

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JULY 2009**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Martin Prescott (Chairman), Anne-Marie Pearce (Vice Chairman), Vivien Giladi and Robert Hayward & 1 vacancy.

ABSENT Achilleas Georgiou and Paul McCannah

STATUTORY CO-OPTees: 1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), *Mrs H. Rosen* (other faiths/denominations representative), 1 vacancy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor representative) - *Italics Denotes absence*

OFFICERS: Mike Ahuja (Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services), Sue Payne (Corporate Scrutiny Services), Ian Davis (Director of Environment and Street Scene), Gary Barnes (Assistant Director of Environment and Street Scene), Nicky Fiedler (Environment & Street Scene Business & Quality Manager), Tracey Chamberlain (Acting Head of Customer Services), Andy Rollock (Team Manager Customer Services Centre), Peter Cook (Projects & Estates) and James Kinsella (Democratic Services).

Also Attending:

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WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Prescott welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Georgiou and McCannah.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED

1. the following interests declared in respect of Agenda Item 7 – Audit Commission final report: Management of the Green Belt:
 - a. Councillor Robert Hayward declared a personal (non prejudicial) interest as a tenant farmer of a holding on the Green Belt.
 - b. Councillor Vivien Giladi declared a personal (non prejudicial) interest as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group, Green Belt Forum and Woodland Trust.Both councillors remained in the meeting and participated in the discussion on this item (Min.201 refers).

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2. With the exception of 1.above no other members of the Committee had any personal or prejudicial interests to declare in respect of items on the agenda.
3. Councillor Robert Hayward advised the Committee of his role as deputy to the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene. Agenda items 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Councillor Calls for Action and Call-In) all related to decisions taken by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene but he advised that as his position was not formally recognised under the Constitution, and he had not been party to any of the decisions, he would not be declaring an interest in these items.

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COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION: CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE - BROADLANDS AVENUE AND CLOSE

The Committee received a report from the Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services (No.53) presenting the results of an initial investigation into an issue referred for consideration under the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) process.

As this was the first issue that had been referred to Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) under the CCfA process Mike Ahuja (Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services) briefly outlined the background to introduction of the CCfA, which had been introduced as part of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 07. OSC's role was to consider the issue(s) raised along with the outcome of an initial investigation, before deciding whether to approve the matter as a CCfA.

NOTED

1. The issue referred as a CCfA related to the delay in a review of the operation of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) that had been introduced in the area surrounding Enfield College in September 06 (including Broadlands Avenue and Close). When introduced it had been stated that a review of the CPZ would be undertaken 6 months after implementation, but this was still awaited.
2. The issue had been referred as a CCfA by Councillors Murphy and Simon (local ward councillors) on behalf of residents from Broadlands Avenue and Close, who outlined the attempts they had made since 2007 to seek a review of the scheme. Whilst a majority of local residents were not opposed to the scheme they were keen to seek a review and changes to its current hours of operation.
3. The outcome being sought under the CCfA was for a review of the CPZ to be undertaken within 2 months.
4. The outcome of the initial investigation undertaken by the Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services, as detailed in section 4 of the report, which outlined the attempts made by local ward councillors to resolve the matter on behalf of local residents. It was confirmed that the issue raised did not fall within the excluded list of items as a CCfA.
5. The following comments from Councillor Neville (Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene) in response to the issue:

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- a. that the original scheme had been implemented on the basis of the original proposals, for which a majority of the residents consulted had been in favour;
- b. at the time of its introduction residents had been advised that the scheme would be subject to review after a 6 month period (which was standard practice). Prior to the end of this period the Council had embarked on a comprehensive review of its Parking and Enforcement Policy. Given the nature of the policy review it had been decided that the CPZ review should be put on hold pending the outcome of the Parking and Enforcement Policy (PEP) review.
- c. the PEP review process had subsequently been delayed. The review was now nearing completion with a report on the findings due to be presented to Cabinet, provisionally in October 09. This process had included consultation with scrutiny.
- d. Whilst needing to maintain a consistent approach and avoid any commitment of resources to the amendment of individual CPZ schemes in advance of Cabinet considering the outcome of the PEP review, the Cabinet member advised he would be willing to commence a review of the CPZ but this would be on the basis that:
 - it would not be possible to consider any potential changes to the CPZ scheme identified as a result of the review, until the outcomes from the PEP review had been considered and agreed by Cabinet;
 - no guarantee could be provided that it would be possible to undertake the review within 2 months.
6. Although recognising the commitment towards a review of the CPZ provided by the Cabinet member at the meeting, Councillors Murphy and Simon felt this did not alter the current position and were therefore minded to pursue the matter as a CCfA.

AGREED that having considered the issue raised and initial response provided by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene at the meeting:

- (1) OSC approve the issue raised as a Councillor Call for Action. In reaching this decision members noted:
 - (a) the attempts that had been made to resolve the matter by local ward councillors;
 - (b) that the issue did not involve the commitment to undertake a review of the CPZ but was one of the timing for this process, linked to the outcomes from the PEP review.
- (2) OSC refer the CCfA on the review of the CPZ affecting Broadlands Avenue and Close to the Environment, Parks and Leisure Scrutiny Panel for detailed consideration at its next meeting in September 09.

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CALL-IN: WHEELED BIN PILOT AREAS

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Overview & Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Director of Finance & Corporate Resources (No.54) providing details of a call-in submitted in relation to a decision made by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene (17 June 2009) on the areas selected for introduction of a Wheeled Bin pilot scheme across the borough. The decision had been included on Publication of Decision List No.11/09-10 (Ref.3/11/09-10) issued on 19 June 2009.

The Committee was advised that this decision had been called-in for review by eight members of the Council. The reason provided for the call-in had been the lack of detail on:

- why the specific areas had been selected for the pilot scheme; and
- how the streets identified within each of the pilot areas had been selected, as opposed to whole wards being covered.

The alternative action proposed under the call-in was for the decision to be referred back to the Cabinet member for reconsideration, in order to review the areas identified for the pilot and, if necessary (based on the information provided under the call-in) consider amending the pilot areas.

The members who had called-in the decision did not feel that it fell outside of the Council's policy or budget framework.

NOTED

1. The following concerns highlighted by Councillor Bond (representing the members who had called the decision in for review) in support of the call-in:
 - a. that the wards listed as being covered under the pilot scheme did not accurately reflect the of streets listed as being covered e.g. Town ward had not been listed despite the pilot including a small number of properties in Chase Green Avenue;
 - b. that the pilot areas had not included any part of Southgate or collections scheduled on Tuesday;
 - c. at the way in which the streets included within each pilot area had been selected.
2. The following comments from Councillor Neville (Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene) in response to the call-in:
 - a. The introduction of a wheeled bin scheme had been included as part of the Council's overall Waste Strategy agreed by Cabinet in October 08;
 - b. A pilot scheme had been introduced to enable experience to be gained and lessons to be learnt before any roll out of the scheme on a borough wide basis;
 - c. The areas included within the pilot had been validated and selected on the basis of an analysis by an independent consultant designed to ensure that a cross section of housing types, geographical locations and demographics were covered from across the borough. In total 14000 properties had been included in the pilot scheme with the aim of providing a fully representative response.
 - d. Whilst it would have been possible for the pilot areas to follow ward boundaries this would not have been operationally productive and would

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- have resulted in higher collection costs along with the need to amend collection days.
- e. Whilst recognising that the wards listed in the Delegated Action Report had not reflected all of the streets covered under the pilot, Overview & Scrutiny Committee was assured that they had been included on the map attached as an appendix to the report and this had formed the basis for the decision. Each of the properties included in the pilot areas would also receive a letter providing full details of the scheme.
 3. In addition Ian Davis (Director of Environment and Street Scene) outlined, in support of the comments by Councillor Neville, how the pilot areas had also been selected on the basis of an independent validation process to take account of the move towards area based working, the introduction of new collection rounds and routing and need to maintain productivity rates and balance the workload for each round.

The following issues raised by members in relation to the call-in:

- (a) in response to a query regarding consultation with ward councillors in the pilot areas it was noted that not all members had been consulted. Councillor Neville reminded the Committee, however, that the selection of areas identified had been based on an assessment undertaken by independent consultants designed to ensure a representative cross section of the borough.
- (b) the need to recognise that the scheme was being introduced on a pilot basis.

AGREED that:

- (1) having considered the information provided at the meeting, Overview & Scrutiny Committee confirm the original Cabinet decision:
 - (a) to approve the areas for inclusion within the wheeled bin pilot scheme, as detailed in the plan attached as an appendix to the Delegated Action Portfolio report.
- (2) in reaching the decision in (1) above Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted:
 - (a) the basis of the areas selected for the pilot scheme;
 - (b) that whilst the wards listed in the Delegated Action Portfolio report had not reflected all streets covered under the pilot the final decision to approve the areas had been based on the map attached as an appendix to the report, which had been accurate.
- (3) the call-in process on this item was now complete, enabling the original decision by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene (as set out in (1) above) to be implemented with immediate effect.

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CALL-IN: CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL ASSESSMENTS

Overview & Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Director of Finance & Corporate Resources (No.55) providing details of a call-in submitted in relation to a decision made by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene (17 June 2009) on the award of a contract for Concessionary Travel Assessments. The decision had been included on Publication of Decision List No.14/09-10 (Ref.2/14/09-10) issued on 30 June 2009.

The Committee was advised that this decision had been called-in for review by seven members of the Council. The reasons provided for the call-in had been:

- clarification was needed on the term Freedom Pass in terms of whether it applied to the elderly and/or disabled;
- further consideration was required on the options, including bringing the service "in house", with an outline of the associated costings;
- further detail was required as to why the contractor was chosen and other options discounted.

The alternative action proposed under the call-in was for the decision to be referred back to the Cabinet member in order to reconsider the options available for provision of the service.

The members who had called-in the decision did not feel that it fell outside of the Council's policy or budget framework.

NOTED the following issues highlighted by Councillor Bond (representing the members who had called the decision in for review) in support of the call-in:

- a. clarification was being sought as to which type of Freedom Pass the assessment process would apply to;
- b. concerns were raised in relation to the tight timescale for the tender process along with the experience of the company to which the tender for concessionary travel assessments was due to be awarded, based on their period of operation within Enfield since 2007;
- c. concern was expressed that whilst Enfield Disability Action had been involved in the tender evaluation process, their chair had advised she was due to meet with the company to which the tender had been awarded to discuss training.

As issues had been raised about the tender process and performance of the company to which the tender was due to be awarded, the Committee agreed that the remainder of the call-in should be considered under Part 2 of the agenda (Min.210 refers). Consideration of the item was therefore deferred until the remaining business on the agenda had been completed.

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COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION: PARKING ARRANGEMENTS IN KESTON CLOSE

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The Committee received a report from the Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services (No.56) presenting the results of an initial investigation into an issue referred for consideration under the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) process.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee was advised that its role was to consider the issue(s) raised along with the outcome of an initial investigation, before deciding whether to approve the matter as a CCfA.

NOTED

1. The issue referred as a CCfA related to proposals for the introduction of parking restrictions and a request from residents (which had been declined) to allow footway parking in Keston Close, given concerns relating to emergency access.
2. The issue had been referred as a CCfA by Councillor George Savva (local ward councillor) on behalf of residents from Keston Close.
3. The outcome being sought under the CCfA was for the introduction of double yellow line parking restrictions on both corners and on one side of the road up to No.1 Keston Close (as opposed to them being introduced all the way along one side of the road) and the introduction of footway parking along one side of the road.
4. The outcome of the initial investigation undertaken by the Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services, as detailed in section 4 of the report, which outlined the attempts made by the local ward councillor to resolve the matter on behalf of local residents. It was confirmed that the issue raised did not fall within the excluded list of items as a CCfA.
5. The following comments from Councillor Neville (Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene) in response to the issue:
 - a. the concerns highlighted regarding emergency access had been recognised and as a result a scheme had been designed to address the issue involving the introduction of double yellow line parking restrictions down one side of the road and on the corners at both ends.
 - b. Following consultation with residents, and the initial CCfA investigation, the request for double yellow lines to only be introduction at the corners and up to just before No 1 Keston Close (as opposed to the whole length on one side) had now been agreed.
 - c. Whilst recognising that there were other roads in the vicinity of Keston Close where footway parking was allowed these arrangements had been in place for a long period. The current practice of the Council was not to permit footway parking, and in view of this and concerns regarding the width of the footway it would not be possible to permit this request from residents.
 - d. Following a recent site visit it appeared that a majority of residents within the Close were supportive of the amended proposals.
6. Although recognising and supporting the concession made in relation to proposals for the introduction of double yellow line parking restrictions in the Close, Councillor Savva queried the feedback on the number of residents in support of the scheme without footway parking and was therefore minded to pursue the matter as a CCfA.

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AGREED that having considered the issue raised and initial response provided by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene at the meeting:

- (1) OSC approve the issue raised as a Councillor Call for Action. In reaching this decision members noted:
 - (a) the attempts that had been made to resolve the matter by the local ward councillor;
 - (b) the concession already made by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene, regarding the introduction of double yellow line parking restrictions in the Close;
 - (c) the key issue to be addressed now involved the request for introduction of footway parking along one side of the Close.
- (2) OSC refer the CCfA on the parking arrangements in Keston Close to the Environment, Parks and Leisure Scrutiny Panel for detailed consideration at its next meeting in September 09.

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AUDIT COMMISSION FINAL REPORT: MANAGEMENT OF THE GREEN BELT

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) received the final report from the Audit Commissions review of the Council's arrangements for management of the Green Belt. OSC had been asked to consider the report on behalf of the scrutiny function and note the outcome of the review.

The report was presented by Roy Anklesaria (Audit Commission) and OSC noted:

1. A number of weaknesses had been identified during 2006/07 in relation to the Council's management of its property assets in the Green Belt. The Council had subsequently changed its management arrangements, and appointed specialist external consultants to take over management of its properties in the Green Belt. The report presented to OSC detailed the outcomes from a review of these new arrangements.
2. The main findings from the review, as detailed in section 10 of the report, which highlighted that since 2007 the Council had significantly improved its processes and procedures for property asset management across all portfolios and specifically within the Green Belt.
3. The key actions taken by the Council, as detailed in section 11 of the report, to improve management arrangements of Green Belt assets.
4. The key actions being recommended to secure further improvements, as detailed in section 12 of the report, including voluntary registration of the Council's substantive holdings within the Green Belt at H M Land Registry and maintaining a programme of updating valuations.
5. The detailed Action Plan included within the report, which allocated priorities against each of the recommendations and set out the response

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already provided by the Council. The Action Plan had been passed onto the Council's new External Auditors. Members attention was also drawn to the Audit Commission's recently published study on Asset Management.

The following comments/ issues were then raised on the report:

- (a) Councillor Dey raised queries on the following sections of the report:
 - (i) para 9 – the involvement of councillors representing wards within the Green Belt in the review process. Roy Anklesaria advised that ward councillors were not consulted as part of the review process. The Leader of the Council and Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been involved along with a wide range of officers.
 - (ii) para's 12, 29 to 31 – the action proposed to quantify the outstanding losses from the previous failure to charge appropriate business rates for assets on the Green Belt, particularly in relation to St Johns School.
 - (iii) Recommendation 2 – this was strongly supported as an action for the Council.
 - (iv) Recommendation 6 – the need for a consistent approach in terms of the policy for implementing rent increases was supported as a principle, although further details were requested on how this would be applied. Roy Anklesaria advised that this approach would need to be underpinned by the recommendation to maintain a programme of ongoing valuations. It would still be possible to address individual circumstances within this approach but this would need to be in a way that only applied to the specific asset and was not transferrable.
 - (v) para 37 – details were sought on the progress made in locating missing documentation relating to asset management on the Green Belt.
 - (vi) para 41 – details were sought on the progress made in addressing issues involving the relationship with the Duchy of Lancaster and specific assets including South and North Barvin Farm and Water Tower.

- (b) the following issues were raised by Councillor Giladi:
 - (i) para 18 – the perception that fewer meetings of the Green Belt Forum would be required was challenged. She reported that attendees at the last Forum had, if anything, called for more regular meetings. In addition the need to appoint a permanent Forum chairman was highlighted. Roy Anklesaria highlighted the important role of the Forum in terms of discussing issues relating to management of the Green Belt and as a consultation mechanism for any changes to the Council's Green Belt Strategy and Policy.
 - (ii) para 20 – it was felt reference also needed to be included to the arrangements for officers, as well as councillors, to be clear about their interests, roles and responsibilities in relation to the Green Belt.

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- (c) Concerns were raised by Councillor Hayward, relating to para 34 in the report, about the need for the Council to ensure Value for Money in relation to its management of the Green Belt. As an example he highlighted the short notice provided for the recent sub letting of two properties in the Green Belt.
- (d) Councillor Prescott advised that the recommendation (3) to include the review of a random sample of property disposals within the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme would be considered and requested that an update on progress against the Action Plan and response to the issues raised be provided for a future meeting.

As no further issues were raised the chairman thanked Roy Anklesaria for attending the meeting.

