

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 19 February 2018

Time: 6.00 pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair) (Chair), Jim Brown, Michael Downing, Alex Farquharson, Michelle Gardner, Carol Latif, John Lloyd, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC and Robin Parker CC

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.20pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Liz Harrington. There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

2 MINUTES - 24 JANUARY 2018

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 24 January 2018, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

NOTE: The version which had been published did not contain details of those Members who had attended, nor did they reflect the start and finish time of the meeting. A revised version, showing all of these details had been produced, published and made available at the meeting for Members.

3 PART 1 DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

This report had not been circulated to Members five clear days before the meeting nor had it been made available for public inspection. The Chair determined, however, that, given the short time left before the end of the call-in period on 22 February 2018, it could be considered on this occasion.

(i) Healthy Stevenage Strategy

The Council's Assistant Director (RG) introduced the report, which outlined the development of the Healthy Stevenage Strategy, the rationale that underpinned it and provided a summary of strategic outcomes. The report also highlighted and considered the wider implications.

The proposed priorities within, and the rationale for the Strategy, were considered by the Council's Community Select Committee on 31 January 2018, at which, there had been clear support for the Council's leadership in this area, with strong recognition that the involvement of health organisations such as the

Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would be key to delivering a genuinely strategic approach for Stevenage. The Select Committee also discussed the importance of developing the right approach to working with communities and the impact of schemes such as tea dances and social and community-based activities, which were not necessarily branded as “health promotion activities” but were clearly beneficial to health and well-being.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

(ii) Budget and Policy Framework Item – Final General Fund and Council Tax-Setting 2018/2019

The Council’s Assistant Director (CF) introduced the report, which considered the Council’s Final General Fund Budget for 2018/2019 and projected 2017/2018 General Fund Budget and final proposals for the 2018/2019 Council Tax. She referred Members to the draft report, which the Committee had considered in January 2018, and said that this was now the final version of the report, which would be presented to Council at its meeting to be held on 28 February 2018. The Assistant Director (CF) corrected a typographical error at Recommendation 2.9 to the report to the effect that the figure quoted for Growth Options was £470,371 and not “£430,371” as listed in the report. In conclusion, she said that the Executive had recorded its disappointment in having not been included within the Business Rates Pilot, where those included, kept all gains received from business rates.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

(iii) Budget and Policy Framework Item – General Fund Draft Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan

The Council’s Assistant Director (CF) introduced the report, which sought approval to the new draft General Fund Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan. She drew Members’ attention to a third recommendation agreed by the Executive that, the Asset Management Strategy adopts a cooperative approach to engagement with communities, in particular through reviews of assets in different localities.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

(iv) Budget and Policy Framework Item – Final Capital Strategy 2017/18 to 2022/23

The Council’s Assistant Director (CF) introduced the report, which sought approval to revisions to the 2017/18 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme and approve the draft Capital Programme for 2018/19 for recommendation to Council. The report also set out the Council’s approach to funding its key Future Council priorities and updated Members on (i) the Council’s draft five-year Capital Strategy and the resources available to

fund the Capital Strategy; (ii) the recent government consultation on prudential borrowing and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP); and (iii) the work of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LFSG) in reviewing all General Fund capital bids prior to inclusion in the Capital Strategy.

She referred Members to the draft report, which the Committee had considered in January 2018, and said that this was now the final version of the report, which would be presented to Council at its meeting to be held on 28 February 2018.

She drew Members' attention to an 11th recommendation agreed by the Executive that, in 2018/19, SBC capital reserves be used to fund £200,000 of the Regeneration Capital Bid assumed from GD3 monies, to allow the SG1 Regeneration Scheme to progress. This was required because the Government had not signed-off governance, which would allow the release of GD3 monies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

(v) Budget and Policy Framework Item – Annual Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2018/19

The Council's Assistant Director (CF) introduced the report, which recommended to Council the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19, including its Annual Investment Strategy and the prudential indicators following considerations from the Audit Committee and the Executive. She said the report had been updated and the use of balances had been discussed by the Audit Committee. She said that this was a planned use of the Council's balances in line with its strategies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

(vi) URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS – Town Centre Regeneration (SG1)

The Council's Strategic Director (TP) reaffirmed the Chief Executive's update given at the Executive on the progress of the decision taken at the last meeting regarding the appointment of the preferred developer for the SG1 Scheme. The developer chosen was preparing a formal launch of the plans on 27 February and the Council was producing a dedicated edition of Chronicle.

Strategic Director (TP) made reference to a national press release issued earlier in the day (Monday 19 February 2018), which confirmed that the appointed development partner was Mace, the international development and construction company behind some of the world's landmark developments would be undertaking the first phase of regeneration, called SG1. This ambitious scheme would bring £350million of private investment into the town centre and would see the area covering the Council's offices here at Daneshill House, the Plaza, bus station and some of the adjacent car parks redeveloped with new shops, bars and restaurants, homes, new public spaces, and a central public sector hub accommodating the Council's offices, a library,

exhibition space, and health services.

Over coming days and weeks, more details of the scheme and the timeline would be shared. The Council was also talking to local businesses and organisations, who are enthusiastic and supportive of the plans, as well as with the media. The Council is hopeful that, following the planning process, construction work will start during next year, and it will then take several years to complete.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part 1 Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2018 be noted.

4 **URGENT PART 1 DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

5 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

6 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

7 **PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE (IF ANY)**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II section of the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 23 January 2018 be noted.

8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR