



## ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 3 December 2018

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Shimkent Room - Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Fungai Nyamukapa 01438 242707

Members: Councillors: M Downing (Chair), M Hurst (Vice-Chair), L Briscoe, J Brown, D Cullen, J Fraser, L Kelly, A McGuinness, A Mitchell CC, S-J Potter and S Speller

---

### AGENDA

#### PART 1

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

**2. MINUTES - 12 NOVEMBER 2018**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 12 November 2018.

Pages 3 – 6

**3. UPDATE ON EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO INDOOR MARKET SCRUTINY REVIEW**

To receive an update on the Executive Member response to the Indoor Market Scrutiny Review.

Pages 7 – 14

**4. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

**5. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) 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 Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

**6. PART II MINUTES - 12 NOVEMBER 2018**

To approve as a correct record the Part II Minutes of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 12 November 2018.  
Pages 15-16

**7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 12 November 2018

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Michael Downing (Chair), Matthew Hurst (Vice Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Jim Brown, David Cullen, James Fraser, Lizzy Kelly, Andy McGuinness, Adam Mitchell CC and Sarah-Jane Potter

**Start / End**      Start Time:    6.00pm  
**Time:**            End Time:       7.50pm

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

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Simon Speller.

Councillor Dave Cullen declared an interest in item 3 – Licence to Occupy as a holder of a Licence to Cultivate.

Councillors Matthew Hurst and Adam Mitchell also declared interests in item 3 as members of an organisation with a Grant to Occupy.

### 2      **MINUTES - 18 OCTOBER 2018**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 18 October be approved subject to the following amendments:

- Page 6 – 1<sup>st</sup> bullet point be amended to read “Unlike previous arrangements, the new timetable had a repeating pattern that made it easier for passengers”
- Page 7 – in relation to the Hertford Loop the words “at the station” at the end of the first paragraph be deleted.

### 3      **LICENCE TO OCCUPY**

Craig Miller, Assistant Director Stevenage Direct Services gave a presentation to the Committee on the process of applying for a Licence to Occupy which allows the licensee to maintain council owned amenity land without any proprietary rights to the land.

Officers advised that the main issues regarding the process were the unresponsive and bureaucratic procedures which were not resident focussed with no dedicated Council contact point.

The Committee was pleased to note the proposals for the review and improvement of the process which would dramatically reduce the time for licence applications and

had given officers the opportunity for the whole process to be delivered electronically. The Committee was supportive of the Assistant Director's plans to consult with interested parties on the proposals.

In response to a question, Officers confirmed that there was no charge for a Licence to Occupy but that an admin charge of approximately £60 was charged by Herts County Council in respect of a Licence to Cultivate.

Officers also advised that applicants would be invited into the Council for a meeting to work out the exact details of an application rather than delaying an application by the use of letters or emails. In response to a question, Officers advised that applications received were for a 5 year licence, the Council would also require the land to be kept maintained at an agreed standard and would also require the applicant to purchase appropriate public liability insurance.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) That support be given to the Assistant Director Stevenage Direct Services to start the consultation process on the proposals to review the Licence to Occupy process.
- (ii) That a progress report be brought back to the Committee by the Assistant Director once the new process is in place.

#### 4 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

#### 5 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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 items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 to 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 outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

#### 6 **STEVENAGE DIRECT SERVICES BUSINESS REVIEW**

The Assistant Director Stevenage Direct Services gave a presentation to the Committee setting out his proposals for the Stevenage Direct Services Business Unit Review.

The Committee were supportive of the proposals put forward by the Assistant Director and it was **RESOLVED** that

1. the presentation be noted; and
2. the Assistant Director come back to a future meeting of the Committee with an update on the progress of the review.

7 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive Member Response To Indoor Market Scrutiny Review

**Date Recommendations agreed by Environment & Economy Select Committee:**

Environment & Economy Select Committee, Tuesday 16 January 2018  
(circulated Friday 19 January 2018)

**Date responses should be made by:**

Executive responses on behalf of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources should be received by Monday 19 March 2018

Recommendations:	Executive Response:	Update December 2018:
<p><b><u>PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATION</u></b> - That officers be requested to engage an external company to carry out market research in order to find out what kind of market offer is required by the Town longer-term.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>The council understands the purpose of this recommendation and has retrieved a quote to undertake such works already. This quote was particularly expensive and efforts are currently being made to find a more cost effective option.</i></p> <p><i>We are conscious that the timing needs to</i></p>	<p><i>Since the last update, the council commissioned a feasibility study for future business development options or diversification of the Indoor Market through a specialist company called Spacemakers.</i></p> <p><i>Spacemakers have delivered a number of projects across the Greater London</i></p>

