

# Minutes

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17<sup>th</sup> September 2008



Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
M Dunn	Yes	Mrs R O'Shea	Apologies
Dr R L Evans	Yes	R Ramage	Yes
Ms L B Flint	Yes	Mrs C Sandbrook	Yes
M Gage (Chairman)	Yes	A F Shelton	Yes
J E B Gyford	Yes	Mrs. J. Smith	Yes
A M Meyer	Yes	F. Swallow	Apologies

### 32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**INFORMATION:** There were no interests declared.

### 33. MINUTES

**DECISION:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 34. QUESTION TIME

**INFORMATION:** There were no questions asked or statements made.

### 35. PROGRAMME FOR MEMBERS OF THE CABINET TO ATTEND MEETINGS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CLLR. MRS. J. BEAVIS THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNICATION

Cllr. Gage the Chairman of the Committee welcomed Cllr. Mrs. Beavis to the meeting as the first Cabinet Member to participate in this programme.

He reminded members of the background information that they had been sent comprising a note of portfolio holders responsibilities, a copy of the Corporate Strategy 2008-2012, and a copy of the Corporate Action Plan 2008-09.

Cllr. Gage also highlighted the Committee's role in acting as a critical friend, and asked members to focus on the policy and strategic aspects as follows:-

- \* the overall objectives as contained in the Corporate Strategy;
- \* the service delivery standards (i.e what we do on a day to day basis);
- \* action plans – what are we planning to do in future years;
- \* performance plans – how are we doing and what value are we giving.

It was hoped that the sessions with Cabinet Members would also assist the Committee on this year's budget scrutiny exercise and that the process could form an integral part of the budget scrutiny process for future years.

Cllr. Beavis welcomed the opportunity to speak to the Committee to give members an insight as to her portfolio responsibilities and associated matters.

She explained the origins of her portfolio and advised Members that she had taken over her responsibilities at the beginning of this civic year. The Customers and Communications portfolio covered the following areas:-

Member Development  
 Rural and Locality Development  
 External Communications and Marketing Strategy  
 Customer Access Strategy  
 Service Delivery Strategy  
 Central Support  
 Corporate Consultation

Cllr. Beavis gave a brief resume of some of the activities that she had been involved in over recent months. These included the publication of the new Customer and Services Access Strategy and associated issues; the launching of the Civic Pride Awards with the Chairman of the Council; the Communications and Marketing Strategy and the new post of Marketing and Campaigns Manager; the Parish and Town Councils Day due to take place in March next year; the Local Strategic Partnership; the need for better Member support and training.

Cllr. Beavis indicated that she would welcome Members writing or e-mailing her on issues of concern relating to her portfolio responsibilities as this helped her when pressing for action on pertinent matters.

There then followed a question and answer session which is summarised below:-

#### Question from Cllr. L. Flint

On the subject of communications, do you recognise this area as one that needs improving given the difficulties that members experience in navigating their way around the organisation and identifying the key officers to contact concerning service issues and queries?

Answer from Cllr. Mrs. Beavis

Yes. I have raised this issue with both the Leader and Chief Executive and will continue to do so. There are initiatives being explored including the setting up of a bespoke members' web site and a telephone directory for the organisation in hard copy.

Question from Cllr. M. Dunn

What are the two main priorities that you see in your role, and what aspects within your portfolio do you think the Council can do better.

Also, can you encourage officers writing reports to use plain English, avoid jargon and the use of acronyms.

Answer from Cllr. Beavis

My main priorities are addressing and actioning the points set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2008 – 2012 and the 2008/09 Corporate Action Plan.

Communications with members needs to be better, and all members need to understand how all the various policy documents, strategies, action plans dovetail together. Getting things done – achievements – the Council's reputation with its customers - are all fundamentally important.

I understand your concerns and will do all I can to encourage officers to avoid using jargon and acronyms, and for reports to be written in plain English.

Question from Cllr. Dr. R. Evans

Do you feel the recent review of the Local Strategic Partnership (formerly PACT (Partners and Communities Together) will make it more effective?

Answer from Cllr. Mrs. Beavis

The Local Strategic Partnership will be more dynamic and action orientated than under its previous guise, and performance information from the new Local Area Agreement will be fed into the Partnership.

Question from Cllr. A. Meyer

(i) What plans are there for a specific members' budget to facilitate better communications between members and their constituents?

(ii) Are there any plans for Member Services to increase the role that they play in supporting Members?

Answer from Cllr. Beavis

(i) I support the case for a members budget to fund members small scale initiatives to

help improve their communications with constituents, eg sending out Member post cards to constituents, and will continue to lobby for an appropriate budget.

(ii) There is a need to increase the support role for members although Member Services is already over-stretched. Resources are under review with a view to increasing the support available to members.

Question from Cllr. Mrs. Sandbrook

In the context of the Council's ongoing Task and Finish Group investigation into the Council's fees and charges policy, if there was a more robust discretionary charging policy adopted by the Council how do you feel this would impact on your role as a Portfolio holder, and what can you do to get the groundswell of support from other Cabinet Members.

Answer from Cllr. Beavis

Fees and charges are well overdue for review and I welcome the work being undertaken by the Task and Finish Group. Fees and charges are clearly a difficult area. All Cabinet Members will be aware of the ongoing review. The final recommendations from the Group will need to be carefully considered, and some difficult decisions may need to be made by the Cabinet. There will also be an input from the Local Committees.

(Cllr. Shelton entered the meeting at this point).

Question from Cllr. J. Gyford

Can you clarify the dividing line between the responsibilities of your portfolio that relates to 'External Communications and Marketing Strategy' and that of the Leader of the Council that relates to 'External Relationships (including PR and reputation)' as there appears to be an element of overlap.

Answer from Cllr. Mrs. Beavis

Responsibilities are divided up to ensure that there is no overlap or duplication. When the Customers and Communications portfolio was compiled the Leader wanted to maintain a role in external relationships in order to allow me to develop and expand my role in this field and to take on more responsibilities as my experience increased.

Question from Cllr. R. Ramage

Whilst there is the joint District/County facility at Witham Library, are there any plans to provide an area office in Witham similar to what was previously provided?

Answer from Cllr. Mrs. Beavis

There are no plans to do so at the present time. However, access to the Council's services District wide is something that is being kept under review, and has also been highlighted by the Rural Isolation Task and Finish Group. It is also something that will need to be considered further in the light of decisions made by Greenfields Community

Housing in relation to its presence in Halstead and Witham.

Question from Cllr. M. Gage

1. In terms of the service that the Council gives at the present time, what rating would you give it out of 10?
2. Similarly, in terms of value for money that the Council gives, what rating would you give it out of 10?

Answer from Cllr. Beavis

1. For the commitment and dedication provided by our employees to the administration - 10/10.
2. In terms of value for money, being more efficient, moving on, doing things differently and new ways of working - 7/10.

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At the conclusion of the session, Councillor Gage on behalf of the Committee expressed his thanks and appreciation to Cllr. Beavis for attending the Committee especially as she was the first of the Cabinet Portfolio holders to participate. He thanked her also for the full answers that she had given to members questions.

36. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09 - HOW THE COUNCIL MANAGES SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

Leigh Woodside from Alexander Consultants gave an update to the Committee on the work that he had been undertaking for the Chief Executive on the project management work stream as this would be of interest to members in the context of their own parallel study on project management.

He presented a series of slides to the Committee on the highlights to date, and some early thoughts on future improvements (Copies of the slides are appended to these minutes). Leigh advised the Committee that he was in the process of preparing a futures improvement paper which would be submitted to the Chief Executive shortly containing his findings and recommendations.

The Committee discussed a number of issues arising from the presentation and Leigh answered a number of questions from Members.

The Chairman indicated that it would be useful to look at the futures improvement paper once it was published, and thanked Leigh for his interesting and informative presentation.

Taking the Committee's study forward

In order to take the Committee's own study forward, it had been previously agreed that the Committee would study:-

(1) a live project which is currently being undertaken by the Council;

(2) a project undertaken by one of the Council's external providers to provide an insight as to how they undertake a project when working with the Council.

### **DECISION:**

In respect of (1), the Committee gave consideration to a shortlist that had been compiled by the Scrutiny Manager based on the completed forms submitted by members indicating their preferences. The Committee commented that it would have been helpful to have more details of the schemes that had been shortlisted.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would study Project ID No. 49 – Play Areas Refurbishment 08/09.

In respect of (2), it was agreed that the Committee would study Project ID No. 15 – Siebel Development. This project involves our IT provider SERCO in replacing the Customer Relationship Management hardware. SERCO's Project Manager will be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to talk to members about this project and the project management processes that SERCO follow when working with the Council.

**Action Point:** *that the Scrutiny Manager makes the necessary arrangements to take the study forward.*

### **37. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09 - NEW SCRUTINY LEGISLATION - LOCAL PETITIONS AND CALLS FOR ACTION – THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

The Scrutiny Manager presented a report on the paper that the Department for Communities and Local Government had published following the responses that it had received to its consultation paper published in December last year.

In respect of the Local Petitions process, the Government's intention was to set down the requirements that Councils would need to follow to comply with the duty to set up a Local Petitions scheme, but to leave some of the details to local discretion.

The officer's report set out: the essentials of the petitioning process; the need for Councils to make a substantive response to all petitions; the need for Councils to make a more significant response to large petitions (i.e. those supported by 5% of residents); the facility for petitioners to appeal to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if dissatisfied with the response they receive.

The Government would keep the petitioning process under review, and it was also keen to explore how authorities could act as community advocates (e.g. for petitions related to Primary Care Trusts on subjects such as the level of community services).

Members noted that the duty to respond to petitions will be included in the forthcoming Empowerment, Housing and Economic Regeneration Bill.

The Committee was also advised that in the recent Government consultation paper on Improving Local Accountability, the Government had highlighted that it wants to ensure that local authorities take petitions seriously, and that petitioners should have a right to appeal to a Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee if they were not satisfied with the local authority response.

***Question 8 of the consultation paper had asked: Do you agree that appeals about a local authority's response to a petition should be considered by the overview and scrutiny committee?***

***What practical issues might arise?***

Following discussion, the Committee supported the proposal for appeals to be dealt with by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. No practical issues were identified as such, but members felt that guidance on the mechanics of the appeals process was required. For example: Will petitioners have a right to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to put their case? Will the Department/Cabinet Portfolio holder be required to attend to justify their response?

**DECISION:** that it be **Recommended** to Cabinet that the comments detailed above be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government in response to this question in the consultation paper (see also minute 38).

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In relation to the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA), the Committee noted that the government had decided that matters for which there are already statutory processes, and complaints about an individual's treatment by the authority, should be excluded from the scope of the CCfA.

Members noted that there are two strands to the CCfA – Councillor Calls for Action relating to local government matters (other than crime and disorder issues) – Councillor Calls for Action relating solely to crime and disorder issues. It was still anticipated that there would be a seamless process for dealing with both types of CCfA.

It was noted that the latest indication from the Government was that guidance on the principles of the CCfA will now be issued before the end of 2008. The guidance will explain to councillors how they can use the power, and advise the local authority how to deal with CCfAs.

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In respect of the Councillor Call for Action in respect of crime and disorder issues, the Committee was advised that there is a specific question included in the Policing Green Paper that asks:

***"How might the CCfA be best used to complement the broader changes to local accountability arrangements for policing?"***

The proposed accountability arrangements were outlined in the officer's report.

The deadline for the receipt of comments on this question was 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008.



Following discussion, the Committee agreed that as long as it could request the compulsory attendance of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) partners at a scrutiny meeting to answer questions and explain any action taken, and as long as CDRP partners have a duty to respond to scrutiny reports and recommendations, then the CCfA would appear to be complementary to the proposed local accountability arrangements.

However, it would be helpful if the Home Office would clarify whether it envisages any specific role for the elected Crime and Policing Representative in the CCfA.

**DECISION:** that it be **Recommended** to Cabinet that the comments detailed above be submitted to the Home Office in response to this question in the Policing Green Paper.

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(In discussing the proposed accountability arrangements set out in the Policing Green Paper and in particular the proposal for each CDRP to elect a new politician to be the local Crime and Disorder Representative to sit on the police authority and the CDRP in place of those current councillors who have been nominated to serve by their local authority, the following motion was proposed and seconded:-

"That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Home Office be advised that the Council does not agree with the proposal that there should be a new type of politician elected to be the local Crime and Policing Representative to sit on the police authority and the CDRP, and that there should be no change to the existing arrangements where such representatives are nominated to serve by their local authority."

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared LOST.)

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38. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09 – NEW SCRUTINY LEGISLATION - COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL: REAL PEOPLE, REAL POWER – IMPROVING LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY – CONSULTATION REPORT

The Scrutiny Manager presented a report on Chapters 2 and 3 respectively of this consultation paper received from the Department for Communities and Local Government, that related to overview and scrutiny.

Chapter 2 was about developing and strengthening overview and scrutiny and in particular enhancing Councils scrutiny powers in relation to Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

Chapter 3 was about increasing the visibility and accountability of local public officers.

The deadline for the receipt of responses was 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The consultation paper included a series of consultation questions and the Committee considered each question in turn and commented as follows:-



## Chapter 2 - Provisions relating to councils scrutiny of LAA partners and their delivery of LAA targets

### Overview and scrutiny committees to require information from partner authorities

The proposal is that:-

- LAA partners (other than police and local health services for which separate provision is made) should provide information requested by a lead authority's overview and scrutiny committee for the purposes both of examining progress on LAA targets with which the partner is concerned and of undertaking studies of local issues connected to such targets (**the lead council in Essex is Essex County Council**);
- Similarly, in a two tier area the lead council or LAA partners – described in the legislation as “associated authorities” - should make available to the district council overview and scrutiny committee information relevant to a target connected to that council's area and functions, including its legitimate concerns about the well being of the area;
- Partner authorities must also provide information where it relates to an agenda item of the overview and scrutiny committee concerned and has been requested by that overview and scrutiny committee.

***Consultation Question 1 asks: Do you agree with our proposed approach in relation to overview and scrutiny committees requiring information from partner authorities.***

The Committee felt that the approach was acceptable in principle, but also commented that:-

- (1) the Government needs to clarify whether in addition to providing information there will also be a requirement for LAA partners to attend Councils overview and scrutiny committees where requested;
- (2) the effectiveness of scrutiny will be best served by the Government actually specifying the time limits (say two months) for responses by partner or associated authorities.

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### Publication of Scrutiny Reports, Recommendations and Responses

The proposal is to extend to overview and scrutiny committees and local authorities only, provisions for exempt and confidential information when publishing scrutiny reports, recommendations and responses. Regulations will also be made to extend these provisions without modification to local authority executives where they publish or provide copies of such documents.

***Consultation Question 2 asks: Do you agree with the proposal to apply the***

***provisions in relation to exempt and confidential information without modification to local authority executives?***

The Committee felt that this proposal was acceptable.

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**Establishment of Joint County and District Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

The proposal is to allow for the establishment of a joint overview and scrutiny committee of a county council and one or more districts within the county area to make reports and recommendations collaboratively in relation to LAA targets for the local area. The proposal suggests that these joint committees should have similar powers to those held by the overview and scrutiny committees of the local authorities within the county area. There will be similar provision for joint committees in respect of partners. There will be a need to avoid burdensome requests on partners.

A joint overview and scrutiny committee may make reports and recommendations to the local authorities or local authority executives within the county area who would then have to respond within two months.

***Consultation Question 3 asks: Do you agree with the proposed approach towards joint overview and scrutiny committees? Are there specific issues that should be considered as part of the approach?***

The Committee felt that this proposal was acceptable in principle. However, it was noted that joint committees would have power to appoint sub-committees and co-opt members, and in this respect the Government needs to clarify whether co-opted members would have any voting rights.

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**Enhancing the powers of district overview and scrutiny committees.**

The proposal is that the powers for district council overview and scrutiny committees should be similar to those available to lead councils as follows:-

- district council overview and scrutiny committees may make reports and recommendations to the relevant county council or county council executive on matters relating to a local improvement target;
- the county council or the county executive will be required to respond to the district overview and scrutiny committee report or recommendation within two months;
- associated authorities will be required to have regard to reports and recommendations from the district overview and scrutiny committee.

***Consultation Question 4 asks: Do you agree with the proposed approach to enable district scrutiny committees to review the delivery of LAA targets?***

The Committee felt that this proposed approach was acceptable.

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## Scrutiny in Small District Councils Operating a Streamlined Committee System

Not applicable to BDC.

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## Taking Forward the Commitments Given in the 2008 Communities in Control White Paper to raise the visibility of, and to Strengthen, the Scrutiny Function.

The proposals are to:-

- to further strengthen the scrutiny function by extending the power to require information from partner authorities to matters outside LAA targets;
- to introduce a power for county and district councils to combine their respective scrutiny resources in 'area scrutiny committees' where they wish to do so;
- to require some dedicated scrutiny resource in county, unitary and London Borough councils;
- to require that overview and scrutiny committees should consider appeals in relation to petitions that are submitted in connection with local petition arrangements (see minute 37 concerning the Local Petitions and Calls for Action – The Government Response).

### ***Consultation Question 6 asks: What issues should be considered as part of any new power to establish area scrutiny committees?***

The Committee felt that the issues to be considered should include: the issue of the number of county and district representatives entitled to serve on the committee; clarification of voting rights; the remit and scope of the joint committee which should ensure that it is able to deal with all issues relating to the well being of the citizens of its area; the need to ensure that area scrutiny committees conduct their business in a non-partisan manner.

### ***Consultation Question 7 asks: How might the requirement for dedicated scrutiny resource be put in place?***

The Committee felt that the proposal for having some dedicated scrutiny resource should apply to all local authorities including district councils and not just county, unitary and London Borough Councils.

### ***Consultation Question 8 asks: Do you agree that appeals about a local authority's response to a petition should be considered by the overview and scrutiny committee?***

#### ***What practical issues might arise?***

See minute 37 setting out the Committee's response to this consultation question.

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## Chapter 3 – Increasing the Visibility and Accountability of Local Public Officers

### Attendance at Regular Public Hearings

It is proposed that a key part of the role of a chair or chief executive of a local public body should be that they attend regular public hearings to ensure that they are subject to public scrutiny and questioning from local communities.

It is therefore proposed that the requirement to attend such meetings should be included in the job descriptions of the chair or chief executive, and that those responsible for these job descriptions should determine the arrangements by which these requirements will be covered.

***Consultation question 9 asks: Do you agree with this approach that those responsible for the job descriptions should determine the precise arrangements by which the chair or chief executive will attend regular meetings?***

The Committee felt that this proposal was acceptable in principle.

However, the Committee also felt that the definition of local public body needed further clarification by the government so that it was made clear as to precisely which local service providers and agencies the chairs or chief executives of which would be required to attend regular public hearings. It was not clear from the consultation paper as to whether 'local public body' would include those private companies such as bus companies, rail companies, water companies, power companies, that provide public services, and also whether it included other organisations such as Academy Schools and the police. The Committee's view was that the respective chairs and chief executives of these organisations should equally be open to public scrutiny and questioning from local communities similar, for instance, to the chair or chief executive of a district or county council.

These comments also apply to consultation questions 10 to 12 below relating to the proposed petitions process to hold public officers to account.

### Petitions to hold public officers to account

The proposal is that if enough people served by a local service or agency sign a local petition (there will be a specified threshold), senior officers working for the local public body which is the subject of the petition should be required to attend a public meeting.

The consultation paper therefore proposes that in each LAA area, the lead council (i.e. Essex County Council in Essex) and its partners, including local service providers and agencies should agree and publish an appropriate scheme. The scheme should be complementary to other local petition arrangements that are in place.

The scheme should set out:

- the officers (or category of Officers) to whom the scheme would apply;
- any relevant petition criteria, such as agreed thresholds, who may sign a petition, the format a petition must take;
- the local service providers and agencies covered by the agreed scheme and how they will respond to petitions;
- arrangements for the hearing.

The Government could specify certain minimum standards for the various elements of the scheme. It also suggests that the public hearing could be in the form of an existing meeting, such as that of an overview and scrutiny committee.

***Consultation Question 10 asks: Do you agree with our proposals to require the local authority with its strategic partners to agree a local scheme for petitions to hold officers to account? What practical issues might arise?***

The Committee felt that the proposals were acceptable in principle, but see comments in relation to consultation question 9 above. Further clarification is needed from the government concerning the definition of local service providers and agencies.

***Consultation Question 11 asks: Should the Government provide some minimum standards for local schemes to hold officers to account? What should they be? Which, if any, local service providers and agencies must, or must not be in any scheme?***

The Committee felt that the Government should provide some minimum standards for local schemes, but did not have any comment specifically on what they should be. In respect of the last part of the question, further clarification is needed from the government concerning the definition of local service providers and agencies.

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#### Which Local Public Officers would be included

It is proposed that it will be for a local authority and its partners, including local service providers and agencies to agree to which of them the scheme should apply, subject to any statutory minimum standards (eg any requirements about which local service providers and agencies must or must not be covered by a scheme).

***Consultation Question 12 asks: Do you agree that the scope of the scheme should be agreed locally subject to any statutory minimum standards and whether this would be an effective means of empowering communities?***

The Committee felt that this was acceptable in principle, but see also comments in relation to consultation question 9 above. Further clarification is needed from the government concerning the definition of local service providers and agencies.

**DECISION:** that it be **Recommended** to Cabinet that the comments detailed above be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government in response to the questions in the consultation paper.

39. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09 – ISSUES SURROUNDING DISABLED PROVISION ACROSS THE DISTRICT

The Scrutiny Manager presented a report setting out the results of a consultation exercise that had been carried out with 30 disabled groups/organisations seeking views on any specific concerns/issues that they would like to draw to the Committee's attention.

Members had previously agreed that they would focus on up to two topics that were felt to be of particular interest and where members felt that they could make a difference.

Just three responses had been received and the issues raised were set out in the officer's report.

**DECISION:**

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the following two items be included in its study:-

- Problems being caused to people with disabilities as a result of vehicles parking across and on pavements;
- Whether there is an adequate provision of public disabled toilets in the district.

**Action point:** that the Scrutiny Manager prepares a scoping report in order to take this study forward.

40. FEEDBACK AND MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S/TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Committee gave consideration to the updated progress sheets in respect of the following studies:-

- \* Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Module 3 – Licensing Enforcement
- \* Allotments – Task and Finish Group
- \* Democratic Renewal – Task and Finish Group

The progress sheets set out the responses received from the respective Cabinet Portfolio Holder/Lead Officer in relation to a number of further issues/comments/points that the Committee had been raised at its last meeting.

(In response of a member's question concerning Democratic Renewal, the Scrutiny Manager had indicated that electoral registration canvassers will be making personal visits to households in September where no Electoral Registration Form had been returned. However, following further clarification with the Democracy Manager it has been ascertained that the annual canvass timetable provides for personal visits to

commence in October).

**DECISION:** that the contents of the updated progress sheets be noted.

*At 10.15pm, it was moved, seconded and subsequently resolved that, in accordance with paragraph 8 of Part 4/1 of the Constitution, the meeting be continued for a further period of 15 minutes.*

#### 41. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS – UPDATE

The Committee noted that at full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008:-

- (i) Cllr. Mrs. Spray had presented the Rural Isolation Task and Finish Group report;
- (ii) Cllr. Mrs. Sandbrook had presented an interim report concerning the Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group.

These reports would now be considered by Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

In respect of the proposed Bus and Railway Services Task and Finish Group, the Scrutiny Manager advised the Committee that the Scrutiny Steering Board had recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that Cllr. Shelton be appointed as Chairman.

**DECISION:** that Cllr. Shelton be appointed as Chairman of the Bus and Railway Services Task and Finish Group. The membership of the Group would be as follows:-

Councillors A. F. Shelton (Chairman); R. Elliston; A. Everard; Mrs. M. Galione; D. Hume; Mrs. G. Spray; F. Swallow.

#### 42. FORWARD PLAN – 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2008 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2009.

Members received the four month Forward Plan for the above period.

Cllr. Sandbrook as Chairman of the Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group queried as to whether there were any implications in relation to fees and charges arising from the following items on the Forward Plan:

- Proposal for Joint Parking Service with Colchester and Uttlesford
- Proposed Agreement for 2008/09 to 2010 on Concessionary Travel

**Action point:** the Scrutiny Manager is to make further enquires to clarify the position.

**DECISION:** that the contents of the Forward Plan be received and noted.

#### 43. BUDGET SCRUTINY TRAINING SESSION



THE Committee was reminded that this session will take place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 at 7.15pm in the Council Chamber at Causeway House. The facilitator is Dr. P. Watt, INLOGOV.

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The meeting closed at 10.25pm.

M. Gage  
Chairman