

# STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Date: Monday 16 January 2018**

**Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage**

**Present:** Councillors: M Downing (Chair), M Hurst (Vice-Chair), R Broom, J Brown, L Chester, J Fraser, A McGuinness and L Briscoe

**Start and End Time:** Start Time: 6:00 pm  
End Time: 6:50 pm

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

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J Lloyd CC and L Harrington. Cllr J Fraser apologised for lateness (Cllr Fraser joined the meeting at 6.30pm).

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. MINUTES – 22 NOVEMBER 2017**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 22 November 2017, be approved as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

### **3. FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDOOR MARKET REVIEW**

The Garages & Markets Manager, Carlo Perricone provided an update on some of the issues raised in the report. Members were informed that retailers Boots and Wilkinson's had responded to the Council's request to enter into an agreement allowing access at the rear of the stores. Both retail chains had indicated that such an arrangement would not be in their favour and they would not be pursuing it. The Garages & Markets Manager informed Members that he had met with most of the traders to appraise them on the work of the MTA and some aspects of the review. The Garages & Markets team was working with the Town Centre Manager, Tina Benson, to include the indoor market in the planning of town centre events.

Members welcomed the report and suggested that paragraph 3.4.2 be re-phrased. The Garages & Markets Manager informed Members that the Council would continue to use a monthly newsletter for sharing information with market traders. Members were informed that a meeting had been scheduled to update all traders on the Indoor Market Review and to update

traders on the MTA committee. It was noted that not all stalls had shutters and there was no consistency in security arrangements. It was suggested that upgrades to stalls in the middle of the market could attract more traders and reduce the number of voids.

The Assistant Director Direct Services, Craig Miller informed the Committee that the report findings and recommendations would be incorporated into the Council's plan to improve market viability. The Assistant Director also indicated that the Council was working on setting clear parameters of its working relationship with traders and managing expectations.

It was moved and seconded that Long Term Recommendation 2 be deleted from the report because it would not be a sound use of Council resources. In opposing the motion, it was highlighted that the recommendation would provide easy access to the indoor market particularly for public transport users.

A vote on the proposed motion was taken. Four (4) Members voted against the motion, one (1) voted for the motion and there were two (2) abstentions. The motion was not carried.

The Chair concluded by thanking the Members and the Garages & Markets Manager for their work on the review and the Garages & Markets Manager's overall work on the indoor market.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The report be noted
- (ii) The Scrutiny Officer amend paragraph 3.4.2 of the report and submit the amendments to the Chair for approval

#### **4. FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation), Zayd Al-Jawad, informed the Committee that the report had been commissioned following Members' concerns about flooding in some parts of the town. The report was aimed at informing Members of the status of flood risk management in Stevenage and the need for further flood risk management work.

The report author, Debbie Horner (Senior Planning Officer), highlighted key issues in the report. Members were informed that flood hotspots had been identified and that Council was holding discussions with developers regarding flood risk management plans. The Senior Planning Officer indicated that developers were now required to consider the highest flood and environmental risk scenarios in development plans. There was a concern about brownfield sites in Stevenage. The Committee was informed that the Environment Agency had produced the Thames River Basin Management Plan, a strategic document looking at high level flood risk across the Thames basin. Following Hertfordshire County Council's Surface Water Management Plan assessment in November 2017, Stevenage would be considered in Phase 3 and an assessment would be carried out in

2019/20. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was conducted on several sites in Stevenage. The Senior Planning Officer informed Members that flood risk assessment was now a requirement for all new developments. Members were informed that green roofs and walls, as a form of Sustainable urban Drainage System, could be incorporated into plans so as to reduce the risk of flooding and surface water runoff in urban areas.

The Executive Portfolio holder for Environment and Regeneration, Councillor John Gardner, welcomed the report and commended the co-operation of local authorities within the region. He acknowledged that, in general, there was clarity on the respective flood risk management responsibilities for Hertfordshire County Council and the town.

The Chair and Members welcomed the report. Members highlighted flood-prone sites in their wards, the rapid conversion of grass areas to concrete developed areas, planning application approvals for developments on water meadows and poor drainage close to highways. Members indicated that since it was a public document, the report should contain simple terminology, clear colour maps and less frequent use of acronyms. Members also sought clarification on the Rye Mead Water Cycle Review.

In response to Members, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the flood-prone sites that had been highlighted by Members had not been covered because the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out in areas earmarked for new developments. The Committee was informed that poor maintenance caused flooding in some sites that were close to highways. The Senior Planning Officer indicated that Rye Mead was near capacity and that the Council has discussed the issue with Thames Water.

The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) sought clarification on whether support was required in drafting a planning policy to support Sustainable Development Systems (SuDS).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the report be noted
- (ii) the Committee endorse the analysis contained in the report and welcomed the co-operation with North and East Hertfordshire councils on this issue
- (iii) the report be commended to the Executive highlighting the need to address issues raised
- (iv) the report be forwarded to the Planning and Development Committee for reference
- (v) the report author provide Members with a glossary of terms used in the report
- (vi) The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) share with the Environment & Economy Select Committee and Planning and Development Committee a planning policy regarding support for

SuDS

**5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None

**6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required

**7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**