

# STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 4 November 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Sarah Mead (Chair) (Chair), Margaret Notley (Vice-Chair) (Vice Chair), Adrian Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Alex Farquharson, Liz Harrington, John Mead, Claire Parris and Loraine Rossati

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 6.00pm  
End Time: 7.15pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest.

### 2 MINUTES - TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 17 September 2019 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 3 SPORTS & LEISURE SCRUTINY REVIEW

Members reported back to the Committee on the evidence gathered for the Scrutiny Review into Sports and Leisure.

John O'Callaghan, Herts Sports Partnership and Jen Jeffries, Chair of the Youth Council were in attendance at the meeting. Apologies had been received from Louise Gallagher-Smith, Sporting Futures.

Members were presented with survey responses from the Youth Council and from Member residents' survey regarding Sports and Leisure across Stevenage and some Member responses to their own desktop and fact finding research.

Councillor Margaret Notley, Vice-Chair of the Committee gave a report to the Committee in relation to Leisure Provision in Stevenage for Older People. Her findings included:

- That there were a wide range of activities across the town at different venues including the Leisure Centre, the Golf Course, Swimming Pool, community centres, social clubs and gyms;
- That the Gordon Craig was a popular venue, reasonably priced with age concessions although there have been issues with the sound in the theatre;
- That walking was a favourite leisure pursuit with the over 50's. The Leisure 50

Walking Group was free to join and organised walks of varying lengths;

The Chair circulated her observations following a number of site visits and a number of potential recommendations were suggested regarding accessibility issues including:

- Possible subsidies for residents for activities such as sailing or the climbing wall at Fairlands Valley park (FVP);
- Apprenticeships to be extended eg. Saturday positions for young people;
- The possibility of funding via a grant system weight loss referrals which some patients are required to pay for making the referrals not cost effective;
- The development of packages in conjunction with the café, to attract families around some of the activities in FVP;
- Clearer advertising around the cycle hub;
- A review of both the parking provision and the toilet/changing room provision at the aquapark.

In addition to these issues, the Chair raised the issue as a possible recommendation around a plus one offer and providing links from the Council's website to local clubs and in particular free events.

Councillor Callaghan agreed to provide a written report on her findings to the next meeting of the Committee.

John O' Callaghan from Herts Sports Partnership commended the Council as leading in the area of sport and leisure provision in the County and for the level of engagement the Council maintained with the Sports Partnership.

He advised that there was now evidence to prove the links between participation in sport and leisure and the improvement in educational attainment and reduction in levels of school truancy.

John also advised Members that the Sports Partnership was working on an activity finder as part of their website which should go live before the end of the year.

The Leisure Services Manager advised that the Council was continuously looking at opportunities for change and adapting the sports and leisure offer to meet needs.

Councillor John Mead acknowledged that financial difficulty was the biggest barrier to participation in sports and leisure activities.

In response to a question about the provision of football pitches around the town, it was agreed that there was a need for additional 3G pitches. The Leisure Services Manager advised that the 3G pitch at the Valley was a good facility but had limited community use. Two potential sites at Chells Pavillion and at Ridlins Playing Fields were being considered as additional sites.

In relation to a question about basketball hoops, officers agreed to look into the costs of installation within parks and report back.

The take-up of sport by women and girls was discussed. It was noted that both the Park Run and membership of local running clubs had a high percentage of women participants.

The Chair of the Youth Council spoke about the activities and leisure provision which representatives from the Youth Council would like including equipment/areas in parks for older children, activities in parks including local bands and youth clubs to go to with friends.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Scrutiny Officer include the feedback given at the meeting including the recommendations raised by the Chair regarding accessibility issues, in the Scrutiny review report;
2. That any further written research or reports be submitted to the Scrutiny Officer prior to the next meeting;
3. That the Leisure Services Manager be asked to provide information relating to the cost of the installation of basketball hoops in parks;
4. That John O' Callaghan and Jen Jeffries be thanked for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

4 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

5 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

6 **PART II MINUTES - TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the Community Select Committee meeting held on 17 September 2019 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

7 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**