

NOTICE OF DECISIONS

Meeting:	Executive	
Date:	Wednesday, 9 December 2020	
Place:	Virtual (via Zoom)	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry (present for items 12-15 only), Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.

**THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS 18 DECEMBER 2020
SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM 21 DECEMBER 2020**

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Phil Bibby CC and Robin Parker CC (observers). There were no declarations of interest.	
2	MINUTES - 18 NOVEMBER 2020	
	It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 November 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
3	MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	
	It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 10 November 2020 be noted.	

4	COVID-19 UPDATE	
	<p>The Executive considered a brief verbal update on the Covid-19 pandemic from the Strategic Director (RP).</p> <p>It was noted that requests from GP surgeries for assistance with Covid-19 vaccination related issues (parking, marshalling arrangements, etc.) were being fed into the Logistics Cell of the Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the Covid-19 update be noted.</p>	
5	HOUSING FIRST APPROACH - STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL	H. Morris x2727
	<p>The Executive considered a report on a Housing First approach for Stevenage, outlining the Council's initial proposals for the medium and long term response to engaging and housing the Borough's rough sleeper clients, together with identifying the additional resources required.</p> <p>In response to a series of Members' questions, the Housing Operations Manager (Providing Homes) replied as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter 2020/21 Cold Weather provision – due to the pandemic, the accommodation previously used by SBC for Night Shelter accommodation for rough sleepers when the temperature fell to 0 degrees centigrade or below was not compliant with the Government's Covid-19 guidance. The use of bed and breakfast accommodation would continue until arrangements could be put in place for the use of alternative, Covid-19 compliant, premises; • Rough Sleepers – SBC was obliged to endeavour to house rough sleepers when they presented themselves to the Council, regardless of local connection. However, if a Stevenage local connection was not evident, but if a local connection was identified elsewhere, then it would be possible (following joint working with the local authority that covered that area) to arrange for individuals to be transferred back to that area to be accommodated; 	

- Officers had investigated the use of a Housing First approach already adopted by other Hertfordshire councils, including Dacorum and St. Albans (who favoured a dispersed units approach) and Welwyn Hatfield (who used a Housing in Multiple Occupation style provision). SBC would be considering a mixed dispersed units/HMO approach; and
- Best practice – this had been gleaned wider afield from the Hertfordshire Tactical Co-ordinating Group, which itself fed into a regional forum covering areas including London, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

The Housing Operations Manager (Providing Homes) undertook to arrange for her slide presentation to be sent to all Members of the Council.

It was noted that none of the funding provided to Hertfordshire County Council to deal with rough sleeping had, as yet, been shared with Borough/District Councils, and that the Leader and Strategic Director (CF) were continuing to press for this to occur.

The Executive supported the Leader's additional recommendation that, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People and Assistant Directors of Finance & Estates and Housing & Investment, a letter should be written to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government highlighting the significant funding gap of those local authorities operating a Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the disparity between Government financial support provided to assist Councils' General Fund budgets, and the absence of similar support funding for HRAs (including full recompense of expenditure already incurred on rough sleeper accommodation), with a request that such support funding be provided as soon as possible.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the support provided to homeless households during the Covid-19 restrictions, March – July 2020 and then November to December 2020 be noted.
2. That the Council's operational plan over the coming winter months, as detailed in the report, be approved, and that delegated authority is granted for the Strategic Director (RP), following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, to agree any minor amendments, subject to financial control.

3. That the current service pressures in Housing and Investment within the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) be noted, which will be monitored by the Council's Finance department in line with the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) planning which will be reported to Executive as and when required.#
4. That it be noted that funding has been obtained through Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MCHLG) for short term spends, and that the approach for use of these funds detailed at Paragraph 4.32 of the report be agreed.
5. That the Leader, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People and Assistant Directors of Finance & Estates and Housing & Investment, write a letter to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government highlighting the significant funding gap of those local authorities operating a Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the disparity between Government financial support provided to assist Councils' General Fund budgets, and the absence of similar support funding for HRAs (including full recompense of expenditure already incurred on rough sleeper accommodation), with a request that such support funding be provided as soon as possible.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 5. To highlight a disparity in Government support funding for authorities with Housing Revenue Accounts.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6	STEVENAGE PARKING STRATEGY 2021 - 2031: PUBLIC CONSULTATION	P. Howard x2296
	<p>The Executive consider a report in respect of the draft Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021 – 2031, seeking approval to its publication for consultation purposes.</p> <p>In response to a Member's request, the Engineering Services Manager confirmed that consideration of the provision of any new disabled parking spaces in the Borough would include the ability for sufficient space to allow disabled drivers/passengers to use any door to get in/out of the vehicle.</p>	

The Executive instructed officers to:

