

NOTICE OF DECISIONS

Meeting:	Executive	
Date:	Monday, 16 December 2019	
Place:	Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.

**THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS FRIDAY, 27 DECEMBER 2019
SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY,
30 DECEMBER 2019**

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sharon Taylor OBE, CC (Chair) and Lloyd Briscoe.</p> <p>Councillor Jeannette declared an interest in Item 5 – Community Centres Review, as she was Chair of the Oval Community Association and Douglas Drive Senior Citizens Association.</p>	
2	MINUTES - 20 NOVEMBER 2019	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 20 November 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
3	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	
	<p>In respect of the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 4 November 2019, the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People & Leisure confirmed that the Youth Council was forging links with schools to allow young and emerging bands to perform and, through the auspices of the Council's Cultural Strategy, it was planned to showcase some of these bands at Stevenage Day in 2020.</p>	

In relation to the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 20 November 2019, Members agreed that any new Post Office in the Old Town should be in a building spacious enough to allow for privacy of transactions.

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

Community Select Committee – 4 November 2019
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 11 November 2019
Environment & Economy Select Committee – 20 November 2019
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 25 November 2019

4

CO-OPERATIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

**R. Gregory
x2479**

Members commented as follows:

- The boundaries between the 6 proposed neighbourhood areas should provide for sufficient flexibility to acknowledge how local residents identified their community;
- If possible, the full roll-out of the of the scheme to the other neighbourhood areas following the pilot area should take place in advance of the August 2020 proposed deadline; and
- Residents should be provided with one initial point of contact, who would be responsible for forwarding on requests to the relevant officer(s).

In relation to the pilot neighbourhood of St. Nicholas and Martins Wood, the Executive agreed that this should encompass the streets to the north that bordered St. Nicholas Park which were currently in Woodfield Ward.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the establishment of 6 Cooperative Neighbourhood areas, based on the pre-2017 Hertfordshire County Council divisions (see Appendix A for map) be approved. The 6 teams will form the basis of the Council's strategic approach to: delivering localised, responsive, coordinated and collaborative services; working with partners; and engaging with the different communities of Stevenage.
2. That the direction of travel set out in the report be approved, and that the development of Co-operative Neighbourhoods serves to reassert and strengthen Stevenage's commitment to Co-operative Council Principles; with staff, Members, residents and partners working together to help people help themselves and to plan for the future of neighbourhoods.
3. That the phased implementation be approved, including the selection of St Nicholas and Martins Wood as the prototype neighbourhood (but also encompassing the streets to the north that bordered St. Nicholas Park which are currently in Woodfield Ward), with basic team and collaboration arrangements put in place in the remaining 5 neighbourhoods.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

5

COMMUNITY CENTRES REVIEW

**R. Gregory
x2479**

Members' views on the report included:

- Support for the hub and spoke model of community centre delivery; the proposals for the social clubs/bars; and the proposals for standardised (but with flexibility for some bespoke items) community centre leases, which would assist community associations in bids for funding;
- It was hoped to replace or supplement community centre buildings, including the addition of one of significant size in the south of the town;
- Further work should be undertaken on the percentage of population that used community centres in each area, in order to inform initiatives to encourage the introduction of a wider breadth of activities aimed at developing an enhanced use of the facilities.

