

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 16 February 2010

Subject: Community Safety and Transport Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Syd Stavrou

Item: 6(c)

Recommending:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport be noted

Local Highways Panel

Following the last Cabinet the Local Highways Panel has reconsidered its constitution and had made recommendations to Council regarding its membership, to ensure that local towns & parishes are better represented and to establish their voting rights. The Panel also considered a large number of proposals for local highways schemes, put forward by members, and has made recommendations to the County Council Portfolio Holder in respect of priorities for him to consider.

Recent Severe Weather

As is usual when we have weather as severe as we did in December and January, a large number of concerns were raised about the effectiveness of local highway gritting. The County Council implemented its published snow/ice plan which does not enable the gritting of all the highway network. This, combined with the extensive period of cold weather did result in many parts of the district not having roads/pavements treated. The Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Scrutiny Panel is to undertake a review of the effects of the severe weather, particularly on the waste service, but I have no doubt that it will also want to consider the efficiency of the winter gritting programme.

Safer Communities

The Partnership continues to function well, although as we move towards the 2010/11 financial year, some of the normal funding streams are being withdrawn or significantly reduced. This includes reductions in funding from the Essex Police Authority, the County Council and the Home Office. We shall have to wait and see quite what impact this will have, and "Safer Essex", the County wide umbrella organisation, intends to call a meeting of all Safer Communities Partnerships early in the summer (probably post elections) to see how the future is looking.

Crime levels remain about the 2009/10 target but are still below the outturn for 2008/09. This is encouraging given the difficulties of the recession. Our primary

concerns revolve around acquisitive crime, this relating to burglary and theft of and from vehicles.

The next meeting of the Safer, Cleaner Greener Standing Scrutiny Panel on 25 February is one of the special crime & disorder scrutiny sessions. This meeting will be concentrating on CCTV, its benefits and areas of concern and will be open to the public. The Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership Strategy Panel members will be present to take questions.