

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 1 November 2017

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: S Mead (Chair), J Brown, L Harrington, J Mead, A Mitchell CC and G Snell.

In Attendance: Councillors: M Downing (as a member of Health Watch Hertfordshire) and M McKay (as SBC representative on Hertfordshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee) Dr P Cutler (Programme Director – Herts and West Essex STP) and A Gilbert (Director of Delivery – Herts and West Essex STP)

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7:15 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bainbridge, E Connolly, M Notley and C Saunders.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 26 SEPTEMBER 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 26 September 2017 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION PLANS

The Committee received a presentation from Dr P Cutler and A Gilbert on the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) for Hertfordshire and West Essex.

The presentation covered the aims and objectives of the STP together with its governance and management structures, leadership approach and priorities.

The Committee was advised that input from the Council would be welcomed to ensure that outputs from the Partnership best met the needs of local people.

The Strategic Director then outlined a number of actions that have already

been agreed with Dr Cutler and Ms Gilbert following recent conversations that were aimed at enabling genuine community engagement and input at a local level. Stevenage was recognised for being proactive in this regard to its ambition to work in partnership with relevant agencies to help address local challenges.

Members then asked a number of questions about the presentation, the operational parameters of the STP and the communication process surrounding the STP which were answered by Dr Cutler and A Gilbert.

In reply to a question concerning the geographical boundaries of the STP the Committee was advised that nationally there were 44 STPs and that the areas had been determined centrally based around hospital catchment areas.

In reply to a further question, and Members concerns that hospitals alone would be targeted for savings, it was confirmed that dental services, along with GP surgeries, would be included within the scope of the STP's activities which would also include all aspects of NHS operations including provision of medicines and back-room services.

With regard to communications the Committee was advised that the STP was aware that inappropriate jargon could be used and would welcome input from local authorities ensure clarity of the message for local residents.

In reply to a request the Chair indicated that she would be willing to schedule further meetings with representatives from the STP on request.

It was **RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

4. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS REVIEW

The Committee considered the emerging recommendations from the Housing Allocations Review.

It was suggested that recommendation 1 be amended to include staff training to ensure customers receive consistency of service.

With regard to recommendation 3 the Empty Homes Manager clarified the rules around eligibility of young people for the housing waiting list and advised the Committee that the Council was looking to convert a number of properties to shared accommodation which would be affordable for those affected by the Housing Benefits Cap for the single under 35s.

In reply to a question concerning the eligibility of people new to the Town to access the housing waiting list the Committee was advised that the qualifying period could be waived dependant on the circumstances of the individual concerned, for example a 'key worker' at risk of losing their job.

In reply to a further question concerning the 'Direct List' the Committee was

advised that it referred to a process which allowed the Council to make most efficient use of its housing stock by prioritising cases that met certain criteria. It was suggested that the term 'Direct List' be replaced with 'Reserved Right'.

It was **RESOLVED** that the comments are noted and incorporated into the final recommendations as appropriate.

5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR