

## NOTICE OF DECISIONS

<b>Meeting:</b>	Executive	
<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 20 January 2021	
<b>Place:</b>	Virtual (via Zoom)	
<b>Members Present:</b>	Councillors:	Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry (from 4.00pm), Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.
<b>Also Present:</b>	Councillors Phil Bibby CC and Robin Parker CC (observers).	

**THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS FRIDAY, 29 JANUARY 2021.  
SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2021.**

<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
	<p>There were no apologies for absence.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p>The Chair announced that she had accepted an item of Urgent Part I business in respect of the Holding Direction relating to the SG1 planning application.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<b>MINUTES - 9 DECEMBER 2020</b>	
	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 9 December 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES</b>	
	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the following meetings of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be</p>	

	<p>noted:</p> <p>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee – 25 November 2020  Community Select Committee – 2 December 2020  Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee - 15 December 2020</p>	
4	<b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b>	<b>R. Protheroe x2938</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a presentation providing an update on the Covid-19 pandemic from the Strategic Director (RP), assisted by other officers.</p> <p>Officers were requested to progress the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ascertain to what extent (if any) the Army had been involved in the Stevenage Mass Vaccination Centre and Primett Road Testing Centre;</li> <li>• To investigate if there were statistics relating to the rate of those individuals who had refused the vaccination;</li> <li>• To find out from the clinical sector whether delays in the administration of the second dose of vaccine would be likely to affect its efficacy;</li> <li>• To ask the Hertfordshire Community Health Trust for further information regarding access arrangements to the Stevenage Mass Vaccination Centre for non-car users, and to request improved directional signage for such users;</li> <li>• To refer to the Local Resilience Forum a request that the eligibility criteria for the vaccine was clarified, and a priority was given for key workers, particularly the “blue light” services, to receive the vaccine;</li> <li>• To feed back to the operators of the Primett Road Testing site that the term “walk-in” was misleading, as the site operated via a prior appointment/booking system; and to feed back that the parking arrangements for the site needed to be made</li> </ul>	

clearer for users on arrival;

- To investigate the legal position with regard to the responsibility of employers to insist on workers receiving Covid-19 tests; and whether key workers would be eligible to receive a test, even if they were asymptomatic;
- To maintain vigilance and the inspection regime in relation to the Covid-safe operation of food delivery services (delivery drivers, etc.);
- To investigate and report back on the position with regard to potential funding for additional Covid Marshals;
- To ask the appropriate health bodies to ensure that when producing literature and posters for display in Local Outbreak areas, the wording of such documents was clear and not designed to unnecessarily scare the local population;
- To feed into the Economy Recovery Task Force details of the work being carried out with the Voluntary and Community Sector on the submission of a community recovery bid to the National lottery Fund for financial support;
- To seek clarification from Hertfordshire County Council regarding its proposals for the provision of free school meals to disadvantaged children during the upcoming half-term, Easter, and Summer half-term holidays; and
- To provide a link on the SBC website to highlight all of the Government’s various business support grant mechanisms/funds.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Covid-19 update be noted.

5	<b>LAUNCH OF STEVENAGE AMENITY TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY</b>	<b>J. Hill x2900</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of a revised policy for how amenity tree management would be delivered in the future.</p> <p>The Executive agreed that the Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, be given delegated authority to approve minor amendments to the policy before its publication,</p>	

including:

- A fuller explanation of the definition of “amenity” trees, and the difference between them and other trees;
- An alignment of the document with Hertfordshire County Council’s emerging Tree Strategy and Guidance documents; and
- The inclusion of additional information in Policy 8 of the document to provide clarity about assessments of trees supporting protected wildlife species and the legislation protecting wildlife in these circumstances.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Stevenage Amenity Tree Management Policy 2020, as set out at Appendix B to the report, be approved.
2. That the Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services), following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, be given delegated authority to approve minor amendments to the policy prior to its publication.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 2. To allow for minor amendments to be made to the document prior to publication.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

6	<b>LAUNCH OF STEVENAGE CEMETERY POLICY</b>	<b>L. Walker x2517</b>
<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of a proposed new policy for how the Cemetery service in Stevenage would be delivered.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Stevenage Cemetery Policy 2021, as set out at Appendix A to the report, 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>		