	<p><i>be right for this work to ensure it not only encompasses the impacts of the challenges within the retail sector generally and the needs of existing residents, but also encapsulates the impacts and needs associated with new resident groups emerging in the town centre due to the current and future regeneration developments.</i></p> <p><i>The council will of course take the learnings from site visits undertaken during the course of this scrutiny process to help inform future decisions and direction.</i></p>	<p><i>Authority and delivered a project to transform Brixton Market.</i></p> <p><i>Spacemakers have been working with market representatives, council services including Markets, Neighbourhoods &amp; Communities and Regeneration teams.</i></p> <p><i>A report detailing potential future options for securing the future of the market is expected.</i></p> <p><i>A future agenda item will be scheduled to provide a briefing to the Environment &amp; Economy Select Committee once the report has been received.</i></p>
<p><b>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 1 -</b> That officers revisit this issue with the shops to see what incentives would be required to restore access to the multi-storey car park as this would significantly improve the potential footfall of the market and would also restore a much needed pedestrian route to and from the car park to the town centre.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>Conversations are ongoing with the retailers in question. To date there has been no appetite to reinstate these access routes. Officers will continue to pursue this option and review the incentives that are being offered to encourage agreement.</i></p>	<p><i>Efforts to secure access through the two stores that could facilitate a route to the market will continue, in particular through the council's work and dialogue on the regeneration of the town centre area.</i></p> <p><i>The significant public realm works have been completed to Market Place and Park Place, improving the access routes for all Indoor Market customers.</i></p>
<p><b>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 2 -</b> If the Market is not moving venue as part of the Town Centre Regeneration Plans, then the Council should look at improving the fabric of</p>	<p><i>Officers are currently appraising potential options to improve the market building and fabric of the building. This work will be incorporated into a business plan with</i></p>	<p><i>A future capital bid for works to upgrade the internal fabric of the market building is likely. This will be informed by the findings and recommendations arising from the</i></p>



<p>the building including upgrading the quality of the pitches by replacing the fascia and shutters (with a uniform replacement roller blind or more expensive metal shutters).</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>actions in the individual annual action plans as appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>The council's regeneration plans include actions to enhance the external facades of the indoor market building.</i></p>	<p><i>Spacemakers report regarding potential future options for the market offer.</i></p> <p><i>An update will be provided on this item alongside the briefing to be provided to E&amp;E Select Committee on the Spacemakers report as detailed above.</i></p>
<p><b><u>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 3</u></b> - That officers look at incentives for Market Traders to keep to the opening trading times and days. Members would recommend that the Garages and Market Manager discuss with the MTA altering the current rules of incentives and disincentives to Market Traders to see if this issue can be improved.</p>	<p><i>The council will seek to ensure consistency in opening hours across all stalls within the market to maximise the attraction and offer to customers. The council will take appropriate and proportionate action where trading hours are not being observed and as such compromises efforts to attract footfall and custom.</i></p>	<p><i>The Indoor Market team has been taking a more robust line with operating hours. However, the team has received feedback to suggest that the opening and closing time policy could be acting as a barrier for some potential new market businesses letting stalls.</i></p> <p><i>In view of this, the team is considering the feasibility of a more flexible approach and will be discussing potential options with the Resources Portfolio Holder shortly. This will include whether this approach would support opportunities for alternative and more diverse use e.g. gallery or office space etc. to help improve the financial viability of the asset.</i></p>
<p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>		
<p><b><u>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 4</u></b> - That the Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources discusses with officers in Finance and the Car Parks Manager the options open to varying the parking charges. Members are aware that work is ongoing with the budget</p>	<p><i>The council will be facilitating nine free parking sessions in 2018/19 that align with indoor market or town centre events to encourage footfall. The council has also implemented the reduced price 30 minute parking pilot from 24 April 2017 to facilitate</i></p>	<p><i>Town Centre and Indoor Market Events are aligned to the free parking sessions provided by the council.</i></p> <p><i>Work on a future parking strategy continues and the 30 minute parking pilot</i></p>

<p>process regarding parking options, and would therefore recommend that all await the outcome of those proposals beyond the initial MSCP 30 minute trial that has been taking place this year, before making any further recommendations on this issue.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>“pop-in” visits to the market</i></p> <p><i>Officers are currently working on a parking strategy for the Borough. This work will incorporate consideration of the relationship between parking tariffs and footfall within the indoor market and the town centre more generally.</i></p>	<p><i>remains in place at this time.</i></p>
<p><b>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 5 -</b> That officers discuss with the Town Centre Manager ways to further enhance and incorporate the Indoor Market with Town Centre events that are organised by the Town Centre Manger.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>The Town Centre Manager is currently finalising the 2018 programme of events for the town centre. The programme and events are being connected to the Indoor Market wherever possible; it also includes specific market focussed events such as “Love your local market” and “Celebrating 45 years of Stevenage Indoor Market. Nine free parking sessions are proposed between April and December that align with town centre events.</i></p> <p><i>The council has purchased a marquee for the Market Traders Association to use in the Town Centre area to promote the Indoor Market. Officers have also facilitated free of charge pitch licences for this.</i></p>	<p><i>The Town Centre Manager and Markets and Estates Officer continue to meet on a regular basis to coordinate town centre and market events. Planning for the 2019 events programme has begun and will be aligned to the free parking session as before.</i></p> <p><i>The marquee continues to be available for use by market traders. The free town centre pitch licences have been used a few times by traders this year.</i></p>
<p><b>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 6 -</b> That officers discuss with the MTA ways to encourage a wider diversity of traders available in the Market.</p>	<p><i>Unfortunately the Market Traders Association has dissolved since the committee made this recommendation. Officers are currently drafting the 2018/19</i></p>	<p><i>The Indoor Market team has developed an annual action plan but recognise the need to consider wider options for the longer term future of the council. The work being</i></p>