The Executive supported an additional recommendation (that could form the basis of one of the standardised clauses in the leases) that organisations using SBC buildings, community assets or managing facilities or delivering services to the people of Stevenage should reflect the Council's values and policies of inclusion and be politically neutral.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the findings of the stage two review of community centres, specifically the highlighted development themes and their individual targets, be noted.
2. That the adoption of a Hub & Spoke Model in relation to both current and the development of future community centres, ensuring there are Community Hubs in the North, Central and South of Stevenage, be approved.
3. That it be agreed that the findings of the Community Centre Review should inform future consideration on the provision of Community Facilities throughout Stevenage as part of redevelopment opportunities.
4. That delegated authority be given to Strategic Director (TP), having consulted the Portfolio Holders for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities and Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Working, to negotiate new Leases and related contractual agreements with Community Associations.
5. That the Co-operative Compact Partnership continues as a mechanism through which the model and social value framework can be further developed, building upon the collaborative working relationship between the Council and community associations.
6. That organisations using SBC buildings, community assets or managing facilities or delivering services to the people of Stevenage should reflect the Council's values and policies of inclusion and be politically neutral.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 6. To ensure use of the buildings reflects SBC values and policies of inclusion.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)	Z. Al-Jawad X 2257
<p>The Executive supported an additional recommendation requesting officers to commence the review of the level of fees contained in the CIL Charging Schedule after the first year of its operation.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the outcomes of the independent examination be noted. 2. That the content of the Examiner’s Report be noted (attached as Appendix A to the report). 3. That Executive recommends to Council that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) it accepts the Examiner’s modifications and recommendation to approve the Charging Schedule, and supporting Instalments Policy and Payments in Kind Policy, attached at Appendices B-D to the report; (ii) it approves the Charging Schedule, and supporting Instalments Policy and Payments in Kind Policy, to be brought into effect on 01/04/20; (iii) it approves the setup of an allocated financial reserve to draw down on for the CIL Officer post with an annual review. 4. That, subject to Council approving the Charging Schedule and supporting documents, delegated authority be given to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Assistant Director, Planning and Regulation, having consulted the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration, to authorise the expenditure of CIL funds under £75,000; (ii) Planning and Development Committee to authorise the expenditure of CIL funds of £75,000 or more. 5. That officers be requested to commence the review of the level of fees contained in the CIL Charging Schedule after the first year of its operation. 		

	<p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 5. To ensure robust monitoring of the CIL Charging Schedule.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
7	HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING	T. Pike x 2288
	<p>In response to a Member's question, the Borough Solicitor advised that should conflicts arise between various partners/signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding, there was a clause allowing for 30 days' notice to be given for withdrawal from the partnership, although any obligations given towards specific projects may need to continue until those projects were completed.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the progress and work of the Hertfordshire Growth Board be noted. 2. That it be agreed that Stevenage Borough Council enter into the Hertfordshire Growth Board Memorandum of Understanding, attached as Appendix 1 to the report. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
8	DEVELOPING A TOWN FUND DEAL	T. Pike x 2288
	<p>The Strategic Director (TP) advised that the Chair of the Town Deal Board would not be entitled to any remuneration, other than expenses.</p> <p>In order to reinforce the Council's decision for culture to be at the heart of the Town Centre Regeneration development, Members supported an additional recommendation that the Executive noted the importance of culture within the Town Deal Fund and the work to develop a Cultural Strategy for Stevenage, and requested officers to consider bringing forward culture-led</p>	

projects within the emerging Town Deal Investment Plan to enable Stevenage to develop its cultural offer.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the release of the Towns Fund prospectus and the steps that would be needed to put in place a Town Deal Board by end of January 2020 and Town Investment Plan by mid-2020 be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director (TP), having consulted with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to complete a readiness assessment for submission to government by 19 December 2019.
3. That the draft Terms of Reference for a new Town Deal Board, set out at Appendix B to the report, delegating finalisation of the draft Terms of Reference to the Strategic Director (TP), having consulted with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, be approved.
4. That the commencement of an open advertising, recruitment and selection process for an Independent Chair of the Town Deal Board, having consulted other key local stakeholders be approved, finalisation of the recruitment and selection process to be delegated to the Strategic Director (TP), having consulted with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.
5. That the importance of local consultation to inform the development of the vision for the Town Deal be noted, and Officers be requested to develop a comprehensive consultation and engagement plan, using existing consultation data and using a co-operative approach to engage with residents, partners, businesses and other stakeholders to help inform the options to be considered through a Town Investment Prospectus.
6. That the importance of culture within the Town Deal Fund and the work to develop a Cultural Strategy for Stevenage be noted, and that officers be requested to consider bringing forward culture-led projects within the emerging Town Deal Investment Plan to enable Stevenage to develop its cultural offer.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 6. To ensure that cultural projects are included in the emerging Town Deal Investment Plan.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

9

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER TWO

**R. Protheroe
x2938**

In respect of the Sickness Absence Performance Indicator, the Executive noted that the percentage figure was skewed due to instances of long-term sickness. The Senior Human Resources Manager undertook to provide Members with statistics relating to short-term sickness absence only.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the delivery of priorities which form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across the key themes for quarter Two 2019/20, together with the latest achievements, be noted.
2. That actions to ensure the improvement in the non-statutory compliance of non-domestic/non-commercial Council buildings in accordance with the compliance contract be noted and endorsed (Paragraphs 3.64 to 3.67 of the report).
3. That the improved performance in the Customer Service Centre be noted and continuing plans to sustain and improve performance be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.84 to 3.90 of the report).
4. That the impact of the rise in long term sickness in relation to the overall average sickness absence levels be noted and that ongoing implementation of improved practices to support sickness absence management be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.99 to 3.104 of the report).
5. That the review of the performance measure relating to number of households in temporary/emergency accommodation be noted and monitored (Paragraphs 3.68 to 3.70 of the report).

	<i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report. Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i>	
10	COUNCIL TAX BASE 2020/21	C. Fletcher x2933
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Stevenage Borough Council for the year 2020/21 shall be 28,275.6 equivalent “Band D” properties reduced to 27780.7 equivalent “Band D” properties after making allowances for a 98.25% collection rate. 2. That the 2020/21 Council Tax Base be approved, subject to any changes made to the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) for 2020/21. The Executive approved the CTS scheme at its meeting on 20 November 2019 for recommendation to Council. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report. Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
11	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2019/20 - 2023/24) AND HRA BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW 2019	C. Fletcher x2933
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That, for modelling purposes, fees and charges increases are in line with inflation. 2. That, for modelling purposes, the updated inflation assumptions used in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Paragraph 4.5.1 refers) be approved. 	

3. That the Capital Programme assumptions contained within the report be approved for the existing programme and new build properties and incorporated into the 2020/21 budget.
4. That officers review responsive repairs spend, taking into account the anticipated impact of the planned maintenance programme and the delivery of the 2% repairs efficiency target (Paragraphs 4.3.5 and 4.4.7 of the report refer).
5. That borrowing to fund capital projects in 2020/21 of £23.8Million be approved and that future years are considered annually in line with anticipated expenditure.
6. That the minimum level of balances for the HRA Business Plan, set as a minimum £3Million plus inflation (Paragraph 4.4.7 of the report refers), be noted.
7. That the creation of a reserve of £5Million, to mitigate against future interest rate volatility and a reserve to accommodate future debt repayment, be noted.
8. That if material changes to forecasts are required following further Government announcements, the Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) be requested to revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy and re-present it to the Executive for approval.
9. That the revised HRA MTFS principles be approved.
10. That the Trade Unions and staff be consulted on the key messages contained within the Medium Term Financial Strategies and more specifically when drawing up any proposals where there is a risk of redundancy.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

12	DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) AND RENT SETTING 2020/21	C. Fletcher x2933
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That HRA dwellings be increased, week commencing 1 April 2020, by 2.7%, an average increase of £2.56 for social rents £4.17 for affordable rents and £3.16 for Low Start Shared Ownership (LSSO) homes per week. This has been calculated using the rent formula, CPI +1% in line with the Government’s rent policy, as set out in Paragraph 4.1.1. of the report. 2. That the rent policy be updated to reflect the rent increase guidance of CPI+1%, (revised from a minus 1% rent reduction excluding LSSO properties). 3. That the draft 2020/21 HRA budget be approved, as set out in Appendix A to the report. This may be subject to change as a result of consultation and the finalisation of recharges from the General Fund. 4. That the final HRA rent setting budget for 2020/21 be presented to the Executive on the 22 January 2020 and then Council on 29 January 2020. 5. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and views fed back into the 2020/21 budget setting process. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
13	URGENT PART I BUSINESS	
	None.	

14	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
15	PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 20 NOVEMBER 2019	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 20 November 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
16	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	<p>None.</p>	