

## **Report to Council**

**Date of meeting: 13 December 2011**

**Subject: Overview and Scrutiny**

**Chairman: Councillor Richard Bassett**



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### **Recommendation:**

**That the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman be noted.**

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### **Youth Council**

1. At the meeting held on Tuesday, 29 November, we received a lively and confident presentation from five members of the Youth Council, who gave an outline of the work they had undertaken over the last year. One of the key themes for them had been young peoples' safety, where they had undertaken projects to address the issues of safety and their fear of crime. One of the things that they had produced in relation to this was a young person's guide to reporting crime, a very useful pocket size guide explaining the reporting system.

2. They had also attended or organised various community projects such as the Intergenerational Fun Day at Ninefields Hall in Waltham Abbey and the Youth Project of the Year Award. They had also acted as a consultative body, taking part in consultations for the LSP, the White Water Rafting Centre, Essex County Council and the City of London, to name but a few.

3. The £12,000 funding from the Council covered the cost of their training, the overall development of the Youth Council and also any event they organised and crucially, their transport costs.

4. We noted that they had also secured £9,425 of funding from external sources with at least another £700 to come in this financial year. Additionally, they had been allocated £1350 from the Council's Safer Communities Partnership to support their work relating to safety and the reporting of crime by young people.

5. The meeting was then opened out to a question and answer session from the committee and other members present. In the end the Committee were impressed with the work done by them and were very happy to recommend to the Cabinet that they receive their DDF bid of £12,000 for the new 2012-13 year.

### **Call-in**

6. We next considered a Call-in by five members of the Cabinet decision (C-032-2011/12) on the Olympic Games "Look and Feel" and Ticket Allocation report. The Committee were told that take up by parishes was limited to just Loughton and as such the total budget for the item would be £3500 and this would now be found from within existing budgets so no DDF supplement would be required. After an interesting debate the Committee decided not to support the call-in and to confirm the Cabinet's decision, which could then be actioned.

## **Government Consultation**

7. We then considered a report on a Government Consultation on the Technical Reforms of Council Tax. It proposed reforms to the Council Tax system from 2013-14. On consideration we agreed with the officers draft responses to the consultation questions especially on not increasing the payment of Council Tax from 10 months to 12 months as the default option

## **Key Objectives – Progress Report**

8. Next we received the Key Objectives – progress report. We noted that it had already been to the Finance and Performance Management Standing Scrutiny Panel and also to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee. We considered and commented on the current state of the objectives. We also considered that the format of the report should be condensed as it was too long and wasted too much paper.

## **6 Month O&S Work Programme**

9. We next considered our work programmes at the six month mark of the year, prioritising exactly what presentations we wanted before the end of the municipal year and what could be kept in abeyance for the following year. We decided that we wanted the LSP to come to our January meeting and for the PCT and Essex County Councils Children Services to be organised for our March and April meetings. It was also suggested that the Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Panel take over the item looking to get information from the emergency services on their plans for the Olympic period.

## **Reports from the Constitution and Member Services Standing Panel**

10. The Committee went on to receive three reports from the Constitution and Member Services Standing Panel, two of which are on this agenda. The first one concerned the Audit and Governance Committee – appointment of Portfolio Holder Assistants, which we endorsed and recommended to Council. The second report was on reporting by Scrutiny Panel Chairmen at Council and other council body meetings, which we approved and so recommended to Council. Lastly, we considered changes to the member agenda dispatch arrangements which we noted and agreed and so recommended to the Support Services Portfolio Holder.

## **Draft Terms of Reference for the Senior Recruitment T&F Panel**

11. We then reviewed the draft terms of reference and work programme for the newly formed Senior Recruitment Task and Finish Panel and agreed them, noting that they hoped to finish and report back by the end of March 2012.

## **Upcoming Presentation**

12. We then considered the upcoming presentation of the LSP manager at our next meeting and decided we would like him to concentrate primarily on the impact of the new Locality Boards; we also would like to have sight of their progress report before the meeting.

## **NHS Merger Project**

13. Next, we received a report from Councillors Wixley and Chana on their recent visits to the meetings on the proposed merger project of the Barts and East London Healthcare NHS Trusts. We agreed that their written summary of events be published in the Members' Bulletin so that all members could see for themselves what had been proposed.

## **O&S Joint Training**

14. Finally we confirmed arrangements for joint Overview and Scrutiny training with Harlow DC. This would take place on 15 and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and all members of Overview and Task and Finish Panels should look to attend as we had secured the services of an excellent external trainer.