
OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Environment Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
 - (a) **Work Programme 2006/07** – We have given consideration to the Work Programme of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2006/07 and in doing so examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan for particular areas of interest and concern. We continually added to our Work Programme and monitored ongoing items.
 - (b) **Work Programme 2007/08** – Our Work Programme for 2007/08 was also given due consideration and we discussed our plans for review topics. Cabinet’s Forward Plan was examined for particular areas of interest and concern to be included in our Work Programme together with further areas for undertaking Task and Finish Review Groups.
 - (c) **Annual Report of Scrutiny 2006/07** - We compiled our Annual Scrutiny Report which shows that Environment Scrutiny has worked hard to ensure that the Scrutiny Process is developed using good practice and harnesses the experience and interests of all Members to the benefit of the Town’s population in the drive to improve services and look after our environment for everyone.
 - (d) **Local Government White Paper** – We received a summary of the key themes of the Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities, which has been designed to form a new phase in the relationship between central and local government with authorities assuming greater responsibilities in their area and ultimately being judged on delivery of those responsibilities. The main themes of the paper are community engagement, executive and scrutiny roles for Members, place-shaping, which includes working with LSPs, comprehensive performance assessment and efficiency. We made a recommendation for Member Training on this issues.
 - (e) **Policy Review – Car Parking Issues on Haughton Road Task and Finish Group** - Following a request from a Member we undertook a Task and Finish to investigate car parking issues in the Haughton Road area following relocation of the College and Councillors Hartley, Long and J. Vasey were nominated to serve on that Group. Members undertook several site visits to the area to evaluate the situation and were advised by Officers of residents’ parking schemes that were to be implemented in the area. The Review Group decided to monitor the situation following the implementation of the parking schemes.

- (f) **Policy Review – Service Planning Task and Finish Review Group** – We received a progress report on the Service Planning Task and Finish Review Group whereby Members of this Committee considered methods of increasing Scrutiny involvement in Service Planning and the ongoing monitoring of Service Plans in preparation for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment in March 2008.
- (g) **Policy Review – Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS)** –. One of Environment Scrutiny’s Reviews for the Municipal Year 2006/07 is to focus on the HERS Scheme and the subsequent Northgate Partnership Scheme to identify what effect the Scheme had had on Northgate, whether it represented value for money and if a notable difference had been made to the area. We have considered our Final Report and forwarded it, with recommendations, to Cabinet for consideration.

Councillor Stella Robson
Chair of Environment Scrutiny Committee