

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation

Report Number:

M6

To: Council

Date of Meeting:

24 April 2012

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

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 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. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12 be noted.
- 2.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee's Work Plan for 2012/13 be approved.

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 have been involved in identifying 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 was again undertaken by the Strategic Financial Planning (SFP) Task Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in relation to the Budget and agreeing areas for 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 made.
- 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 recommended the adoption of a new joint Corporate Enforcement Policy for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

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.

9. **Appendices**

Title	Location
Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee: Proposed Work Plan for 2012/13	Attached

10. **Background Documents**

None.

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BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation

Report Number:

To: Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee

Date of Meeting:

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
How to Encourage Work Experience and Apprenticeship Schemes in MSDC and BDC	To consider recommendations of Working Group	Recommendation	Paul Banjo

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

Topic	Purpose	Decision or Recommendation to Strategy/Council	Lead Officer
Allocations Policy of Section 106 Agreements	To consider the proposed update	Recommendation to Council	Julie Abbey-Taylor
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
CIL and Section 106 Agreements - discussion paper	To consider the implications of the new arrangements	Decision	Lindsay Barker

**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
Budget Proposals - 2013/14	To scrutinise further (if necessary)	To be determined	Barry Hunter

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:

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