

Report to Council

Date of meeting: 19 February 2008

Subject: Progress Report – February 2008

Chairman: Councillor R Morgan



Recommendation:

That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report from December 2007 to the present be noted.

Report.

The main Overview and Scrutiny Committee

December 2007 Meeting:

1. At its meeting, held on 13 December 2007, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from the Chairman of the Princess Alexandra Hospital on their bid for Foundation Trust Status. Also there was Aidan Thomas, the Chief Executive of the West Essex PCT and John Carr the Vice Chairman of the West Essex PPI Forum, who gave their views on the bid. The Committee upon hearing the argument put forward, expressed their support for the PAH's bid for Foundation Trust Status.

2. The meeting also considered a report on the proposal to instigate a three-week cycle for the Area Planning Sub-committees. The Committee deferred consideration of the report to the January meeting pending a more detailed report and to receive further views of the Town and Parish Councils on this proposal. The Committee also considered a report from the Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel about improving communication and access to information within EFDC for Members, where a number of proposals to enable this were agreed.

January 2008 Meeting:

3. At their meeting on 31 January 2008 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and agreed the draft Portfolio Holders Budget proposals for the coming municipal year which had previously been considered by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel. They also considered the revised report on the proposed three week cycle for the Area Plans Sub-committees, after a close debate the committee recommended to council that provision be made in the Council calendar of meetings for a meeting of each Area Plans Sub-committee every three weeks.

4. The Committee also considered and endorsed the Constitution and Member's Services Standing Panel report on Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 – provisions relating to elections, in which they decided not to pursue the four year option for council district elections. They appointed Councillor Morgan to be the Overview and Scrutiny representative on the Waste Management Board and received a report on Cleaner Neighbourhoods and the Rogers Review that was considered by the Environment and Planning Scrutiny Panel in December. They endorsed the report's recommendations to the

Cabinet.

5. The Council may also wish to know that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have the Police at our March meeting and London Underground at our April meeting.

Standing Panels

6. The 4 Standing Panels each have a rolling programme that consider ongoing cyclical issues and are comprised of the Housing Standing Panel under the Chairmanship of Councillor S Murray; the Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel chaired by Councillor R Church; the Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Jon Whitehouse; and the Environment and Planning Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Mrs Smith.

7. The Housing Standing Panel met on 22nd January 2008. At this meeting they received the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for 2007/08 and an update of the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

8. The Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel met on 11 December 2007. They considered the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and the Electoral Cycle. At their meeting on 15 January 2008 the Panel again considered other parts of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

9. The Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel met on 14th January 2008 when they considered the draft detailed Portfolio Holders Budgets in detail.

10. The Environment and Planning Standing Panel met on 6th December 2007, when they discussed the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act and the Rogers Review.

Task and Finish Panels

11. The Provision of Value for Money within Planning Services Task and Finish Panel met on 3 December 2007 where they were updated on the Best Value Review of Planning Services and received a copy of the BMG Customer Satisfaction Survey.

12. No other Task and Finish Panels have met in this period.