

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 4 June 2025

Time: 2.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Richard Henry (Chair), Myla Arceno, Rob Broom, Coleen De Freitas, Jackie Hollywell, Tom Plater, Loraine Rossati, Simon Speller and Nigel Williams

Start / End Time: Start Time: 2.00pm
End Time: 3.00pm

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

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Jeannette Thomas.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - CABINET 12 MARCH 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 March 2025 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 **MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

Cabinet received an update on recent meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny and Select Committee meetings. This included:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Garage Asset Management, Community Infrastructure Levy – Draft Charging Schedule, Revised Supplementary Planning Documents, High Street Rental Auctions and Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution;
- Environment and Economy Select Committee – the provision of services to flat blocks, recycling bring-banks, waste and recycling and ways to improve recycling rates;
- Community Select Committee – Crime and Disorder, housing allocations, damp and mould and tenant enforcement, community centres and an update on resident engagement.

The Leader thanked the outgoing Chairs of the three Scrutiny Committees for their work and wished the three incoming Chairs well for the upcoming year.

Officers agreed to ensure that the attendance of Cabinet Portfolio Holders at any Scrutiny Committee be recorded in the minutes of relevant meetings.

Officers advised that a written response would be sent to all Cabinet Members relating to a question raised by Councillor Williams regarding the High Street Rental Auctions item.

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21 January, 18 February and 18 March 2025; Environment and Economy Select Committee – 27 February, 11 March and 20 March 2025; and
Community Select Committee – 26 March and 8 April 2025.

4 **GREEN SPACES STRATEGY AND TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY**

Cabinet received a report regarding the draft Green Spaces Strategy and Tree & Woodland Strategy which had been developed, following consultation with colleagues and residents, to support future delivery of further improvements over the next ten years in order to ensure that these assets continued to meet the needs of people and wildlife in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment advised Members that the strategies were aligned with the corporate priorities and local policy documents.

The Leader referred to the work undertaken by the outgoing Portfolio Holder for this area who had led the development of the strategies over the last two years, working with community groups, partners and officers.

Members agreed that the many green spaces across the Town were a huge asset for the Town and that these strategies would support the Council's aims and ambitions to continue to improve and enhance these green spaces to provide a great environment for people to live, work and play.

Members were also pleased to note that compared to the surrounding areas, all residents could access green spaces including 20 hectare woods with a short distance of their homes. The new Country Park planned for the north of the town was also a much welcomed new asset to Stevenage.

Members thanked Officers for their hard work and due diligence in producing the Strategies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Green Spaces Strategy and Tree & Woodland Strategy 2025 – 2035 be approved.

5 **PLANNING POLICY UPDATE INCLUDING REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME AND REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Cabinet received a report which provided an update to changes in National Planning Policy and Guidance announced by Government and the implications for plan making in Stevenage.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment advised that an update on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan – Review and Partial Update was also provided, with the aim to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State in June 2025

Officers advised that the report sought Members' approval to adopt a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which consisted of minor updates affecting the Council's approach to both plan making and how the Council consults on planning applications concerning land in the Council's ownership.

It was noted that Members of the Planning and Development Committee had been consulted with no comments being made.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The revised Local Development Scheme be approved;
2. The revised Statement of Community Involvement be approved;
3. That the comments of the Planning & Development Committee on the content of the Cabinet Report be noted.

6 TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES 2024/25

Cabinet received a report highlighting the Council's performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) for 2024/25, when compared to the results from 2023/24.

Members noted that overall, the performance across the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, demonstrated a broadly positive trajectory, with several key areas showing marked improvement and others maintaining consistently high standards. It was noted that while a small number of indicators reflected minor reductions, these were not considered significant and were being actively addressed as required.

Members agreed the importance of remaining committed to building on these improvements in the coming year and to continue to deliver against the Regulator for Social Housing's Performance Improvement Plan beginning the journey towards securing a C1 grade.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing welcomed the addition of Councillor Nigel Williams to the Cabinet as Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Tenant Involvement who would contribute to ensuring meaningful engagement with Council tenants going forward.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The results of both the TSM Management Data and the Tenant Perception Surveys for 2024/25 and the improvement actions being undertaken to further improve tenant satisfaction levels be noted;
2. The publication of the TSM Management Measures on the Council's website be approved.

7 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

There was no urgent Part I Business.

8 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**:

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.

9 **PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 12 MARCH 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the Cabinet held on 12 March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10 **PIONEERING YOUNG STEM FUTURES**

The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of the provision of Pioneering Young STEM Futures.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

11 **PROJECT DELIVERY AND PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR APPOINTMENT: THE OVAL**

The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of the provision of Project Delivery and Principal Contractor Appointment: The Oval.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

12 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR