

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR SERVICES
15 MARCH 2010**

Present: Councillors Fawthrop, Forward, Webb (in the Chair) and Wilson (the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Bird).

Lead Members in attendance: Councillors Cooke and Lock.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bird and Corello and Katrina Silverson, Scrutiny and Electoral Services Officer.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Beaver (from the gallery)	4	Personal – Member of Hastings Runners
Fawthrop and Webb	7	Personal – Any discussion relating to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) as County Councillors
Lock	7	Prejudicial – ESCC Lead Member for Transport & Environment (in relation to the CCTV discussion)
Webb	8	Prejudicial – Any discussion relating to the Seafront Strategy

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 and 9 February 2010 be approved as a true record.

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**19. QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL
MONITORING REPORT**

Mark Horan, Policy and Partnerships, presented the report which advised Members of the performance against the 2009/10 targets in Part II and Part III of the Corporate Plan and related budget and risk issues.

Members discussed Fixed Penalty Notices, bus routes and the community bus service that has taken over from the No 23 bus route.

Councillor Forward asked if there was anything more than could be done with regard to vehicles parking in School Safety Zones and Mike Hepworth, Head of Environmental Health, replied that the number of PCNs being issued should act as a deterrent.

Members also discussed the contract with Veolia. Waste collection was disrupted during the bad weather but is now running normally. Members were pleased to note the increase in the numbers of residents participating in the Garden Waste scheme.

There was discussion about street cleansing, in particular dog fouling, and Councillor Forward remarked that it is still a problem. Richard Homewood, Corporate Director Environmental Services, replied that he appreciated the point being made and said that while the Council was doing all it could, we also did rely on residents reporting irresponsible dog owners.

Councillor Webb congratulated officers on the Green Flags awarded to Hastings Country Park Nature Reserve and Alexandra Park and St Leonards Gardens.

Councillor Webb asked for an update regarding Hastings Castle and Kevin Boorman, Head of Communications and Marketing, stated that he was hopeful of receiving funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Members discussed commercial and industrial planning applications and Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer, explained the difficulties in determining some within 13 weeks and the national indicator set by the government that required this. Councillor Webb suggested that the Overview & Scrutiny Chairs discuss the merits of asking officers to write to the government to request that this particular national indicator be removed.

Councillor Webb also asked that officers involved in organising the Seafood and Wine Festival be thanked as the event was a big success.

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RESOLVED

- (1) that staff in the Regeneration Homes and Communities and Environmental Services Directorates be thanked for their hard work;**
- (2) that the Committee be assured that action is being taken to improve any shortfalls in performance and/or to address risks highlighted.**

20. FINAL REPORT ON WORKLESSNESS POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Councillor Fawthrop presented the report summarising the findings of the Overview & Scrutiny Services Panel on Worklessness. The Panel concluded that the policies the Council has in place are proving to be effective and that this report should be used as part of the Hastings Borough Council input into the East Sussex Local Economic Assessment.

Councillor Fawthrop stressed the lack of basic skills and the need for good business premises to attract new businesses to the town. Councillor Webb emphasised the key issues discussed during this review including the large numbers of young people leaving school with no education, employment or training (NEET).

The Committee agreed that further recommendations relating to employment should be included in the final report and agreed the following recommendations:

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Committee agree the report and recommendations and forward it to the Cabinet for discussion.**
- (2) that there should be continued action to create a range of jobs reflecting the need for a diverse range of employment opportunities to meet the needs of residents.**
- (3) that there was a clear need for continued work to address the skills gap in Hastings and to address the large numbers of young people leaving school with no education, employment or training (NEET).**

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- (4) **that actions should continue to create as diverse a range of employment opportunity as practicable in order to extend opportunity to as many residents as possible.**

21. UPDATE ON SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SEWERAGE SYSTEMS AT RISK OF FLOODING

Councillor Wilson updated the Committee on this Review. The group had met a number of times and the report has now been completed and will come to the next Services Committee. After discussions with Southern Water there is now a better understanding of how sewerage is handled in the Borough.

22. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CCTV AS A CRIME DETERRENT

Councillor Fawthrop presented the report which provided an update on progress with the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of the effectiveness of CCTV as a crime deterrent.

Overall it has been demonstrated that CCTV in Hastings has contributed to a reduction in crime and disorder and enhances community safety.

Cllr Fawthrop mentioned that individuals would like to know what happens to their reports and Richard Homewood agreed that reports should be acknowledged.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SEAFRONT STRATEGY

Simon Hubbard, Corporate Director Regeneration Homes and Communities presented the report on the outcome of discussion at Cabinet on the Scrutiny Review and provided the Committee with an update on progress on the action plan.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) **the report and updated action plan be noted**
- (2) **that a further update is considered by Overview & Scrutiny in a year's time.**

24. MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CABINET DECISIONS

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Graham Belchamber presented the report which provided members with detailed information on Cabinet decisions taken since the last O & S meeting that fall within the remit of this Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.10pm)