

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING



Date: Wednesday 28th October 2009

Time: 7.15pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Causeway House, Braintree

Membership:

Councillor J. Baugh	Councillor A. M. Meyer
Councillor G. Cohen	Councillor R. Ramage
Councillor M. Dunn	Councillor D. E. A. Rice
Councillor Dr. R. L. Evans	Councillor A. F. Shelton
Councillor M. G. Gage (Chairman)	Councillor Mrs. J. A. Smith
Councillor J. E. B. Gyford	Councillor F. Swallow

Members are requested to attend this meeting, to transact the following business:-

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Member Declarations.

- (i) To declare the existence and nature of any 'personal' or 'personal and prejudicial' interests relating to items on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 8 to 12 (inclusive) of the Code of Conduct for Members in Part 5 of the Constitution and having taken appropriate advice (where necessary) before the meeting.
- (ii) Any member with a 'personal and prejudicial' interest to indicate whether he/she intends to make representations in accordance with paragraph 12 (2) of the Code of Conduct as part of Question Time.
- (iii) To declare the existence and nature of any instruction given by or on behalf of a political group to any Councillor who is a member of that group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Committee or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the group in respect of that Councillor should he/she speak or vote on any particular matter.

[Note: A member with a personal and prejudicial interest must withdraw from the room or chamber whilst the item of business the

subject of such prejudicial interest is being considered]

3. **Minutes.** To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1st October 2009.

4. **Question Time.** (See paragraph on page iv).

5. **Budget Scrutiny**

The following Cabinet Members and Officer have been asked to attend this meeting:

Cllr. G. Butland, Leader of the Council

Cllr. M. Lager, Portfolio Holder for Efficiency and Resources

Cllr. N. Harley, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Culture

Officer Support: Mr. T. Wilson, Head of Finance

The Committee's initial scrutiny of the Cabinet's proposed budget for 2010/11 is to be based on the following criteria and associated questions:

A. ASSUMPTIONS

- (1) What do you expect the state of the British Economy to be in the year 2010/11?
- (2) What level of income have you anticipated from all fees and charges, receipts from Council Tax, the base tax level for a schedule D band property, and inflation on costs?
- (3) What have you anticipated the Government Settlement to be? Will previous advice on this percentage hold good?
- (4) What are the underlying policy assumptions for BDC for the year 2010/11 having regard to items 1 to 3 above?

B. BUDGET

- (1) What is the shape and size of the Budget in relation to:-
 - (a) each Portfolio Holder;
 - (b) quality of service provision;
 - (c) capacity to meet the task in hand?

C. PRIORITIES

(1) What are the priorities for the Cabinet?

D. RESOURCES

1. Where are the main resources going to be applied to each Portfolio and for what reason?

There may be supplementary questions that the Committee may wish to ask following the initial responses to the above questions from the Leader, his Deputy, and the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder.

Checklist of information required to facilitate consideration of the cabinet's proposed budget.	
<u>Item</u>	<u>Comment</u>
A. An update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Copy attached (Item A)
B. Summary extracts from the base budget.	Base budgets for 2010/11 are not available at present. However, budgets for 2009/10 are provided in the Budget Book which has been circulated to members.
C. The proposed capital programme for 2010/11.	Not available at present.
D. Details of the bids submitted by officers and not just those that have been approved by Cabinet.	Not available at present.
E. Details of the Cabinet's proposed budget for 2010/11.	Not available at present.
F. Current staffing costs and resource levels within service areas, and where the major areas of spend arise.	Staffing costs for 2009/10 are contained in the attached spreadsheet (Item F (i)). Major areas of spend for 2009/10 compared against averages for Essex Districts and all English Districts are provided in the attached spreadsheet (Item F (ii)).
G. Comparative unit costs where these are available.	Information needs to be drawn together in a single report – currently in progress.
H. Results of the public consultation exercise on the Cabinet's budget.	Not available at present.
I. Any other pertinent information/papers submitted to Cabinet in the context of the proposed budget e.g Feedback on Local Priorities; Proposed Areas for Budget Increases; Possible Areas for Review and future savings etc.	Not available at present.

6. Scrutinising LAA Improvement Targets – Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees) (England) Regulations 2009)

To give consideration to the attached report.

7. Task and Finish Groups

To consider the recommendations of the Scrutiny Steering Board regarding the Chairman and composition of the Public Services Provision for Older People – Task and Finish Group, as follows:-

- (i) that Cllr. Ramage should be appointed as Chairman of the Group;
- (ii) that Membership of the Group should comprise the following Members: Cllrs. J. Baugh; J. Elliott; Mrs. S. Howell; R. Ramage (Chairman); D. E. A. Rice; A. F. Shelton; C. Siddall; Mrs. J. Smith.

8. Forward Plan.

To consider the Forward Plan for the period 1/11/09 to 28/2/10 (copy previously circulated).

9. Urgent Business. To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

10. To agree the exclusion of the public and press for the consideration of any items for the reasons set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

At the time of compiling the agenda there were none.

11. Urgent Business. To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in private by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

S. Bore
Scrutiny Manager

If you require any further information relating to this agenda or wish to forward your apologies for absence, please contact Steve Bore on 551414 extension 2003 or e-mail stebo@braintree.gov.uk

The last page of this agenda is numbered (to be inserted).

QUESTION TIME

Immediately after the Minutes of the previous meeting have been approved there will be a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak about Council business or other matters of local concern. During this period, councillors who have declared a personal and prejudicial interest in any item of business on the agenda may also speak as permitted by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. Whilst members of the public can remain to observe the whole of the public part of the meeting, councillors with a prejudicial interest must withdraw whilst the item of business in question is being considered. Members of the public wishing to speak should contact the Council's Democratic Services Section on (01376) 552525 or email stebo@braintree.gov.uk prior to the meeting.

