

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday 31 October 2016

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: M Downing (Chair), M Hurst (Vice-Chair),
D Bainbridge, R Broom, J Brown, L Chester,
J Fraser, E Harrington, A McGuinness and P Stuart

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7:05 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence nor any declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 29 SEPTEMBER 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 29 September 2016 are signed by the Chair.

3. MINUTES – 12 OCTOBER 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 12 October 2016 are signed by the Chair.

4. REVISIT TO RECOMMENDATIONS AND AGREED ACTIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS AND FIXED PENALTY NOTICES (DOG FOULING)

The Environmental Performance & Development Manager informed the meeting that since 2013 when the Council ran a campaign to educate dog owners, there had been a significant fall in incidents of dog fouling. The Officer advised that posters suitable for the summer and winter months, warning against dog fouling had been installed in 40 locations within the nine hotspots in town.

The meeting was advised that in the last 6 months a dozen fixed penalty notices had been issued in relation to fly tipping and littering as it had been on the increase, however no fixed penalty notices were issued for dog fouling as it was difficult to catch offending dog owners. Members were informed that although housing and private tenants received information pack detailing their responsibilities regarding recycling and refuse, no information was provided on dog fouling or fly tipping, however the Officer

advised that in most cases a warning letter to residents had a positive outcome.

In response to concerns about dog fouling around school playing fields, Members were advised that schools were not within the remit of SBC Environmental Officers but Hertfordshire County Council.

In response to a question on responsibilities of owners of horses, the Officer advised that no regulation existed that covered horse droppings but he would provide Members with information relating to the issue.

Officers agreed to circulate the figures showing the reduction in numbers of dog fouling incidents since the 2013 campaign was undertaken.

5. REVISIT TO RECOMMENDATIONS AND AGREED ACTIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO MAINTENANCE OF TREES, HEDGES & SHRUB BEDS

The Arboriculture and Conservation Manager informed Members that following the review of trees in 2015, the Environmental Services Team in conjunction with Housing Tenancy Team had now implemented an integrated maintenance service for all types of trees across the town.

Members were advised that as the Housing Revenue Account trees in the town had not been maintained to the same standard as the general fund trees for over a long period, the scheduled works for the trees would be completed within 2-3 years.

With regards to the continued funding of the combined maintenance programme, Members were advised that there were no guarantees that the service would continue as this would be subject to the HRA funding priorities.

In response to questions on the works schedule for the maintenance of shrub beds across the town, the Officer indicated that ward councillors would be notified of works scheduled in their area before work commences, and that a map of showing planned works would be circulated to Members.

On the issue of licences to occupy, the Head of Environmental Services informed the meeting that following the review no solution had been found to simplify the process. Councillor M Hurst encouraged ward councillors to assist with improving amenity spaces within residential areas, by working with their local residents using awards from Local Community Budgets to improve areas.

In response to a Member request officers agreed to inspect the maintenance of shrub beds around Burns Close and to provide details of this inspection to the local ward councillors.

6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

8. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR