

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING



Date: Wednesday 5th January 2011

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 21st and 27th October 2010 (Copies previously circulated).
4. **Question Time.** (See paragraph below).
5. **Budget Scrutiny**

This item comprises two parts as described below.

Part 1: To receive an update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy that was considered at the Cabinet on 7/12/10 (will Members please bring with them the copy of the report previously circulated with the Agenda for the cancelled Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 20/12/10, that relates to this item). In this respect, Cllr. G. Butland the Leader of the Council will attend the Committee to advise Members of the grant received from the Government and how matters will be taken forward.

Part 2: Group Session with the following Cabinet Portfolio Holders:

Cllr. Mrs. J. Beavis, Portfolio Holder for Customers and Community Support

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

Cllr. Mrs. W. Schmitt, Portfolio Holder for Clean, Green and Safe

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

Scrutiny of individual Portfolio Holders proposed budgets will be based on the following set questions:-

(1) Can you explain how you developed your budget for 2011/12 taking into account corporate priorities and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2008/09 to 2011/12?

(2) With the current climate, what efficiency savings have you put in place and what effect will they have on services etc.?

(3) How have you taken decisions about which services are considered priorities and which are not?

(4) Are there any proposed changes to the budget for service areas and, if so, what are their implications for service users, with particular emphasis on potential areas for budgetary cuts?

This year Cabinet Portfolio Holders have been requested to provide written responses to the set questions, and these are attached.

The session will begin with the Committee asking supplementary questions.

Updated Checklist of information required to facilitate consideration of the Cabinet's budget.	
Item	Comment
1. An update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	MTFS update considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 13/9/10 submitted to O and S Committee on 21/10/10. MTFS update considered by Cabinet on 7/12/10 – copy circulated with Agenda for cancelled O and S meeting held on 20/12/10.
2. Summary extracts from the base budget.	Copy submitted to O and S Committee on 21/10/10.
3. The proposed capital programme for 2011/12.	Not available at present.
4. Details of the bids submitted by officers and not just those that have been approved by Cabinet.	Not available at present.
5. Details of the Cabinet's proposed budget for 2011/12.	Not available at present.
6. Current staffing costs and resource levels within service areas, and where the major areas of spend arise.	Copy submitted to O and S Committee on 21/10/10.
7. Comparative unit costs where these are available.	Copy submitted to O and S Committee on 21/10/10.
8. Results of the public consultation exercise on the Cabinet's budget.	Not available at present.
9. 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.	Paper identifying services as statutory, discretionary or mandatory submitted to O and S Committee on 21/10/10.
10. The risk assessment relating to Customer Impact.	Not available at present.

6. Section 106 Agreements – Management of Contributions

To note the Cabinet's formal response to the Committee's recommendations. (Will members please bring with them the copy of the report submitted to Cabinet on 22/11/10 and associated minute extract, that was circulated with the Agenda papers for the cancelled 20/12/10 Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting).

7. Task and Finish Groups.

Public Services Provision for Older People – Task and Finish Group – to receive a brief verbal update from Cllr. R. Ramage the Chairman of this

Group.

8. Scrutiny Hearing – Re: the Council’s handling of issues concerning the future of Silver End Village Hall.

To note that the Scrutiny Hearing will take place at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26th January 2011.

9. Rescheduling of 20/12/10 Cancelled Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Budget Scrutiny).

To note that this meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday 6th January 2011.

10. Decision Plan (formerly known as the Forward Plan).

To consider the Decision Plan for the period 17/12/10 to 30/4/11 (copy previously circulated).

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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 (01376) 551414 extension 2003 or e-mail stebo@braintree.gov.uk

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.

The Council's "Question Time" leaflet explains the procedure and copies of this may be obtained at the Council's offices at Braintree, Witham and Halstead.