

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monday, 29th November, 2010

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Simon Hill, Senior Democratic Services Officer, The Office of the Chief Executive
email: shill@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564249

Members:

Councillors R Morgan (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, W Breare-Hall, Ms R Brookes, Mrs R Gadsby, Mrs A Grigg, D Jacobs, D C Johnson, G Mohindra, J Philip and J M Whitehouse

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy and copies made available to those who request it..

Therefore by entering the Chamber and using the lower public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for web casting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the upper council chamber public gallery area

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Senior Democratic Services Officer on 01992 564249.

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

1. This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking.

2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“This meeting will be webcast live to the Internet and will be archived for later viewing. Copies of recordings may be made available on request.

By entering the chamber’s lower seating area you consenting to becoming part of the webcast.

If you wish to avoid being filmed you should move to the public gallery or speak to the webcasting officer”

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

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

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). 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.

5. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 10)

Decisions required:

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 October 2010.

6. PRESENTATION FROM YOUTH COUNCIL

(Youth Council Representatives) In 2008/09 the Cabinet had requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual presentation from the Youth Council giving an update on the developing Youth Council programme and to present their request for funding for the year ahead.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - SIX MONTHLY REVIEW (Pages 11 - 34)

To consider the attached report.

8. INTERIM REPORT ON CHILDREN'S TASK AND FINISH PANEL (Pages 35 - 38)

(Councillor Mrs Wagland) To consider an interim report of the Children Services Task and Finish Panel.

9. KEY OBJECTIVES 2010 / 11 - PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 39 - 70)

To consider the attached report.

10. SCRUTINY OF CABINET FORWARD PLAN (Pages 71 - 88)

Recommendation:

To discuss the Cabinet priorities for the year ahead and the forward work programme for 2010/11.

The Overview and Scrutiny rules state that this Committee should "...arrange meetings with the Leader and other Portfolio Holders to discuss their plans for the year ahead and ... agree with them on any items for inclusion in the work programme which may be undertaken by the Committee on the cabinet's behalf".

Accordingly, attached is the latest Executive Work Programme incorporating the Forward Plan.

The Cabinet has determined that it's Corporate Priorities for 2010-11, are:

- (i) To deliver a sound Core Strategy of the local development Framework;
- (ii) To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, through the development and implementation of appropriate initiatives;
- (iii) To further improve the Council's corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people as part of Essex County Council's Children's Trust arrangements;
- (iv) To improve the performance of the Benefits Service;
- (v) To maintain the Council's sound financial position;
- (vi) To achieve the level of savings identified within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy;
- (vii) To work with the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership to further reduce levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the District;
- (viii) To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources;

- (ix) To enable the provision of additional affordable housing in the District and other initiatives to assist people unable to purchase a property on the open market;
- (x) To continue the improvement in the benefit the Council receives from its investment in information and communications technology
- (xi) To continue to increase the Council's recycling performance; and
- (xii) To review the Council's commercial landholdings in order to coordinate competing land use proposals, to fulfill the authority's operational requirements and achieve value for money.

In addition there are a number of further objectives split between the nine Portfolios as detailed in the attached Objectives for 2010/11.

The Leader and Portfolio Holders have been invited to attend this meeting to present their plans and answer questions on their work.

11. STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON DUTY TO RESPOND TO PETITIONS (Pages 89 - 100)

(Councillor Mrs M. MacEwen) To consider the attached report of the Constitution & Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel.

12. NEW HOMES BONUS CONSULTATION

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee grant permission for the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel to report directly to the Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2010 on the Government's consultation document on 'New Homes Bonus'.

On 12 November, Grant Shapps (Minister for Housing) launched a consultation on the Government's Proposed 'New Homes Bonus', where central Government would match the council tax raised from new homes for the first six years. The consultation seeks the views on the implementation of the New Homes Bonus and runs from 12 November to 24 December 2010.

The Consultation document will be going to the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel on 2 December 2010 and because of the tight deadline involved they are seeking this Committee's permission to report directly to the Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2010.

13. CABINET REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION:

To consider any items to be raised by the Chairman at the Cabinet meeting on 06 December 2010.

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). Under the Overview and Scrutiny rules the Committee is required to scrutinise proposed decisions of the Executive. The Chairman is also required to report on such discussions to the Cabinet.

The Committee is asked to consider the 6 December 2010 Cabinet agenda (previously circulated) to see whether there are any items that they wished to be raised at the Cabinet meeting.

14. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Exclusion: To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Paragraph Number	Information
Nil	Nil	Nil	

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement: Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers: Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.