

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR RESOURCES
17 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillors Barlow, Bing (until 7.00pm), Cartwright, Martin, Sabetian and Stevens (in the Chair),

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following councillors declared an interest in the minutes as indicated:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Martin	7	Personal – Member of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

6. MINUTES

Katrina Silverson, Scrutiny Officer, brought to the committee's attention an error in the minutes of 22 May 2008. Under members present, both Councillors Pragnell and Beaver were incorrectly entered. They were in attendance at the meeting, but as invited lead members.

RESOLVED - that following the amendment to the minutes as stated above, the minutes of the meetings held on 22 May and 17 June 2008 be approved as a true record.

7. QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Jane Hartnell, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Sustainability, presented the Quarter One Performance report.

The report advised members of the performance against the 2008/09 targets in Part II and Part III of the Corporate Plan, together with related budget issues within the Personnel & Organisational Development and Corporate Resources Directorate.

Members discussed the waiting times for customers telephoning Revenues and Benefits. They felt that the waiting times were still too long and asked for information to be brought back to the committee on how this could be addressed. They also felt that there should be an absolute upper limit of waiting times. Neil Dart, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate

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Resources agreed to bring some information back to the committee as part of the Quarter Two Performance Monitoring.

Other issues raised included Equalities, membership of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and Councillor Call for Action (CCfA). Verna Connolly, Head of Personnel and Organisational Development confirmed that there was much working currently ongoing with the Equalities Standard and there was extensive training being held for managers. Graham Belchamber, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Manager explained that while retaining membership of HOSC was not under review, the annual membership fee of around £7,000 per annum paid by all East Sussex authorities is and he would be meeting with the East Sussex County Council Scrutiny Manager to discuss this.

Graham Belchamber also reported that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny would be consulting all members to ask for views on further improving O&S in order to take action on target 18.2. This review would be focussed on the performance management role of O&S, training for members in O&S and how we can better promote its work programme and successes. All members agreed that O&S was performing very well with its range of scrutiny reviews. It was also confirmed that O&S had powers to review public services delivered by other public sector and commercial providers.

Members also asked what methods the council were using to encourage more people with disabilities to apply for positions. Verna Connolly explained that the council did actively encourage everyone to apply, including people with disabilities and the BME groups. She explained that measures were also in place to ensure that people weren't disadvantaged when applying for jobs. There had been much work to develop and establish links with various groups, one of these being Tressell Training.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. staff in the Corporate Resources and Personnel and Organisational Development Directorates be thanked for their hard work; and**
- 2. the committee noted that action is being taken to improve any shortfalls in performance and/or to address risks highlighted.**

8. UPDATE ON SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SHARING SKILLS AND TRADING SERVICES

This item was moved up the agenda at the request of Councillor Bing.

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Councillor Bing updated the committee on the progress of the review. He explained that most Heads of Service had been interviewed; it was apparent that much work had gone into their statements. The review team were also hoping to meet with a representative of Kent Commercial Services to hear how they operate.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. UPDATE ON MOTION TO COUNCIL: WEBCASTING AT MEETINGS

Mark Bourne, Head of ICT Services gave a brief update to the committee on the progress of this project. Members had a constructive initial meeting and had explored the background to the project. This had also sparked a debate on alternative arrangements to webcasting. The project team were scheduled to visit East Sussex County Council next week to see how their webcasting system worked.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10. UPDATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Cartwright updated the committee on the progress of this project. He explained that this had been a delayed piece of work, due to the introduction of new Government Performance Indicators. The group were attending a Beacon Councils training event next week and would feedback on this at their next meeting.

Neil Dart commented that it might be helpful for the project group to establish exactly where we were in terms of the existing policy and then compare with other authorities. Potential gaps and/or best practice could then be identified to assist the project group in their planning.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. UPDATE ON SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ON STREET PARKING AND USE OF PARKING SURPLUS

Councillor Cartwright updated the committee on the progress of this review. The initial meeting of the review team had enabled them to see both the pitfalls and strengths of the current process. There was also discussion as to how elected members could feed into the process of the use of parking surplus. The second meeting had seen a workshop of community and

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business representation from the Old Town and Town Centre come together to express their concerns and raise suggestions.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CABINET DECISIONS

Katrina Silverson, Scrutiny Officer, presented a report on the recent Cabinet Decisions made since the last formal meeting, highlighting areas that fell within the Committee's remit.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.08pm)