

# Minutes

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012



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

### 37. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** There were no Declarations of Interest.

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.

### 38. **QUESTION TIME**

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

### 39. **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 40. **TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

**INFORMATION:**

#### **Task and Finish Group - Council's General Property and Land Investment Policies**

Members received an update from Councillor Tattersley, Chairman of this Group. Members noted that the Group had not been progressing as quickly as had been hoped. The Group has been reviewing Council property assets generally and related fees and charges. The Group's next meeting in April will include consideration of accessing Council owned land.

#### **Task and Finish Group - Local Highway Liaison**

Members received an update from Councillor Abbott, Chairman of this Group. The Group is progressing well and to the timetable it had set itself of producing a draft report by the

end of March. Officer support has been excellent. Feedback on the experiences of members of the public and town and parish councils on highway repairs has been sought. For feedback from members of the public, newspaper and website adverts had been used. The Group plans two further meetings and aims to produce its final report by May 2012.

41. **ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12, SCRUTINY OF TRANSPORT LINKS AND ACCESSIBILITY TO HEALTH SERVICES ACROSS THE DISTRICT**

**DECISION:**

That it be **recommended to Cabinet** that:

1. The Council encourages NHS Mid Essex PCT to commission or otherwise develop the provision of out-patient services in Witham possibly using the Oncology Services that has been in place at Douglas Grove Surgery, Witham, as a model.
2. The Council works in partnership with NHS Mid Essex to develop the provision of further GP – led community based patient services in Witham such as minor surgery and diagnostics, and that the Council reviews its available land in Witham with a view to identifying a site for the possible provision of those services.
3. The Council reviews how it might further promote the availability of the Community Transport Service.
4. The Council encourages Essex County Council and Essex PCTs in their efforts to review the proposed provision of an Essex wide Health and Adult Social Care Transport and the proposed One Stop Call Centre Services with the aim of finding a suitable cost effective way of providing the service.
5. Essex County Council explores the expansion of the Hospital Hopper Service to include more areas in the North of the district to include transport to Colchester General Hospital and also considers, together with Suffolk County Council the expansion of Hopper Routes to West Suffolk General Hospitals and to Broomfield Hospital for Witham and the immediate catchment areas.
6. The Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group be supported in its proposals to increase the delivery of more health services locally in the district including chiropodist, orthotics and podiatrist services.
7. NHS Mid Essex PCT be encouraged to develop their proposed “Care Home Dashboard” to provide information on care home use of hospital services with the potential to assist in moving towards more efficient use of hospital services by care homes and in turn, allow more home residents to avoid hospital visits and remain in familiar surroundings.
8. The Committee recognises the value of Village Agents in identifying and supporting those vulnerable people in their communities and therefore recommends that Essex County Council be encouraged to continue the Village Agent service.

42. **ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2012, A SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

**INFORMATION:** The Chairman welcomed the following invited speakers:

John Zammit	Chairman, Braintree District Community Safety Partnership
Jane Richards	Vice Chairman, Braintree District Community Safety Partnership
Chief Inspector Nick Lee	District Policing Area Commander, Uttlesford and Braintree

The invited speakers provided the following information in response to questions raised by members:

- Braintree District Council plays a key part in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The role of the Council includes holding CSP funds and administering and employing people in the partnership;
- The CSP's Strategic Assessment leads to the identification of the Partnership's priorities and the development of an Annual Plan. The Assessment is based on information from across the district along with national and other information;
- Scrutinising the success of the CSP can be difficult in some areas. For example, how much is a reduction in the number of Anti Social Behaviour Orders a result of the work the police or the CSP? However, the objective of the CSP is that sum of its parts is greater than each individual agency;
- Joint Action Groups (JAGs) are key partnership activities with the public sessions held in Braintree, Witham and Halstead. Community led solutions are encouraged through JAGs and funded by the CSP where they are considered suitable and viable.
- The CSP has found raising public awareness of the Partnership difficult and a challenge that has yet to be met. Members of the public confuse the CSP with the Council and the Police. A newsletter has been produced although it does not yet have wide circulation;
- Funding is a significant concern for the CSP. Sources of funds to the CSP were greatly reduced last year and no further funds are expected this year under the current funding system. New sources of funding are being sought. However, the long term future of the CSP is uncertain and it could become a "toothless beast";
- The reasons for the increase in the number of reported domestic abuse cases are unclear. Drugs and alcohol are a factor although increased reporting could also be a factor as there are now many more reporting mechanisms. Work is being done with families with complex needs which includes addressing domestic abuse;

- It is not viable for the Police Crime Commissioner, as an individual to attend Responsible Authority Group meeting. However, it is hoped that there will be engagement with the Commissioner;
- Policing levels are largely determined by crime levels in an area and as a result, more police are centred in urban areas. Police Community Safety Officers have been moved to the rural north of the district to assist with policing in the area. The District Policing Area Commander acknowledged that concerns have been expressed by residents over policing levels in that area and advised that the police were working to try and address those concerns.

It was agreed that copies of the CSP's Executive Summary of the Strategic Assessment, Annual Plan and Terms of Reference would be circulated to members.

Members were very interested in scrutinising the CSP further and learning about its wider scope and functions. Members wished to better understand the role and the broad framework of the CSP, its value to the community and how it relates to the strategic objectives of the Council. It was suggested that scrutiny of the CSP could be a major item for the Committee in the next Civic Year and agreed that the Chairman would discuss further scrutiny of the partnership and the role of the Committee with the Member Services Manager.

The Chairman thanked the invited guests for their presentations and worthwhile contributions.

#### 43. **DECISION PLANNER**

**DECISION:** That the Decision Planner for the period 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012 be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.54pm.

Dr R L Evans  
Chairman