

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 24 March 2015

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage SG1 1HN

Present: Councillors: J Hollywell (Chair), P Bibby (Vice-Chair), D Bainbridge, L Bell, L Briscoe, J Brown, C Saunders, G Snell and P Stuart.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
End Time: 6.45 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 24 FEBRUARY 2015

It was noted that the Committee's review on the maintenance of trees, hedges and shrub beds had been cited by the Executive as an excellent piece of scrutiny work and had had a direct influence in the proposals that were going forward to the Executive to triple the New Homes Bonus funding to rejuvenate shrub beds and hedges in the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 24 February 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. 2015-2016 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Committee considered a report regarding its workplan for the 2015/2016 Municipal Year.

The Committee discussed the ideas that had come forward from Members for reviews in the forthcoming year.

It was considered that a number of the suggestions that had been put forward had been addressed in other recent reviews, these included issues around recycling and litter bins etc. It was also accepted that some matters raised would probably best be addressed by providing briefings for the Committee, for example legal provisions and the role of the Council, the County Council and the Environment Agency in relation to fly tipping and littering etc.

With reference to the suggestion regarding the cultivation of wild grass meadow flowers along selected verges, the Committee was informed that the Councillor Bainbridge was having an on-going discussion with the Environmental Performance and Development Manager and it would not be a matter for the Committee to address.

An additional suggestion for a scrutiny study had been the Business Technology Centre (BCT). The study could consider whether the work of the BCT still addressed the business start-up and employment needs of the Town and whether businesses were moving on from the Centre. Members were of the view that this would be a valid and useful study.

A suggestion to undertake a scrutiny of the East Coast Mainline was positively considered, but following advice from the Strategic Director (Environment) it was noted that such a study would best be undertaken in the Municipal Year 2016/2017.

The Strategic Director (Environment) informed the meeting that a report on an Energy and Sustainability Strategy would be going to an early meeting of the Executive in the next Municipal Year and if time allowed it would come forward as a Policy Development item for Members of the Committee to consider. Additionally further work was to be undertaken on the Council's recycling arrangements and this would also be coming as a Policy Development item.

Concerning review of earlier scrutiny studies the Committee indicated that it would like an update on the implementation of the Green Travel Plan and to revisit the recommendations that came out of the study on the use of garage compounds for residential parking.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That feedback from the Scrutiny Evaluation Questionnaire completed by Members be noted.
2. That the Business Technology Centre be the focus of the Committee's Scrutiny Study for 2015/2016 and additionally the Committee receive a briefing on legal provisions and the role of the Council, the County Council and the Environment Agency in relation to fly tipping and littering etc.
3. That Committee receive an update in September/October 2015 on the implementation of the Green Travel Plan and the recommendations made in relation to the review undertaken in 2011/2012 concerning the use of garage compounds for residential parking.
4. That it be noted that Policy Development briefings on an Energy and Sustainability Strategy and aspects of Recycling may be coming to the Committee Members in the next Municipal Year.
5. That a scrutiny study on the East Coast Mainline be included in proposals coming

forward for work in 2016/2017.

6. That the discussions between Councillor Bainbridge and the Environmental Performance and Development Manager concerning the cultivation of wild grass meadow flowers along selected verges be noted.

4. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

At this juncture the Chair indicated that as this was her last meeting in that role she took opportunity to thank Members and officers, particularly Stephen Weaver, Scrutiny Officer and Lee Myers, Head of Environmental Services for the work undertaken over the last two years.

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR