

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation **Report Number: L170**
To: Overview and Scrutiny **Date of Meeting: 27 March 2012**
(Community Services) Committee

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY SERVICES) COMMITTEE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This paper provides a basis for the Committee’s annual report to Council.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Constitution, the Committee must report annually to Council on its work during the last year and make recommendations for future work programmes and if appropriate, amended working methods.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Head of Corporate Organisation, in consultation with the Committee Chairman, complete the Committee’s Annual Report for submission to the next meeting of Council based upon this report and the Committee’s views.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There have been no financial implications to date other than the costs of officer time and normal allowances for Members that are included in the budget.
- 3.2 Any development of the work of in-depth scrutiny, including items such as the payment of out of pocket expenses for expert and other witnesses, can be accommodated within existing budgets for 2012/13. The position for future years will be addressed through the Strategic Financial Planning Process, if that is necessary.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report is an update on work completed during 2011/12, together with a draft programme for 2012/13. Risk management considerations for individual topics will be included in reports to the Committee as the year progresses.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Officers and Members were invited to identify any topics for consideration during 2012/13.

6. Equality Analysis

- 6.1 There are no equality implications with this report. Equality analysis considerations for individual topics will be included in reports to the Committee as the year progresses.

7. **Shared Service/Partnership Implications**

- 7.1 A Joint Scrutiny Committee has been established to keep the overall implementation plan under review. Shared Service/Partnership implications for individual topics will be included in reports to the Committee as the year progresses.

8. **Key Information**

8.1 Work in 2011/12

The following is a summary of the Committee's main achievements during the year:

- a) The Committee has considered a review of the operational arrangements for long stay car parking charges in Sudbury and Hadleigh during the six month period from October 2010. The following were among responses to issues raised by Members:
- The increased data available from the new arrangements shows clear evidence of changes in the usage pattern, with a better 'churn' of vehicles
 - Neither the Police nor Suffolk County Council has identified an increase in illegal parking, although it is recognised that there has been some increase in on-street parking
 - Confirmation that the estimates of income take into account all relevant costs
 - Officers administering the charging scheme have tried to address early problems sympathetically and support the proposed changes which they consider will be an improvement
 - Any proposals for the introduction of residents' parking schemes would be a matter for Suffolk County Council as highway authority.
- b) The Committee considered the annual review of the Babergh Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Inspector Crick from Suffolk Constabulary was present for this item and answered detailed questions from Members on various issues including:
- The performance of the CCTV system including the mobile unit, and the arrangements for the use and training of volunteers. Visitors to Sudbury Police Station to view the monitoring operation are welcome.
 - The night time economy.
 - Current situation on the possible use of DPP Orders (Designated Public Protection Orders).
 - Domestic abuse – number of incidents is fairly static but there appears to be increased confidence in reporting.
- c) The Committee has considered the annual report of the Development Committee for 2010/11. The following were among the points raised:
- The disappointingly low numbers of Parish/Town Council representatives who spoke at Development Committee during 2010/11. The view was expressed that Members might wish to encourage their Parishes to take the opportunity offered by the Council's policy on public speaking.
 - Further information on the operation of the New Homes Bonus payments.
 - The extent to which the Building Control Service is able to attract work of a commercial nature.

- The definition of minor and major applications, and the reasons why some applications do not meet target times.
 - The effect of vacancy management on delivery.
 - Use of consultants which is restricted to specialist advice if not available in-house.
 - The effect of home working in rural areas in relation to the balance to be struck with residential amenity.
 - Matters relating to the operation of Section 106 Agreements, use of the available monies and the continuing need to encourage Parishes to bring forward qualifying schemes.
- d) A considerable amount of work has been undertaken by the Strategic Financial Planning (SFP) Task Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to identify savings, efficiencies and additional income generation. A joint meeting of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees was held and the key budget options for 2012/13 were scrutinised. The Committee's views on the key issues were reported to Strategy Committee and other suggestions for savings included:
- Increase the brown bins charge
 - Increasing charges generally by 5% not 3%
 - Establish Trusts/Community Interest Companies to save Business Rates
 - Use of office space
 - Procurement Task Group to assess savings opportunities at their next meeting.
- e) The Committee has received an update on the work undertaken by the Council in respect of the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity functions. It was noted that a possible location has now been identified for an aerial for the satellite phone system.
- f) The Committee considered a report setting out the requirements for Babergh in supporting Suffolk County Council in meeting its obligations under the Flood Risk Regulations (2009). The Flood and Coastal Policy Manager from Suffolk County Council was present for this item to answer questions from Members on various matters, including the respective responsibilities of the various agencies involved.
- g) The Committee received an update on Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny arrangements. It was noted that the County Council is now establishing a Health Scrutiny Committee in addition to its Scrutiny Committee. Also that the Director of Corporate Services will report to a future meeting of the Committee once the County health scrutiny arrangements have been finalised.
- h) The Committee carried out a review of the 2010/11 Community Grants Scheme. This included a presentation by representatives from four organisations in receipt of funding during 2010/11. It was noted that the Council's current criteria/policy for the allocation of grants would not continue beyond 2012/13 and that proposals for the establishment of a joint Grants Policy with Mid Suffolk DC would be developed during the coming year following a review of both Council's grant policies. During the debate the following were among the queries and issues raised:

- Clearer definitions of the types of payments made under the Scheme would be useful – e.g. the current list includes grants, commissioning arrangements, partnership funding agreements and payment for services including those which are in fact statutory obligations.
- Tighter guidelines on grants made for activities which are the responsibility of other statutory agencies.
- The annual report to Members on the Grants Scheme should include more information on the operational details of the Scheme, the arrangements for securing matched funding and more precision about how the Grants Scheme ensures that the delivery of grant funded services meets the Council's Strategic Plan Themes
- A quota system to achieve a balance between core funding and project funding needs to be considered
- The criteria and policy need to be flexible enough to reflect the changing circumstances of existing and potential grant recipients
- A policy for spreading grant funding more equally across the District needs to be considered.

It was agreed that all of these issues would be dealt with in the Grants Review.

- i) The Committee considered the annual report by the Council's representative on the Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) who answered questions from Members on various issues including:
 - Hamilton Road, Sudbury – timescale and redevelopment proposals (it was noted that an electronic copy of the planning guidance for Hamilton Road would be sent to Committee members)
 - Brantham Industrial Site – deterioration of the site and regeneration plans
 - Dry Port – need to reduce carbon emissions and encourage greater use of the railways
- j) The Committee considered a report providing an update on the performance and development of a key and operational partnership between Babergh and South Suffolk Leisure (SSL). The Chief Executive of SSL was present for this item and answered questions from Members on various issues including:
 - Customer Forums
 - Energy efficiency proposals
 - Proposals for improving reception area and refurbishment of the café
- k) The Committee considered an annual update on the self financing of the additional staff resources within the Building Control Service after the termination of the Building Control Partnership between Babergh DC, Ipswich Borough BC and Suffolk Coastal DC. The following were among the issues raised:
 - Integration with Mid Suffolk Building Control Group
 - Promotion of energy efficient buildings
 - Differences between statutory and additional income

- l) The Committee received an update on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity activity since October 2011. The following were among the points raised:
- The Committee would like to continue to receive six-monthly reports
 - Future reports to include a more up-to-date work plan if possible
 - Further work required on ICT and satellite phones
- m) The Committee has scrutinised the draft HRA Budget for 2012/13 and the draft 4-year Capital Programme for Council Housing. The Committee's views were reported to Strategy Committee for consideration at their meeting on 9 February 2012 alongside the HRA 30 year Business Plan required under the Government's Council Housing self-financing reforms.
- n) The Committee will consider the introduction of a revised joint Corporate Enforcement Policy for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils at this meeting.

8.2 Work Plan for 2012/13

Appendix 1 sets out a list of items of work that Members and Officers have identified for consideration by the Committee during 2012/13. It is recommended that Members should identify which, if not all, of the matters they consider should be addressed by the Committee in 2012/13 and importantly, what other areas they think should be considered for inclusion in the work programme. If any such areas are identified, an assessment sheet will need to be completed, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2. In doing so, Members are asked to consider the principles of PICK analysis which have been approved by the Committee. A summary is attached at Appendix 3. Further guidance on the selection of issues for inclusion in the annual work programme can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook.

9. Appendices

Title	Location
Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee: Proposed Work Plan for 2011/12	Attached
Appendix 2 – Planning Assessment Sheet	Attached
Appendix 3 – PICK Analysis	Attached

10. Background Documents

None.

Authorship:

Karen Sayer
Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01473 826652
Email: karen.sayer@babergh.gov.uk

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation

Report Number:

To: Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee

Date of Meeting:

DRAFT WORK PLAN FOR 2012/13

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 22 MAY 2012

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
Community Safety Partnership – Annual Review	To consider work of CSP in 2011/12	Decision	Paul Little
Suffolk Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	To consider Public Consultation Draft	To be determined	Chris Fry

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 24 JULY 2012

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
HRA Business Plan and budget/costs	To consider proposals for HRA Budget	Recommendation to Strategy	Barry Hunter
Annual report of Development Committee	To consider annual report	Decision	Nick Ward
Emergency Preparedness Work Plan	Six-monthly review	Decision	Jonathan Free
Review of Community Grants	To scrutinise community grants scheme	Decision	Sara Jackson

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2012

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
South Suffolk Leisure – Annual Report	To review performance in 2011/12	Decision	Paul Little
Haven Gateway Partnership	Annual Report	Decision	Mike Hammond
Community Grants Budget – 2012/13	Full strategic review	Decision	Sara Jackson

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 20 NOVEMBER 2012

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer

**DATE OF COMMITTEE – 11 DECEMBER 2012
JOINT MEETING WITH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
(STEWARDSHIP) COMMITTEE (IF REQUIRED)**

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
Report of the Strategic and Financial Planning Task Group	To consider the Group's recommendations	To be determined	Barry Hunter

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 29 JANUARY 2013

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer

DATE OF COMMITTEE – 26 MARCH 2013

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
Annual Report	To consider draft Annual Report for 2012/13	Recommendation to Council	Steve Ellwood

Authorship:

Karen Sayer
Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01473 826652
Email: karen.sayer@babbergh.gov.uk

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY () COMMITTEE

PLANNING ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR REVIEWS

What is to be reviewed?	
Why?	
What benefits are expected?	
What needs to be examined and asked?	
Documents/evidence/research <i>What?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Site visits <i>Where?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Consultation <i>Who/what?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Witnesses <i>Who?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
What resources will be needed for the review?	
Over what period should it be carried out?	Start Complete
Who will be the lead officer?	

PICK ANALYSIS

In developing its annual work programme, Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be clear about the reasons for selecting particular issues and what they are seeking to achieve.

The list of topics and issues for the work programme can be a very long one if not careful. Some councils use an idea called PICK to prioritise the types of issues to choose. PICK stands for:

- P Public Interest
- I Impact
- C Council Performance
- K Keep it Context

P for Public Interest

Councillors are the eyes and ears of the public, ensuring that the policies, practices and services delivered by both Babergh District Council and external organizations, are meeting local needs and to an acceptable standard. The concerns of local people should therefore influence the issues chosen for scrutiny.

I for Impact

Scrutiny is about making a difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. Not all issues of concern will have equal impact on the well-being of the community. This should be considered when deciding the work programme and priority be given to those issues that have more impact.

C for Council Performance

Scrutiny is about improving performance and ensuring the people of Babergh are served well. Councillors will need good quality information to identify areas of poor performance both within the Council and externally. There are no shortage of Performance Indicators available in the public service arena, both national and local, although the quality and relevance will vary. There is a need to select the most relevant performance indicators and to seek an interpretation of results.

K for Keep it in Context

To avoid duplication or wasted effort priorities should take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered. Is there a Best Value Review happening or planned? Is the service about to be inspected by an external body? Are there major legislative or policy initiatives already resulting in change? If these circumstances exist councillors may decide to link up with other processes (e.g. Best Value Review) or defer a decision until the outcomes are known or conclude that the other processes will address the issues.

PICK CHECKLIST

More “ticks” across all four categories indicates that the topic is more suitable for in depth review.

<p>Public Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> There is evidence of significant public interest in this topic <input type="checkbox"/> It is a “high profile” topic for specific local communities or communities of interest <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area where we received a lot of complaints and / or bad press <input type="checkbox"/> The review will need to include participatory events and opportunities for local people and / or organizations to have their say <input type="checkbox"/> Substantial survey or research work is required
<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> This review will have a significant impact on the “well being” of Babergh <input type="checkbox"/> A local community or community of interest have much to gain or lose <input type="checkbox"/> Work is needed to develop the routes to influencing change (e.g. with partners) <input type="checkbox"/> This could make a big difference to the way services are delivered <input type="checkbox"/> This could make a big difference to the way resources are used
<p>Council Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Council and / or other organizations are not performing well in this area <input type="checkbox"/> We do not understand why our performance differs from others <input type="checkbox"/> We are performing well but spending too much money in this area <input type="checkbox"/> There are few local or national performance measures / targets for this service <input type="checkbox"/> This service is fundamental to the achievement of Council objective(s)
<p>Keep in Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> This service will not be part of a BV Review or external inspection in the next 2 years <input type="checkbox"/> This service will be reviewed or inspected soon but Scrutiny can make a positive contribution by focusing on key areas of interest and making recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> This service has not been recently reviewed or inspected <input type="checkbox"/> There are no current major changes to service that reduce or pre-empt the value of review <input type="checkbox"/> Service changes are planned and Scrutiny can positively influence change