

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA



THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING

Date: Wednesday 23rd March 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. **Question Time.** (See paragraph below).
4. **Minutes.** To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th February 2011 (copy previously circulated).
5. **Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters**

To receive a presentation from District Commander Nick Lee on key issues and challenges faced by the Police in dealing with Crime and Disorder issues in the District.

I asked Members to let me have notice of any specific questions/issues that they wished to raise and these are set out below.

Cllr. G. Cohen

It has been reported that complaints against the police by the public in Essex have risen sharply in the last couple of years (as in some other places). It would be interesting to know why this is the case, what proportion of complaints are genuine, and what does this rise signify (e.g. public attitudes, lower police effectiveness or standards, perhaps even greater police activity)?

Cllr. Dr. R. Evans

I would like to raise the following points about local Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAPS).

- a) mindful that NAPS have been in operation for a number of years could we have an update of the Terms of Reference of these NAPS in the light of experience gained ?
- b) to what extent are Councillors - Town/Parish/District or County encouraged to sit on NAPS ?
- c) what is the view from the Police perspective of NAPS in terms of dealing with community issues such as crime and anti social behaviour ?

District Commander Nick Lee is happy to take any other questions on the night.

6. **Older People Task and Finish Group**

Cllr. Ramage presented the Group's final report to Cabinet on 14/2/11 – see minute extract attached.

To note that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Well-Being will provide a detailed response and recommendations to the Cabinet meeting on

28/3/11.

7. Future Officer Support Arrangements for the Overview and Scrutiny Function

To note that the arrangements for providing support to the Overview and Scrutiny function in the new civic year will be as follows:-

Activity	Responsibility
Attending meetings of the O and S Committee and providing advice and guidance.	Sharon Lowe, Assistant Chief Executive
Co-ordinating and taking all the necessary action to progress the Committee's annual work programme including drafting scrutiny final reports and setting up Scrutiny Steering Board.	Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager
Monitoring of progress of O and S recommendations.	Emma Wisbey, Governance Lawyer
Compiling reports on all O and S issues including new scrutiny legislation.	Sharon Lowe, Assistant Chief Executive
Preparation of Agenda and minutes.	Member Services Team
Liaison and maintaining an overview with the Chairman of the O and S Committee.	Sharon Lowe, Assistant Chief Executive

In the meantime, the Committee will be aware that as initial research had not produced an overwhelming case for a Governance Committee (merging the functions of Overview and Scrutiny, Audit and Standards Committees) a Working Group appointed by the Local Government Reform Cabinet Sub Group is undertaking further work on the matter, and that the issue of resources is one of the items that it will examine. A final report is due to be submitted to the Council's AGM on 26/5/11.

8. Decision Planner

To consider the Decision Plan for the period 14/2/11 to 30/6/11 (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 (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.