

Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda



Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Standing panel Tuesday, 24th June, 2008

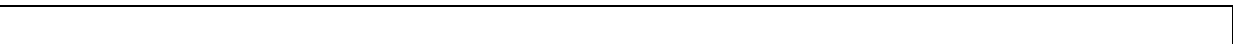
Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry, Office of the Chief Executive
email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564246

Members:

Councillors M Colling (Chairman), G Pritchard (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, K Chana, Miss R Cohen, R Frankel, Ms J Hedges, D Jacobs, J Philip, Mrs P Richardson and Mrs L Wagland



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 3 - 6)

Recommendation:

(1) That the terms of reference for this Scrutiny Panel be agreed and submitted to the 10 July 2008 meeting of then Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

(2) That the Panel agree a preferred starting time for the Panel.

1. At its meeting held on 10 April 2008, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the setting of this new Standing Scrutiny Panel, by splitting the Environment and Planning Standing Panel and adding in the Crime and Disorder Task and Finish Panel. Draft Terms of Reference have been proposed by the Chairman of the Panel in consultation with the Lead Officer. These are attached, which the Panel is asked to agree.

2. Once agreed the Terms of reference will be submitted to the July meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their ratification.

3. For completeness, the terms of reference of its (former) sister Panel, the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel is also attached for information.

4. The Panel is asked to agree a preferred starting time for Panel meetings.

5. A work programme will be drawn up brought to the next meeting for information.

5. BACKGROUND REPORT (Pages 7 - 12)

(Director of Environment and Street Scene) To consider to attached report.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the forward programme of meeting dates for the Panel. They are:

02nd September 2008;
21st October 2008;
09th December 2008;
24th February 2009; and
21st April 2009.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: Safer, Cleaner, Greener

Status: Standing Panel

Terms of Reference:

1. To approve and keep under review the “Safer, Cleaner, Greener” initiative development programme.

(Note: this development programme will encompass the three main issues and will therefore include matters such as:

- (i) environmental enforcement activity***
- (ii) safer communities activities***
- (iii) waste management activities (in addition to WMPB information)***

2. To keep under review the activity and decisions of the West Essex Joint Waste Committee.
3. To receive reports from the Waste Management Partnership Board in respect of the operation of and performance of the waste management contract
4. To monitor and keep under review the Nottingham Declaration “action plan” and the Council’s progress towards the preparation and adoption of a sustainability policy and to receive progress reports on the Council’s Climate Change Strategy from the Green Working Group
5. To monitor the recommendations of the 2005/06 Task and Finish Panel on parking in residential areas in respect of wider parking enforcement issues only.
6. To receive, review and comment upon County Council Highways strategic policies on speed and freight management
7. (Subject to Cabinet approval of the Group) to receive and review the reports of the Bobbingworth Tip Management Group

Chairman: Cllr M Colling

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TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: Planning Services

Status: Standing Panel

Terms of Reference:

1. To consider matters which arise through the process that the Government is driving to bring in an East Of England Plan as issued in May 2008; these may range from how to respond to the initiatives or views of those who support or oppose us, and how we may support or oppose the views taken by others, and how to work in partnership with others to secure delivery of the plan with adequate infrastructure. In particular, this is to allow the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development to remain tuned in to local views.
2. In association with 1, to keep an overview of work associated with securing a sound New Local Development Framework.
3. To consider what changes are practical and desirable to Council policies concerning the reuse of redundant and other buildings in the Metropolitan Green Belt; in particular, are further restrictions necessary (changes in policy required) to ensure that such developments are truly sustainable.
4. To keep an overview on transport matters that were the subject of a focus day in Nazeing in March 2007, and the action plan in respect thereof.
5. To consider in detail the provision of Value for Money within the following Planning Services focusing specifically on:
 - Development Control (including Appeals)
 - Forward Planning
 - Building Control
 - Enforcement
 - Administration and Customer Support
 - Economic Development
 - Environment TeamTo gather evidence and information in relation to these functions through the receipt of:
 - performance monitoring documents,
 - Best Value Review of Planning Services (updated version)
 - benchmarking exercises,
 - consultation with Planning Committee Members, customers and IT Suppliers.To identify problems, possible solutions, barriers to success;
To review the measures introduced since 2004 to improve performance within Development Control namely the success of
 - the 'Hit Squad',
 - the Service restructure(s),
 - the new IT system
 - the application of the Planning Delivery Grant.To consider whether the reporting arrangements for all of the above matters and

those for the Section 106s, and appeals are sufficient (including how new legislation impacts on these) and to recommend accordingly.

