

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 30 April 2019

Time: 10.00am

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.

Start / End Time: Start Time: 10.00am
End Time: 10.30am

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ralph Raynor.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 14 MARCH 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 14 March 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)**

The Executive considered a report seeking approval of a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration advised that the Council's existing Local Development Scheme (LDS), approved in July 2016, needed to be updated as a result of the recent lifting of the Secretary of State's Holding Direction on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan. The proposed revised LDS now showed an anticipated adoption date for the Local Plan of 22 May 2019, as well as timetables for the Railway Station Area Action Plan and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2019, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved as the programme for the new Stevenage Borough Local Plan and associated documents, subject to any necessary minor editorial modifications agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.

2. That the LDS 2019 is brought into effect from 13 May 2019 and published on the Council's planning web pages.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

4 **STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN : PRE-ADOPTION DRAFT**

The Executive considered a report in respect of initial proposals for recommendation to Council on the adoption of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031, incorporating main and minor modifications, for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Budget and Framework Rules in the Council's Constitution.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration provided the background and history to the Local Plan, as set out in Section 3 of the report, leading up to the Secretary of State's issuing of a Holding Direction in November 2017, which had remained in force for over 16 months.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration referred to the Secretary of State's lifting of the Local Plan Holding Direction on 25 March 2019, on the understanding that the Council committed to a number of actions, as set out in Paragraph 3.12 of the report. Also set out in that paragraph were the Council's responses to address those actions.

The Leader reminded Members that the Council was now at the stage where it could either adopt the Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan, incorporating the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector, or must withdraw it completely. There was no opportunity to open up for discussion issues previously considered during earlier consultation processes on the Plan or at the Examination in Public held in early 2017.

The Leader considered that the delays caused by the Holding Direction had resulted in unnecessary costs to the Council Tax payers of Stevenage due to the legal fees and expenses incurred by the Council in challenging that decision. She had raised the matter of what appeared to be the indefinite and unreasonable timescales associated with Holding Directions with the Local Government Association, whom she had asked to lobby the Government on this issue.

The Leader commented that, prior to the Holding Direction, the Council had been aware of the Railway Station as an important gateway to the town, also recognised by residents and local businesses. The Council would therefore be supportive of an Area Action Plan for the "Station Gateway" area.

The Executive supported the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration's suggestion that the following wording be added to Paragraph 3.12 of the report:

"The Council has worked proactively since the Holding Direction was put in place on 13 November 2017 to attempt to get the Direction lifted. There were no technical issues outstanding at the end of January 2018. A number of meetings and visits

between Council Members and officers and civil servants and the Secretary of State have taken place during this time, alongside constant requests to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to release the Direction. The support of other Hertfordshire Local Government Authorities and professional bodies during this period has been appreciated.”

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration expressed their thanks to the work carried out by officers in attempting to break the deadlock caused by the Holding Direction.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the outcomes of the Main Modifications (and associated Sustainability Appraisal) consultation be noted (responses summary attached as Appendix A to the report).
2. That the content of the Inspector’s Report be noted (attached as Appendix B to the report).
3. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be informed that the Executive’s initial proposal is to recommend to Council to accept the Inspector’s recommendation to adopt the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, incorporating main and minor modifications (attached as Appendix C to the report), and associated Proposals Map, and also to revoke the District Plan Second Review 2004 (Background Document BD1).

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

5 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

6 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

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 grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That, having considered the reasons for the following items being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

7 **PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 14 MARCH 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 14 March 2019 be approved for signature by the Chair.

8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR