

Minutes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

30th May 2012



Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
P R Barlow	Yes	F Ricci	Apologies
C A Cadman	Yes	W J Rose	Yes
Dr R L Evans (Chairman)	Yes	A F Shelton	Yes
P Horner	Yes	J S Sutton	Yes
S A Howell	Yes	J R Swift	Apologies
R P Ramage	Apologies		

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

INFORMATION: The following interests were declared:

- Councillor Barlow declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, Annual Work Programme, as a member of the Management Committee of Witham Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Councillor Cadman declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, Annual Work Programme, as Vice Chairman of Suffolk West Citizens Advice Bureau.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, all councillors remained in the meeting for all items and took part in the debate and decision thereon.

2. QUESTION TIME

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked or statements made.

3. MINUTES

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd March 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2012-13

INFORMATION:

Topics for Scrutiny by the Committee

Members considered the report on proposed items for the Committee's Annual Work Programme including the recommendations of the Scrutiny Steering Board.

Members agreed with the Steering Board's recommendation that the Committee scrutinises the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Members noted that CSP representatives had attended the Committee's meeting in March and had given a useful insight into the CSP. Members noted that the CSP faced future funding issues and that Community Safety was likely to be a discretionary area of funding with the Police and Crime Commissioner to be directly elected in November 2012. Members agreed that the scrutiny review would need to identify if the CSP provides clear value to the community, value for money, is transparent, and also meets the Council's objectives.

Members agreed that draft Terms of Reference should be developed for the scrutiny review of the CSP following a meeting of the Committee's Chairman and Vice Chairman and the Member Services Manager with the Corporate Director. The draft Terms of Reference could then be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

Members also noted that the Committee would scrutinise the Council's Budget as part of its regular work programme and also, as in previous years, invite as appropriate a representative from Essex Police to update the Committee on crime issues in the District.

Topics for Scrutiny by Task and Finish Groups

Members agreed to establish Task and Finish Groups to conduct scrutiny reviews of the following:

- Affordable and Social Housing
- Citizens Advice Bureau and the Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency

As regards the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency, the scrutiny review should understand the work, pressures, issues and benefits to the community of both organisations. The review should also identify what sort of information and how members would like to receive that information.

As regards Affordable and Social Housing, the scrutiny review should review how the Council might further support affordable and social housing in the District. The review should consider possible options in terms of shared ownership and shared equity ie. both property owning and property renting in the District.

DECISION:

That the Committee's Annual Work Programme for 2012-13 comprises:

Topics for Scrutiny by the Committee

1. Community Safety Partnership.
2. Scrutiny of the Council's budget including a review of delivery from previous years, and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) through to 2015/16 in terms of impact on services from planned cuts, key risks in implementing the budget and key assumptions made in the MTFS.

Topics for Scrutiny by Task and Finish Groups

That the following Task and Finish Groups be established:

3. Affordable and Social Housing – a review of how the Council might further support affordable and social housing in the District.
4. Citizens Advice Bureau and the Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency – the review should include understanding the work, pressures, issues and benefits to the community of both organisations. The review should also identify what sort of information and how members would like to receive that information.

5. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

INFORMATION: It was agreed that the Member Services Manager should review available options for the further development of Committee members and report to the Committee's next meeting.

6. **DECISION PLANNER**

DECISION: That the Decision Planner for the period 16th May 2012 to 30th September 2012 be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.40pm.

Dr R L Evans
Chairman