To evaluate all relevant facts in relation to the topics under review in an objective way and to produce recommendations for future action accordingly;

To establish whether there are any resource implications arising out of the topics under review and advise Cabinet for inclusion in the Budget Process 2008/09;

To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at appropriate intervals and to submit an interim report on Development Control in the June 2008 cycle, and a final report on all matters by March 2009.

6. To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council and the Cabinet with recommendations on matters allocated to the Panel as appropriate.

Chairman: Cllr Mrs Wagland

Report to Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 24 June 2008

Subject: Background information report

Officer contact for further information: J Gilbert

Committee Secretary: A Hendry



Recommendation:

To note the position on the issues highlighted within the Panel's terms of reference

Report:

1. Since this is the first meeting of the newly established Panel, it was considered prudent to prepare a report setting out the position regarding the main issues highlighted in the Panel's terms of reference. Further reports will then be brought forward throughout the year as the safer, cleaner, greener initiative takes further shape and moves forward.

The Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative

2. Safer, cleaner, greener was adopted by Cabinet at its meeting in November 2007 (Minute ref: 110 – 12 November 2007). Cabinet, at its meeting in February 2008 received a detailed report setting out the possible objectives for the new initiative and the resources which would be required. Cabinet resolved as follows:

(1) *That, in support of the Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, approval be given to:*

(a) *the following additions to the establishment of:*

(i) *one CCTV Operations Officer;*

(ii) *two Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Officers;*

(iii) *one Environment & Neighbourhood Officer; and*

(iv) *a Rapid Response Unit;*

(b) *the associated proposals for training, service branding, equipment, vehicles and on-going running and maintenance costs; and*

(c) *the continued development of the waste and recycling service to include a review of the garden waste collection service and the collection of food waste as a recyclable material;*

(2) *That approval be given to the following for inclusion in the 2008/09 budget:*

(a) *a revenue Continuing Services Budget growth bid in the sum of £250,000;*

(b) *a revenue District Development Fund growth bid in the sum of £30,450; and*

(c) *a capital growth bid in the sum of £23,000; and*

(3) *That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to consider the most appropriate means of monitoring the Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative.*

3. Progress has been made in developing the new establishment to underpin the initiative with the following appointments:

- (i) Safer Communities Manager: Caroline Wiggins
- (ii) Safer Communities Officer: Paul Gardener
- (iii) Neighbourhood and Environment Manager: Richard Gardiner

All the posts in the relevant sections have now been prepared for job evaluation and appointments will be made over the next few weeks. This may take some time with respect to posts which will have to be advertised externally such as the CCTV Operations Officer and the Anti-Social behaviour Investigator posts. Once appointments have been completed arrangements will be made to commence training officers so that they can be accredited under the Essex Police Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. Officers are researching appropriate vehicles for the provision of the Rapid Response Vehicle and a decision on this is anticipated very shortly. At an appropriate time it is intended that the service be formally "launched".

West Essex Joint Committee

4. The role of the Panel is to receive the minutes of the West Essex Joint Committee and to review the decisions made. The process of the procurement of the new disposal contracts is entering a critical phase with all Essex Authorities being required to take some fundamental and long lasting decisions over the next 6 to 12 months. These will include:

- (a) agreeing the Essex Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy; and
- (b) the Inter Authority Agreement between the Council and the County Council, which will bind the Council to performance standards in respect of type, nature and quality of recyclable materials to be delivered into the County facilities.

Waste Management Partnership Board

5. This is the Board established through the new contract which is charged with managing and developing the services over the life of the contract. The first meeting of the Board has been regrettably delayed through some procedural difficulties with the contract, but the first meeting has now been called and will be held in mid July. This Panel will receive the minutes of the Board meetings which will include service performance and monitoring data.

