point for entry</b> That the Executive consider the possible Commercial activities associated with the New Towns Heritage Centre. During the site visits Members were taken with the crucial role that various commercial activities can do to support the users of the building - (Members recommend 7 specific design features listed in the final report and recommendations).</p>			
				<p><b>Rec 7 - Developing a hub and spoke approach for arts &amp; historical heritage across the town</b> - That the Executive consider continuing a hub and spoke model which makes best use of our CNM and Play Services infrastructure, i.e. in our neighbourhoods which would support the main hub core offer at the New Towns Heritage Centre.</p>			

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<b>Sports &amp; Leisure</b>	01/04/19	4 June 2019/updated 3 July 2019	04/06/2019 03/07/2019 17/09/2019 04/11/2019 08/01/2020 21/10/2020	<a href="#">Report &amp; Recommendations 21 10 20</a>	<b>There were 24 recommendations in total: (see the final report for all of the recommendations)</b>	Not applicable as the report included an	<b>To be scheduled</b>

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 recommendations specifically around improved accessibility to sports &amp; leisure opportunities linked to health benefits</li> <li>• 9 recommendations around improved marketing opportunities and use of the website</li> <li>• 6 recommendations regarding infrastructure improvements</li> <li>• 3 recommendations suggesting improved liaison between SBC and SLL</li> </ul>	Exec response due to Covid	
Housing Allocations Review		13/07/17	13/07/2107 26/09/2017 01/11/2017 08/01/2018 07/02/2018	<a href="#">Complete 07/02/18</a>	Rec 1. Staff training with regards to advice when moving between properties, more support for tenants with literacy or language problems or limited access to online services.	<a href="#">05/06/18</a>	21/10/25
					Rec 2. Consider the provision of shared accommodation for under 35s who will be impacted by the Housing Benefit Cap.		
					Rec 3. Priority be given to under occupiers wishing to downsize their properties.		
					Rec 4. Review the local connection criteria for persons moving into areas close to the Borough whilst on the housing waiting list.		
					Rec 5. Make alternative and improved use of hard to let sheltered accommodation.		
					Rec 6. Arrange a communications campaign to help 'myth bust' and revisit the terminology used with bidders to be clear and help manage expectations.		
					Rec 7. Stop the current practise of automatically informing housing bidders where their bid was within the top 50 bids.		
					Rec 8. For all new tenancies, an up-to-date gas check be completed on the property and be fully working before the new tenant moves in.		
Resident Engagem'nt		<a href="#">Revised Scoping Document - 12 July 2018</a>	20/06/18 12/07/18 04/09/18 02/10/18	<a href="#">Final Report - 24 01 19</a>	• 4 recommendations on the digital agenda including improved website to capture resident comment and touch screens and digital boards	<a href="#">22/03/23</a>	To be scheduled

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Page 9		<a href="#">July 2018</a>	02/10/18 07/11/18 09/01/19 24/01/19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A recommendation to improve face-to-face engagement with residents and manage expectations of residents during community engagement work</li> <li>• 3 recommendations on integrating community engagement work into individual business units</li> <li>• 2 recommendations on improved consultation demographics</li> <li>• 2 recommendations on promotion of engagement methods and branding</li> <li>• 2 recommendations on engagement toolkits and including in corporate reports</li> <li>• A recommendation on increasing the number of Neighbourhood Wardens to at least one per County Council electoral division</li> <li>• A recommendation on addressing the diversity of people on existing structures such as the Housing Management Advisory Board and Customer Scrutiny Panel</li> <li>• A recommendation on publicising the results of consultation and then responding to it</li> <li>• A recommendation that the consultation toolkit should promote ways to engage the public in local time bound projects that build engagement between residents and the Council</li> <li>• A recommendation that there be an annual revisit to the Resident Engagement Framework to check if the methodology used is still relevant</li> </ul>			
	Damp and Mould	Mar-16	<a href="#">Jun-16</a>	<a href="#">Sep-16</a>	<a href="#">Complete January 2017</a>	<p>The review made 10 recommendations about how the Council responds to damp and mould cases including:</p> <p>the way it treats tenants, logging cases, agreed response times, budget provision to address in small flat blocks.</p> <p>On 02 10 18 the Committee brought back the recommendations for monitoring and again on 30 11 19</p>	<a href="#">Mar-17</a>	<a href="#">09 01 23</a>

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