

Template Scoping Document

Community Select Committee	
Scrutiny Review Title:	Allotments
Background issues to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	Members raised the issue of scrutinising allotments when the committee agreed items for the work programme in March 2016.
Is the issue highlighted as one of the Council's corporate aims and objectives of the Council's Corporate Strategy , – 'Sharing the Dividends'? If so which one:	There is a commitment in the 2013-18 Corporate Strategy, 'Sharing the Dividends', with regard to an improved Environment, "We will work with local organisations, partners and residents to promote and maintain Stevenage's environment", and "We will encourage residents to take part in their local area and help us to manage and support the natural environment in Stevenage. We will continue to work with partners to ensure that future development and growth of the town is not at the expense of the green environment."
Is this issue covered by the Future Town Future Council Programme?	There are no specific references in the Future Town Future Council programme.
Is this issue one that raises interest with the public via complaints or Members' surgeries or with Officers?:	There is no history of complaints regarding Allotments.
Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. Officers have suggested the following possible Options:</i></p> <p><i>Suggested areas to cover:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How well are the current arrangements with Stevenage Garden & Allotments Association (SG&AA) administering the running of the allotments scheme since they took over its administration some 18 months ago?</i> • <i>What are the future plans for Stevenage Allotments?</i> • <i>How secure is the future of Stevenage Allotments, pressure to use land for residential</i>

	<p><i>use?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are there good practices as a Co-operative Council that could be replicated elsewhere?</i> • <i>Are there examples of best practice in other authorities re allotments that could be adopted in Stevenage?</i> • <i>Numbers on the waiting list</i> <p><i>Some questions that Members may wish to ask:</i></p> <p><u>XXX</u> – Are the current arrangements adequate?</p> <p><u>XXX</u> – How many people are currently on the waiting list? Is this number typical of allotment sites?</p> <p><u>XXX</u> – Are the current arrangements working well for <i>SG&AA members and allotment users?</i></p>
<p><u>Timing issues:</u> Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>Officers will advise at the meeting if there are any timing issues to consider. The review will have to fit in with the timing of the other Select Committee review work programme items.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide <u>dates</u> if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue July 2016 – agree draft scope & receive presentation from officers Interview witnesses - possible date 26 September or on site visit to allotment sites (to be arranged) Site visit to allotment site(s)</p> <p>Date to be agreed – agree recommendations & final report</p>
<p><u>SBC Leads</u> (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD's Heads of Service who should appear as witnesses):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Executive Portfolio Holder(s) for Environment & Regeneration, Cllr John Garnder</i> • <i>Strategic Director Environment, Tom Pike</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Head of Service, Lee Myers</i>
Any other witnesses (external persons/critical friend)?:	To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Critical Friend – Would it be appropriate for this review to invite an officer from another local authority or Allotments Society to speak as a “critical friend”?</i>
<u>Allocation of lead Members</u> on specific individual issues/questions:	To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. Members will ask questions on the following areas (list the issues to address during the interviews):
Any other Questions Members wish to cover:	<u>Equalities & Diversity Issues</u> – Are there any E&D issues to consider in this review? – Are there any specific access arrangements for characteristic groups compared with other members of the community?
<u>Site visits and evidence gathering in the Community</u>	A site visit to one or two allotment sites to meet with users and members of the
<u>Equalities and Diversity issues:</u> The review will consider what the relevant equalities and diversity issues are regarding the Scrutiny subject that is being scrutinised	<i>To be identified by the lead Member – Cllr XXX</i>
<u>Constraints</u> (Issues that have been highlighted at the scoping stage but are too broad/detailed to be covered by the review):	<i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 4 July 2016 (These issues can be captured and dealt with via other means – Briefings/email/officer action etc)</i> Any other matters that are not directly linked to the review into damp and mould should be directed to officers.
<u>Background Documents/data</u> that can be provided to the review	<i>As identified by the Committee at the draft scoping meeting 4 July 2016:</i>

	<p>http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmselect/cmenvtra/560/56011.htm - (Parliamentary Select Committee findings on Allotments)</p> <p>http://www.nsalg.org.uk/growing-advice/how-to-plan-an-allotment/ - (National Allotment Society)</p> <p>http://www.sgaa.co.uk/index.php - (Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association Web Site)</p>
<p><u>Agreed Milestones and review sign off</u> - To be agreed by Members and officers</p>	<p><i>Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date): DD MM YY</i></p> <p><i>Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): DD MM YY</i> (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)</p>