6. The Board will also be charged with the development of revised arrangements for the collection of garden waste and the introduction of a food waste collection service. These matters were considered in detail by Cabinet at its meeting on the 9th of June. Scrutiny is represented on the Board by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

Nottingham Declaration

7. Following a recommendation by the former Environment & Planning Standing Panel to cabinet, Council adopted the "Nottingham Declaration" in November 2007. The declaration requires the Council to fundamentally review the way it undertakes its business in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and to encourage a more sustainable approach. This is a very challenging agenda which has commenced with the adoption of a Biodiversity Strategy in March 2008. The "Declaration" is attached for information.

8. An officer working party on "green issues" has been established which has the development of a climate change strategy as one of its key pieces of work

Parking issues

9. Parking in residential areas remains a problem in many parts of the district. These problems arise through:
- (i) commuter parking near to London Underground stations;
 - (ii) employee parking in built up areas; and
 - (iii) residential estates which when built were not designed to accommodate the numbers of vehicles which are now required to be parked.

With respect to item (iii) above the management of this issue has transferred to the new Housing Directorate and the Housing Scrutiny Panel is to receive a report on estate parking at its next meeting. This therefore leaves this Panel with a remit in respect of wider parking enforcement issues.

10. The former Panel received a very full report on the problems and potential solutions but it has to be said that the solutions are complex and very resource intensive. Nevertheless there is an anticipation that the Council will endeavour to deal with the difficulties through measures such as:

- (a) the review of local parking restrictions; and
- (b) the provision of additional off street parking provision in areas where it is the landowner.

11. There is also an outstanding matter that fell within the remit of the former Town Centre & Car Parking Task & Finish Panel relating to anti-social behaviour in car parks. This will be dealt with as part of the overall safer, cleaner, greener initiative and reports brought back to the Panel.

Highway issues

12. Currently the County Highway service reports to the Council, from time to time through:

- (i) twice yearly presentations to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- (ii) attendance at this panel from time to time.

It is anticipated that these broad arrangements will continue.

13. There were however a number of specific issues that the former Environment & Planning Panel was taking a particular interest in, these being:

- (a) traffic issues in and around the Nazeing and Roydon areas;
- (b) speed management; and
- (c) (alongside (a)) the proposed review of the countywide freight strategy

These matters remain on-going and reports will be brought forward to this panel in due course. Items (a) and (c) above will also be key considerations for the newly formed Planning Standing Panel in view of their development framework implications

Bobbingworth Tip

13. The remedial works at Bobbingworth Tip are nearing a successful conclusion. Cabinet received a report at its meeting on the 9th of June setting out that all the major engineering works had been completed and that all remaining works revolved around completing the importation of top soil and the completion of the creation of a park environment. Provided the weather through the summer period remains reasonable it is anticipated that works will be completed by the end of the 2008 calendar year.

14. The report to Cabinet recommended the creation of a local group to oversee the

management of the Tip going forwards. This recommendation was accepted and steps are underway to establish its membership. It is suggested that this group should report from time to time into this Panel.

Terms of Reference

15. The terms of reference for this Panel are to be considered on this agenda. However, given the creation of the two new Panels from the former Environment & Planning Panel, the terms of reference of the new Planning Standing Panel have also been included in this agenda so that Members can ensure that no important issues have been overlooked during the transitional period.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Standing Panel

Item	Report / Priority / Deadline	Progress / comments	Programme of future meetings
(1) Safer, cleaner, greener (general) (a) completion of establishment etc formal "launch" (b) accreditation progress (c) enforcement activity			24 June 2008 2 September 2008 21 October 2008 9 December 2008
(2) Safer communities (Safer) (a) CCTV policy (b) anti social behaviour in car parks			24 February 2009 21 April 2009
(2) Essex waste procurement process and Joint Committee (Cleaner, Greener) (a) minutes of joint Committee (b) JMWMS (c) Inter authority agreements			
(3) Waste Management Partnership Board (Greener) (a) minutes of Board (b) review of garden waste (c) introduction of food waste collection (d) recycling in flats and similar buildings			

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Standing Panel

Item	Report / Priority / Deadline	Progress / comments	Programme of future meetings
(4) Nottingham Declaration (Greener) (a) sustainability action plan (b) climate change strategy			
(5) Residential parking (Safer, Greener)			
(6) County highways matters (Safer) (a) NAG (b) speed management (c) freight strategy			
(7) Bobbingworth Tip (Greener) (a) Management Group			