

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EAST HERTS COUNCIL AND STEVENAGE
BOROUGH COUNCIL JOINT REVENUES
AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
SHIMKENT ROOM, DANESHILL HOUSE,
DANESTRETE, STEVENAGE, SG1 1HN ON
MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2014, AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs J Lloyd (Chairman).
Councillors G McAndrew, J Thomas and
A Webb.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Scott Crudginton	- Strategic Director (Resources)
Su Tarran	- Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Haysey, J Thornton and M Tindale.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 30 JUNE 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of held on 30 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Committee received a report detailing the current position in the following areas:

- Performance Reporting

- Other Challenges

The Committee was advised that a re-sizing report had been presented to the senior management teams at both authorities and was currently working its way through the decision making process. The report had been considered necessary in light of the changing demands on the service.

Concerns were expressed with regard to the workload generated as a result of the Department of Work and Pensions' (DWP) data matching exercise and the Committee was advised of the impact on pilot sites.

The Committee was advised that processing times of 12 – 18 working days, especially where clients had not declared changes in circumstances had been recorded and issues had been identified with clients on zero-hours contracts.

With regard to Universal Credit the Committee was advised that the pilot schemes continued but that the timescale for a wider roll-out of the scheme remained unclear.

The Committee discussed the DWP plan to introduce the Single Fraud Investigation Service and was advised that a business case was being prepared to provide county-wide anti-fraud investigations as part of the Shared Internal Audit Service to address areas of fraud prevention considered not to be fully prioritised by the DWP proposals.

It was put to Members that as the Committee had been originally established to oversee the formation and bedding-in of the Joint Revenues and Benefits service it had served its purpose. It was agreed that some form of committee would have continued usefulness and it was suggested that a meeting could be called either on an ad hoc basis, should circumstances demand, or on a formal once-yearly basis, dependant on the terms of the

partnership agreement. The Committee was advised that a proposal covering the available options would be included as part of the update report at the January meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be received and noted.

4 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None.

5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

6 URGENT PART 2 BUSINESS

None.

The meeting closed at 7.01 pm

Chairman
Date