

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 22
AUGUST 2019, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor G Williamson (Chairman)
Councillors A Alder, K Crofton,
I Devonshire, C Redfern, M Stevenson,
T Stowe and A Ward-Booth

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Isabel Brittain	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Geoff Hayden	- Corporate Property Service Manager
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Alison Street	- Finance Business Partner

118 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor A Alder and seconded by Councillor M Stevenson that Councillor K Crofton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Financial Sustainability Committee for the 2019/20 civic year.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, Councillor K Crofton was appointed Vice-Chairman of

the Financial Sustainability Committee for the 2019/20 civic year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor K Crofton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Financial Sustainability Committee for the 2019/20 civic year.

119 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor G McAndrew.

120 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the first meeting of the Financial Sustainability Committee. He explained that Council had established this Committee following on from the work of the Financial Sustainability Group. He said that he was looking forward to working with Members.

121 ESTABLISHMENT OF FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability submitted a report informing Members of the Committee on what had been agreed at Council on the 24 July 2019. Members were reminded that, following a two-year process, the Committee had been recognised as having delegated power to invest in income generating projects. The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

122 VERBAL PRESENTATION BY CORPORATE PROPERTY SERVICE MANAGER ON INVESTMENT DECISIONS

The Corporate Property Services Manager gave a presentation and property update in respect of potential investment decisions for Members to consider. He detailed the assessment scoring criteria and gave a detailed summary breakdown of each property that had been assessed by Officers. This breakdown included a summary of 12 properties that were and were not considered suitable for investment.

The Head of Housing and Health summarised the circumstances whereby the Millstream Property Company might become involved in consideration of the residential elements of any investment. He said that if Millstream had the necessary resources available at the time an opportunity is put forward by the Committee, the directors could make the decision. Alternatively, if Millstream did not have the resources it could seek them from its funder, the council. It was the Head of Housing and Health's view that the necessity to seek full Council approval for additional funds or seek such monies through delegated authority would in all probability depend on the level of funding being sought.

The Head of Housing and Health answered a number of detailed questions from Members regarding the reasons why the Millstream Property Company would have to be involved, explaining that while the Council could hold residential properties these could only be treated as council housing. The Council, in setting up Millstream, has decided that it wants greater flexibility,

through its company, to hold properties in different tenures, notably homes for private rent. In response to a comment from Councillor I Devonshire regarding mixed use developments, the Head of Housing and Health said that he did not envisage Millstream's involvement in a mixed tenure purchase prolonging acquisition as the company is set up to act swiftly in the property market and to enable this has already agreed purchase criteria with its shareholder, the Council.

The Corporate Property Services Manager, the Head of Housing and Health and the Head of Strategic Finance and Property answered a number of further detailed questions from Members that were pertinent to each property included within the presentation. The Corporate Property Services Manager undertook to approach the owners of certain properties detailed in the presentation. The Head of Housing and Health would also conduct site visits with the Corporate Property Services Manager. Members received the presentation.

RESOLVED – that (A) the presentation be received;

(B) the Corporate Property Services Manager undertook to approach the owners of properties detailed in the presentation; and

(C) the Head of Housing and Health would carry out site visits with the Corporate Property Services Manager.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm

Chairman

Date