<p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>business plan for the Indoor Market. An action within this plan will be to draft a tenancy strategy that seeks to identify and target particular sectors of the business market to encourage new traders and enhance the existing offer.</i></p>	<p><i>undertaken by Spacemakers will inform the development of a longer term (three year) business plan for the market.</i></p>
<p><b><u>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 7</u></b> – That officers consider a staggered rent for new traders.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>The business plan referenced at recommendation six will incorporate initiatives and incentives to encourage new traders. The council currently offers subsidised rents for the first six months for new traders to encourage take up. The business plan will consider further options such as shorter leases and staggered rents as suggested.</i></p>	<p><i>The council has introduced a new struggling trader rate that can be applied for any business that may be experiencing financial viability. Up to six months subsidised rent can be applied where a review of the companies account confirms feasibility issues.</i></p> <p><i>Staggered rents have been assessed and were not considered viable at this time.</i></p> <p><i>The council previously offered a casual trader option. This allowed up to ten trading sessions a year. The council covers the cost of Public Liability Insurance for the traders during these sessions. Despite regular advertising this option had limited take up. In view of this the market team rebranded this option as “Pop Up Stalls” and increased the number of trading sessions to up to 40 a year. This has proven to be more popular with three to four traders a month taking this up.</i></p>
<p><b><u>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 8</u></b> –</p>	<p><i>Officers continually review best practice</i></p>	<p><i>The council is a member of the National</i></p>

<p>That officers approach other traders from different markets or other settings.  <b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>and liaise with the industry bodies (National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and also with the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF)) to ensure we keep apprised of new ideas and innovative solutions.</i></p>	<p><i>Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and actively considers its advice and best practice recommendations in decisions pertaining to the operation of the Indoor Market.</i></p>
<p><b><u>SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATION 9</u></b> –  That officers further promote other uses of void spaces and to casual traders.  <b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>Officers are currently considering options for alternative uses of void spaces. Options will range from decorating the void space to improve the look and feel to promoting use for local arts projects etc. This work will be encapsulated within the annual business plan.</i></p>	<p><i>Void rates continue to fluctuate and traders can provide just 28 days' notice to terminate their licence.</i></p> <p><i>The Indoor Market Section works hard to keep existing traders and attract new traders to the market. However, external factors are a key determinant in this, e.g. challenging conditions in the retail sector and traders retiring etc. This said the team has secured a number of new traders since the review was undertaken:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Tattooist – four stalls</i></li> <li><i>• Pet supplies - one stall</i></li> <li><i>• Fancy Dress - reserved two stalls</i></li> </ul> <p><i>There are two traders who started as a pop up stall and they have converted to being permanent traders.</i></p>
<p><b><u>LONG TERM RECOMMENDATION 1</u></b> - That options for a future alternative location for the indoor market be included in the town centre regeneration plans.</p>	<p><i>Officers will continue to consider and review alternative options with regeneration colleagues.</i></p>	<p><i>The relocation of the Indoor Market is currently not considered to be a viable option. However, this will continue to be evaluated as plans for the regeneration of</i></p>

<p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>		<p><i>the town centre area develop.</i></p>
<p><b>LONG TERM RECOMMENDATION 2</b> – (i) That the Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources discuss with officers the possibility of a future acquisition of the freehold for a suitable town square retail building creating an arcade linking the town centre square with the Indoor Market entrance; (ii) If an arcade link to the Indoor Market is not viable either because of the building configurations or for financial reasons, then the purchase of a smaller retail site with footfall from the town centre be considered for a smaller reconfigured market with a focus on business start-ups in conjunction with an outdoor market offer in the regenerated Town Centre.</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>Unfortunately, this is not considered a viable option at this time. The principle of creating access to the market via an arcade is understood, however there is concern that the introduction of further stalls in this area would introduce further external competition to the traders located within the market building.</i></p> <p><i>An alternative location for a smaller reconfigured indoor market has not been identified or considered viable at this point.</i></p>	<p><i>The council's position remains the same as previously reported by the Portfolio Holder for Resources.</i></p>
<p><b>LONG TERM RECOMMENDATION 3</b> – That officers consider approaching an independent company to administrate the market on a commercial basis for the Council</p> <p><b>Action: Garages &amp; Markets Manager Carlo Perricone / AD Craig Miller</b></p>	<p><i>The council is committed to operating the Indoor Market and the efforts to maintain the viability of this operation. The council will keep an open mind to this option and will review its applicability in the future. It is however not considered an option at this point.</i></p>	<p><i>The council's position remains the same as previously reported by the Portfolio Holder for Resources.</i></p>



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank