

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday 18 January 2017

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: M Downing (Chair), M Hurst (Vice-Chair),
R Broom, J Brown, E Harrington and P Stuart.
Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 6.15 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bainbridge, L Chester, J Fraser and A McGuinness.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 15 NOVEMBER 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 15 November 2016 are approved and signed by the Chair.

3. REVIEW OF ALLOTMENTS

The Committee were asked to consider the report and recommendations of the review into the Allotments.

Members welcomed the content of the report, that it reflected the review findings.

The Scrutiny Officer advised Members that an additional recommendation had been included relating to future improvements for disabled plot holders.

It was **RESOLVED**

1. That the findings of the review, contained within this report and the recommendations below be presented to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration and the Strategic Director (Environment) and that a response be provided from these and any other named officers and partners within two months of the publishing of this report.
2. That Members and officers work with the Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association and local schools to establish ways to

encourage young people to take up gardening and keeping allotments, as a way of widening the demographics of allotment users.

3. That officers explore the possibility of working with Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association to explore the possibility of Community Ownership of Allotments.
4. That officers revisit the current Appeals arrangements to improve and speed up the process.
5. That officers discuss with Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association ways in which overgrown allotments might be tidied up (without using a cultivator that spread weeds) to encourage new allotment hirers to take on allotment strips.
6. That officers work with the Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association to consider ways in which new allotment hirers could be trained to gain the basic understanding and knowledge to work an allotment successfully.
7. That officers consider what measures can be taken to direct allotment holders to publicly available toilets in the area as any further onsite provision is not viable within the current budgetary restraints, but better information such as a map would be helpful.
8. That, building on the achievements already made, officers consider along with Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association, ways in which the security can be improved and vandalism designed out of the allotment sites.
9. That a detailed breakdown of the internal service charges be provided to Members of the E&E Select Committee in order that they can better understand why this makes up the largest proportion of the Allotment services overall costs.
10. That improved facilities for disabled plot holders will be monitored by Members when they revisit the review at a future meeting of the Environment & Economy Select Committee.

4. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not Required.

6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR