

Report to Council

Date of meeting: 29 July 2008

Subject: OS report to Council

Chairman: Councillor R Morgan

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry, ext.4246



Recommendation:

That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report from June 2008 to the present be noted.

Report

The main Overview and Scrutiny Committee

June 2008 Meeting:

1. The Committee received a presentation from Catherine O'Connell, the Locality Director of the West Essex Primary Care Trust. She appraised the Committee on the background to two proposals of the PCT. One was to develop a GP led health centre for West Essex at Traps Hill Surgery in Loughton; and the other was to improve health services in Chipping Ongar by redeveloping the Ongar War Memorial Hospital.
2. The Committee questioned Ms O'Connell and eventually endorsed the proposals as outlined and welcomed the fact that new money was to be used to finance these schemes. A formal response was submitted to the PCT with the Committee's endorsement.
3. The Committee went on to appoint the members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for the five Standing and two Task and Finish Panels.
4. The meeting also had a first look at the Best Value Performance Plan 2008/09. As it was a work in progress, the Committee confined their consideration to the layout and draft content of the report.
5. Finally the Committee considered the Cabinet Agenda, when the following points were made:
 - A member commented that under item 10, the Loughton High Road Town Centre Enhancement, it should be noted that only the works for Phase 1 and 2 had been completed.
 - The creation of a Conservation Officer post under item 15 was supported.
 - Comments were also made by a Committee member on the reasons for having all of the report for item 20 in private. They thought it should only have been partly restricted, with the majority being publicly available.

July 2008 Meeting:

6. The Committee received a presentation from Lonica Vanclay, the County officer responsible for youth provision in the District. She appraised the committee on how the youth

provision scheme was organised through the district, what kind of work they undertook and how they worked in partnership with outside organisations. Some of the points made were:

- The two teams for the area are now focusing on specific projects;
- Concentrating at present on the Limes Farm estate;
- Their Mobile Bus visits rural areas;
- There were problems with Murray Hall in the summertime, gets too hot during the day.

She went on to answer the questions of the Committee and other councillors that had made a special effort to attend the meeting.

7. The Committee also received the forward plan of the Cabinet. The Leader, Mrs Collins indicated to the Committee the Cabinet's overall priorities for the year and then went through each portfolio, indicating their priority objectives for 2008/09. Some of the highlights were:

- The Cabinet's thrust for next year would be the Safer Cleaner Greener agenda;
- The Council needed their own strategy for North Weald Airfield;
- Improving the CCTV coverage in the District;
- To work in consultation with neighbouring authorities on the East of England Plan;
- Carrying out parking reviews;
- Ensuring that the Council's ICT systems works across all directorates; and
- Reviewing the opportunities that will be presented to the District from the 2012 Olympics.

8. The Committee also agreed the terms of references for the two new Task and Finish Panels (Customer Transformation T&F and the Leisure T&F Panel) and the two new Standing Panels (Planning Services and the Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panels).

Standing Panels

9. Five Standing Panels have been constituted this year, each have a rolling programme that consider ongoing cyclical issues and are comprised of:

1. the Housing Standing Panel under the Chairmanship of Councillor S Murray;
2. the Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Mrs McEwen;
3. the Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel chaired by Councillor D Jacobs;
4. the Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel chaired by Councillor M Colling; and
5. the Planning Services Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Mrs Wagland.

10. The Housing Standing Panel met on 3rd July 2008. At this meeting they considered the Housing BVPI and LPI Performance Indicators; the De-designation of Properties from Older People's Occupation; Ethnic Monitoring; the Private Sector Housing Strategy; Unauthorised Parking on Housing Estates (Members consultation); review of Epping Forest Careline and a Choice Based Lettings 6 month review.

11. The Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel met on 30th June 2008 where they reviewed the 2008 elections and considered the Government Consultation document on moving the date of the 2009 local elections.

12. The Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel met on 17th June 2008 when they considered the Key Performance Indicators 2007/08 and 2008/09; the Capital Outturn 2007/08 and use of Transitional Relief in 2008/09 and the Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2007/08.

13. The Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel met on 24th June 2008, when they agreed their Terms of Reference and draft work Programme for the year.

14. the Planning Services Standing Panel met on 19th June 2008 when they agreed their new Terms of Reference and then held a consultation with Residents associations and Amenity Groups. They will meet again on 15 July to discuss the best value review on Planning Services.

Task and Finish Panels

15. The two new Task and Finish Panels (Customer Transformation and the Leisure Task and Finish Panels) also met to agree their terms of References and their draft work programme for the year ahead.