7	<b>FUTURE TOWN, FUTURE TRANSPORT STRATEGY - 12 MONTH REVIEW</b>	<b>D. Hodbod x2579</b>
<p>The Executive considered a report with regard to the progress of the projects included in the Future Town, Future Transport Strategy, adopted in October 2019.</p> <p>The Executive agreed to an additional recommendation, requiring a further report back in 12 months' time, in order to review progress on the Strategy post-pandemic.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the progress with projects included within the Future Town, Future Transport Strategy be noted.</li> <li>2. That it be noted that the Future Town, Future Transport Strategy will be included within the quarterly Future Town, Future Council monitoring reports.</li> <li>3. That a further progress report on the Strategy be submitted to the Executive in 12 months' time.</li> </ol> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 3. To review the position post-pandemic.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>		
8	<b>COUNCIL TAX BASE 2021/22</b>	<b>C. Fletcher x2933</b>
<p>The Executive considered a report seeking approval of the Council Tax Base for 2021/22.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Stevenage Borough Council for the year 2021/22 shall be 28,227.8 equivalent "Band D" properties reduced to</li> </ol>		

27733.8 equivalent “Band D” properties after making allowances for a 98.25% collection rate.

2. That the 2021/22 Council Tax Base be approved, subject to any changes made to the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) for 2021/22. The Executive approved the CTS scheme at its meeting on 6 October 2020 for recommendation to Council.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

9	<b>FINAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) AND RENT SETTING REPORT 2021/22</b>	<b>C. Fletcher x2933</b>
<p>The Executive considered a report for recommendation to Council in respect of the final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Rent Setting for 2021/22.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question, it was confirmed that the HRA Business Plan was scheduled for review in November 2021, by which time the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the levels of rent arrears, Universal Credit and Council Tax support would be more clearly realised.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That the HRA rent on dwellings be increased, 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 homes per week (based on a 52 week year). 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</li><li>2. That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 HRA budget, as set out in Appendix A to the report.</li><li>3. That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 Financial Security options, as set out in Appendix B to the report.</li></ol>		

4. That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 growth options, as set out in Appendix C to the report.
5. That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix D to the report.
6. That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 service charges.
7. That Council be recommended to approve the minimum level of reserves for 2021/22, as shown in Appendix E to the report.
8. That the contingency sum of £250,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2021/22 (unchanged from 2020/21).
9. That Council be requested to note the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in the report.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

10	<b>DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2021/22</b>	<b>C. Fletcher x2933</b>
<p>The Executive considered a report with regard to the draft General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2021/22.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Resources and officers were requested to give further consideration to the amount of Local Community Budget (LCB) for the Youth Mayor for 2021/22 and to the introduction of a process whereby Members could, if desired, carry over a proportion of their LCB funds from one financial year to the next.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the 2020/21 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £11,189,490 be approved.</li> <li>2. That a draft General Fund Budget for 2021/22 of £728,360 (as adjusted for the transfer from reserves of £8,000,000 to</li> </ol>		

allow for the repayment to the Collection Fund of that amount) be proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £380,590 and a Band D Council Tax of £220.57 (assuming a 2.32% increase).

3. That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as summarised in Section 4.12 of the report, be noted.
4. That a minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,650,000 in line with the 2021/22 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix A to this report, be approved.
5. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2021/22 (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
6. That the 2021/22 proposed Fees and Charges increase of £131,700 be approved (Appendix C to the report) and included in the draft budget.
7. That the 2021/22 proposed Financial Security Options (General Fund share) of £1,462,182 (Appendix B to the report) be included in the draft budget for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
8. That the Growth bids (General Fund share) of £166,966 (Appendix D to the report) be approved in principle, as set out in the report, and that the priority order of implementation be approved, as set out in Paragraph 4.3.2 of the report.
9. That the pressures of £656,540 be noted (Appendix D to the report).
10. That the 2021/22 Council Tax Support scheme be approved, as set out in Section 4.8 of the report.
11. That the use of New Homes Bonus be noted, as referred to in Paragraph 4.4.4 of the report.
12. That the revised Financial Security targets for the General Fund, as set out in Paragraphs 4.11.1 - 4.11.2 of the report, be approved.
13. That the signing off of further COVID business grant schemes be delegated to the Strategic Director (CF), after



consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder, as referred to in Paragraph 4.5.14 of the report.

