

Report to Council

Date of meeting: 28 July 2009

Subject: OS report to Council – July 2009

Chairman of the Committee: Councillor Richard Morgan



Recommendation:

That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report from June 2009 to the present be noted.

Report

The main Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 July 2009 Meeting:

1. The meeting received a presentation from Lonica Vanclay and Nigel Varnam the officers from County responsible for youth provisioning. They gave the Committee a run through of the current situation of youth facilities and activities in the district. They were then closely questioned by the Committee and the other members that had attended the meeting.
2. The Committee received reports on the Safer Cleaner Greener Strategy and the Enforcement Policy. They strategy and the policy had recently gone to and were agreed by, the Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Standing Panel. The Committee endorsed both the Strategy and the Enforcement Policy.
3. The Assistant Director Technical Services (Environment and Street Scene) gave the Committee a short presentation on the latest government consultation on Flood and Water Management. Because of the very tight deadline this came straight to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and bypassed the Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel. Upon reviewing the background to this consultation document the members agreed with the officer's proposed handling of the questions put by the government and asked that the Pitt Review Task and Finish Panel be asked to look into the future impact of the proposed bill on the Council.

Standing Panels

4. Five Standing Panels have been re-constituted this year, each have a rolling programme that consider ongoing cyclical issues and are comprised of:
 - i) The Housing Standing Panel under the Chairmanship of Councillor S Murray;
 - ii) The Constitution and Members Services Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Mrs McEwen;
 - iii) The Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel chaired by Councillor D Jacobs;
 - iv) The Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel; and
 - v) The Planning Services Standing Panel chaired by Councillor Mrs Wagland.

5. The Housing Standing Panel has still to have their first meeting this year.
6. The Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel met on 23 June when they decided to designate their Panel to also act as a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, they would devote two meetings a year, in February and October, to Crime and Disorder issues although they could review such matters any of their meetings. They also agreed to incorporate the defunct Leisure Task and Finish Panel's terms of reference into their own. They would not however include the evaluation on the provision of sporting facilities as part of the development of Epping Forest College.
7. As from 9 July 2009, the Chairman of the Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel, Councillor Rolfe was appointed to the Cabinet as Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing. This disbarred him from being on and chairing the SCG Panel which also considered leisure matters. A new member and Chairman of the Panel will be appointed at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in September.
8. The Planning Services Standing Panel met on 18 June and considered the planning and economic development outturn for 2008/09, building control, the course that a planning investigation could take and staffing within planning enforcement and the current staffing position within planning Services.
9. The Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel met on 16 June where they considered the consultation plan for 2009/10. They also considered the provisional revenue and provisional capital outturn for 2008/09 and the Council plan for 2006-10.
10. The Constitution and Member Services Standing Panel met on 29 June, when they reviewed Overview and Scrutiny, officer delegation on planning applications, and the recent European and County elections.

Task and Finish Panels

11. A new Task and Finish Panel, under the chairmanship of Councillor Mrs Grigg, looking at the Pitt review on Flood Defences for the district has now been established and will be meeting just before this Council meeting to sort out their work programmes for the coming year.