

**Executive Member Response To Neighbourhood Centres Scrutiny Review**

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

Environment & Economy Select Committee, Wednesday 13 January 2020  
(circulated Monday 1 March 2020)

**Date responses should be made by:**

Executive responses on behalf of the Executive Portfolio Holders for:  
Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council; Environment & Regeneration; Economy, Enterprise & Transport;  
Communities, Community Safety and Equalities; Resources should be received by Friday 30 April 2020

**Recommendations:**

**Executive Response:**

**RECOMMENDATION 1** - Small scale timely interventions are made to maintain each area using what means are at the Council's disposal including its current regime of routine maintenance, cleansing, repair and using existing budgets or where appropriate the use of ward Members Local Community Budgets via funding bids as well as local County Councillors LCBs.

Co-operative Neighbourhood teams will work with ward Members and local residents to shape Community Plans over the coming months.

Each community plan will identify areas of environmental / physical improvement within neighbourhoods and will include reference to Neighbourhood Centres where these have been identified as a priority, with interventions and actions identified and clear resource

	<p>and timescale monitors. This will include all relevant Council service areas and will focus on both existing resources and budget allocations and the securing of additional resources through Local Community Budgets, HCC Locality Budgets or grant funding pursued by local community groups.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Working will ensure that this is routinely reviewed at the Neighbourhood Strategic Board, as the physical appearance of Neighbourhood Centres may be noted as a priority or concern, and should be the subject of an annual visual inspection, to ensure needed improvements are identified, and followed up. This will also feature within the Communities &amp; Neighbourhoods service plan.</p>
<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION 2</u></b> - Approach partner authorities/partner bodies to hold them to account for failure to maintain infrastructure.</p>	<p>SBC will work with partner authorities and infrastructure providers to ensure that their infrastructure in Stevenage for which we all rely is properly invested in and suitably maintained.</p> <p>Where suitable / appropriate, key actions will be incorporated into the respective Cooperative Neighbourhood Community Plans.</p>
<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION 3</u></b> - That the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management approach to addressing local issues in the Neighbourhood Centres be monitored by the Executive Member with Portfolio responsibility for Neighbourhoods and Co-Operative Working to see if this is working (perhaps with a short report back in a year to monitor progress and see if the interventions are</p>	<p>Community Plans will identify improvements to Neighbourhood Centres where they have been put forward as a priority for investment or improvement. The progress of these plans will be monitored in each neighbourhood. In addition, the Co-operative Neighbourhood Strategic Board is chaired by the Portfolio Holder will maintain oversight on progress across all six neighbourhoods</p>

<p>timely and the resources are adequate to remedy problems that are identified at the Neighbourhood Centres).</p>	<p>and will seek to remedy issues which might arise for the timely delivery of interventions, subject to funding availability.</p>
<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION 4</u></b> - That each Neighbourhood Centre area establishes a friends group to help with projects and community gardens at each Centre.</p>	<p>The Community Development team will work with ward Members, businesses and local residents to develop local ownership over Neighbourhood Centres where the need has been identified. This may include Friends of Groups or may also include sponsored community clean up days or associated activity groups. The form of the group would not be prescribed but the purpose of achieving community ownership would be fundamental to this process.</p>
<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION 5</u></b> - That when Members have met with the Head of Estates and the Assistant Director Housing Development they will then be able to include a relevant recommendation in regard of these plans.</p>	<p>The visioning and proposition for the Neighbourhood Centres will need to align with planning policy and changing consumer and community preferences for shopping, living and community activities in a post Covid environment. Work in this area will begin to develop over the summer months, working closely with Members and engagement with the Cooperative Neighbourhood teams. It is proposed that Officers meet with Members of the Environment and Economy Select Committee in Quarter 3, 2021 – 2022.</p>