14. That the use of the additional COVID grants, as set out in Paragraphs 4.5.9 - 4.5.10 of the report, be approved.
15. That the Strategic Leadership Team be requested to identify further options totalling £500,000, which could be implemented if the impact of COVID and other recessionary pressures are worse than projected (as referred to in Paragraph 4.1.3 of the report).
16. That the Strategic Leadership Team be requested to bring forward a Productivity Focused Transformation Programme by June 2021 to set out the plan for future savings (as referred to in Paragraph 3.11 of the report).
17. That, in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue with the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022, (as referred to in Paragraphs 4.16.8 - 4.16.9 of the report).
18. That the decisions taken in Resolutions 2. – 12. above be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules in the Council's Constitution.
19. That the Equalities Impact Assessments appended to the report at Appendices E and F be noted.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

11	<b>DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2020/21 - 2025/26</b>	<b>N. Penny x2033</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of proposals for revisions to the 2020/21 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme and the draft Capital Programme for 2021/22 onwards.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p>	

1. That the draft 2021/22 General Fund Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix D to the report, be approved.
2. That the draft 2021/22 HRA Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix E to the report be approved.
3. That the updated forecast of resources 2020/21, as detailed in Appendix D (General Fund) and Appendix E (HRA) to the report, be approved.
4. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets, as detailed in Appendix F to the report, be approved.
5. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund Capital Programme, as outlined in the report, be approved.
6. That the progress on Locality Reviews be noted.
7. That the 2021/22 General Fund growth bids identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (as referred to in Paragraph 4.2.2 and Appendix A to the report) be approved in principle, subject to further review work being undertaken (as referred to in Table 9 and Paragraph 4.6.3 of the report).
8. That the HRA budget increases identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (as referred to in Paragraphs 4.8.3 to 4.9.9 and Appendix C to the report) be approved.
9. That the 2021/22 de-minimis expenditure limit (as set out in Section 4.10 of the report) be approved.
10. That the 2021/22 contingency allowances respectively, as set out in Paragraphs 4.11.1 and 4.11.2 of the report, be approved.
11. That the Executive delegation set out in Paragraph 4.11.3 of the report, allowing Executive to approve increases to the Capital Programme for grant funded projects, be approved.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

12	<b>URGENT PART I BUSINESS</b>	
<p><u>Holding Direction – SG1 planning application</u></p> <p>The Strategic Director (TP) reported that, on 19 January 2021, the Council received notification from the Government that, after a period of consideration, the Secretary of State had opted not to call-in the SG1 planning application. This application had been subject to a holding direction, in place since late October 2020, following the decision of the Council’s Planning &amp; Development Committee to grant planning permission to the application. The Local MP for Stevenage had made the initial request to the Secretary of State that he call-in the application.</p> <p>The Strategic Director (TP) advised that the Secretary of State had concluded that the determination of the application should remain with the Local Planning Authority and, as such, the holding direction had been withdrawn. This allowed the scheme to the next stages required in the planning process.</p> <p>Members were delighted to hear this news. The Chair thanked officers, the Chair of the Planning &amp; Development Committee, MACE (the developer), the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Stevenage Development Board for their efforts and continued support in securing a lifting of this holding direction.</p>		
13	<b>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>	
<p>It was <b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>		

14	<b>PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 9 DECEMBER 2020</b>	
	It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 9 December 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
15	<b>LOCALITY REVIEW LAND AND SITES DISPOSAL REPORT</b>	<b>N. Penny x2033</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of some proposed site disposals identified as part of the Locality Ward asset and land reviews.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the recommendations contained in the report 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>	
16	<b>THE FORMATION OF A WHOLLY OWNED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY - RENEWED BUSINESS PLAN APPROVAL AND FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>A. Ahmed x2805</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report with regard to a renewed Business Plan for the Wholly Owned Housing Development Company.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that, with minor amendments, the recommendations in the report 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>	

17	<b>LEISURE CONTRACT - COVID-19 AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b>	<b>R. Gregory x2568</b>
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the Council's Leisure Management Contract and to consider mitigation measures to support the effective recovery of leisure facilities post pandemic.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the recommendations contained in the report, together with one additional recommendation, 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>	
18	<b>URGENT PART II BUSINESS</b>	
	None.	