- Ensure that the consultation document contained a list of questions at the end of each section that the Council would wish consultees to answer as part of their representation/response to the document;
- Ensure that the consultation period be extended from one month to two months; and
- Ensure that, with consultation on Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), a higher bar was set on the level of public consultation responses received on each CPZ proposal, and a similar high bar was set on the number of residents in favour of adopting a CPZ for their street/area.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the content of the draft Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.
2. That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director(Planning and Regulation), following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft Strategy prior to its consultation.
3. That the draft Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031 be published for consultation in early 2021.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7	HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020 - 2030	K. Long x2078
	<p>The Executive considered a report seeking the adoption of the proposed Housing for Older People Strategy (HOPS) 2020 - 2030.</p> <p>The Leader asked officers to ensure that reference to the Council's buy back scheme was included in the Strategy document</p>	

prior to its final publication.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the draft Housing for Older People Strategy 2020 - 2030, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be adopted.
2. That the Older Persons Strategy delivery post to implement the strategy be agreed (this is included in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) draft budget report and Medium Term Financial Security (MTFS) report presented to the December 2020 Executive).
3. That an interim report be submitted to the Executive in 1 year's time and a progress report in 2 years' time with any resource request or review that may be required.
4. That it be noted that a growth bid of £17,000 will be recommended for 2022/23 and included in the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy for modelling purposes, for the initiatives as set out in Section 5 of the report.
5. The proposed performance and monitoring indicator details, as set out on page 38 of the draft strategy, be agreed.
6. That, subject to approval of the draft Strategy, the front facing document be shared with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People and Leader of the Council for approval.
7. That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, to make any minor amendments as are necessary to the Strategy prior to its publication.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

8	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE 2020/21 - QUARTER TWO	R. Protheroe x2938
<p>The Executive considered a report with regard to the Council's Corporate Performance information and statistics relating to Quarter Two of 2020/21.</p> <p>[During the element of the presentation on this item which related to grant funding received by SBC from the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the Leader declared a personal interest as a Member of the Hertfordshire LEP Board, but stated that she had not been involved in any decisions regarding approval of the above grant funding.]</p> <p>In reply to a question from the Leader, the Strategic Director (CF) undertook to investigate and respond on whether the rent arrears figures set out in Paragraphs 3.104 (£765,753.39) and 3.108 (£368,283.37) of the report should form a cumulative total for rent arrears.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 2020/21, together with the latest achievements, be noted. 2. That, in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue the adoption of the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022. 3. That impacts of the Government directive on housing rough sleepers during Covid-19 be noted and that future Housing First plans be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.97 to 3.102 of the report). 4. That the impacts on the Council's Housing Options Service from the Government directive on evictions and the COVID-19 pandemic be noted and that future Housing First Plans be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.92 to 3.96 of the report). 5. That the impacts of Universal Credit and COVID-19 on rent collection rate be noted and action plans be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.103 to 3.113 of the report). 		

	<p>6. That the impacts of COVID-19 on the following areas be noted and plans be endorsed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Creation/New Business Start Up through the Business Technology Centre (Paragraphs 3.125 to 3.128 of the report); • Ability to inspect food establishments (Paragraphs 3.129 to 3.131 of the report); • Issues with the letting of Council garages (Paragraphs 3.132 to 3.138 of the report); • Collection of Council Tax (Paragraph 3.165 of the report); and • Ability to identify and remove HRA/GF savings (Paragraphs 3.166 to 3.168 of the report). <p>7. That the level of void loss and how voids sheltered and major works impacts this measure be noted, and improvements be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.114 to 3.122 of the report).</p> <p>8. That the plans to improve website satisfaction be endorsed (Paragraphs 3.155 to 3.157 of the report).</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENT SETTING AND BUDGET REPORT 2021/22</p>	<p>C. Fletcher x2933</p>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting and budget report 2021/22.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <p>1. That the Housing Revenue Account rent on dwellings be increased, from week commencing 5 April 2021, by 1.5% which is an average increase of £1.46 for social rents, £2.38 for affordable rents and £1.80 for Low Start Shared Ownership</p>	

	<p>homes per week (based on a 52 week year), having been calculated using the rent formula CPI +1%, in line with the Government's rent policy set out in Paragraph 4.1.1 of the report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. That the draft 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account be approved, as set out in Appendix A to the report, but it be noted that this may be subject to change as a result of any consultation and the finalisation of recharges from the General Fund. 3. That it be noted that the final Housing Revenue Account rent setting budget for 2021/22 would be presented to the Executive on 20 January 2021 and Council on 28 January 2021. 4. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views fed back into the 2021/22 budget setting process. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
10	URGENT PART I BUSINESS	
	<p>The Chair accepted an urgent item of business in respect of a verbal update/presentation from the Strategic Director (RP) on European Union Transition (Brexit).</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the verbal update/presentation on European Union Transition (Brexit) be noted.</p>	
11	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) 	

	(Variation) Order 2006.	
	2. That the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.	
12	PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 18 NOVEMBER 2020	
	It was RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 November 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
13	FINANCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS 2021/22	C. Fletcher x2933
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of a range of Financial Security Options regarding the 2021/22 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the report, together with one additional recommendation made at the meeting, be approved.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
14	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	None.	