AGREED that

- (1) Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the Audit Commission report and request that a further update is provided by the Director of Place Shaping and Enterprise, for its meeting on 3 November 09 on:
 - (a) the progress being made against the key recommendations within the Action Plan detailed in the report;
 - (b) the issues raised by members at the meeting, as set out above;
- (2) a reference be made to the Assistant Director Corporate Governance regarding the need to seek, in consultation with the Majority Group, the appointment of a permanent chairman for the Green Belt Forum and to ensure that regular meetings of the Forum continue to be held.

Councillor Robert Hayward declared a personal (non-prejudicial) interest in respect of the above item, as a tenant farmer on the Green Belt within the borough. Councillor Vivien Giladi also declared a personal interest as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group, Green Belt Forum and Woodland Trust. Both councillors remained in the meeting and participated in the discussion on this item.

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

Overview & Scrutiny Committee received a draft work programme for 2009/10 to consider and approve as a basis for their work over the next year.

AGREED that the draft programme be approved as the basis for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme during 2009/10, subject to inclusion of:

- a report back (17 September 09) on the outcome of the review approved under the call-in on the Concessionary Travel Assessments; and

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- a report back (3 November 09) on the issues raised in relation to the Audit Commission report on Management of the Green Belt.

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REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) was reminded that under the terms of Enfield's Constitution, Council was formally required to adopt an annual scrutiny work programme on the recommendation of the OSC, following consultation with the Cabinet and Corporate Management Board.

The Committee received a report from the Head of Corporate Scrutiny Services detailing the annual scrutiny programme of work for 2009/10, which members were being asked to review prior to recommending it onto Cabinet and Council for endorsement.

NOTED

1. The annual programme of work had again been based on the combined individual work programmes produced by OSC and each Scrutiny Panel for 2009/10. The combined work programmes had been collated and attached as Appendix 2 of the report. In addition the work programmes had been broken down between Panels and provided as a list of items to be covered by scrutiny during 2009/10, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. The following issues highlighted by OSC as part of their annual work programme review;
 - a. the need for each Panel to continue monitoring and prioritising their programmes of work to ensure that the members and officers involved in supporting each review had the necessary capacity to continue undertaking effective scrutiny. With this in mind the aim again for this year would be for Panels to try and ensure that no more than two detailed reviews were undertaken at any one time;
 - b. the potential impact arising from the introduction of Councillor Calls for Action and need to maintain capacity on each Panels work programme to deal with any issues referred;
 - c. the combined programme did not include the work programme from the newly established Place Shaping and Enterprise Scrutiny Panel, which was still to be developed. Any potential overlap with the work programmes from the existing Panels would need to be addressed as part of this process. Members also recognised the need to manage and prioritise the support officer resource available to support the new Panel.

AGREED that

- (1) subject to the issues identified by OSC as part of their review process, the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme for 2009/10 be referred onto CMB & Cabinet (for comment) and then recommended to Council for formal adoption.

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- (2) the OSC Chairman be granted delegated authority to approve any final amendments or comments on the annual scrutiny work programme, prior to its submission to Council.

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ISSUES REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY PANELS FOR CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

NOTED that with the exception of the Scrutiny Panel work programmes dealt with under the Annual Scrutiny Work programme 2009/10 (Min * above refers), no items had been referred to Overview & Scrutiny Committee by individual Scrutiny Panels for consideration at the meeting.

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MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL TO SCRUTINY

NOTED that Council (1 July 09) had approved the creation of an additional Scrutiny Panel covering the remit of Place Shaping and Enterprise. A copy of the report considered by Council, setting out the Terms of Reference and remit for the Panel, had been included on the OSC agenda, as background information.

Nominations for members of the new Panel were currently being sought, with the Panel due to start meeting from September 09 onwards. The chairman of the new Panel, once appointed, would also serve as a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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REFERENCES TO CABINET

1.1 Specific items to be referred to Cabinet

NOTED that in accordance with the Council's Constitution Overview & Scrutiny Committee had agreed to refer the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10 onto Cabinet & Council for comment and adoption.

1.2 References from Scrutiny to Cabinet/Council: Monitoring Update

NOTED that the following scrutiny references had been considered by Cabinet and Council since the last business meeting of the Committee on 22 April 09:

Council (1 July 09): Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/09

Council had noted the areas identified as future challenges for scrutiny and agreed (following a vote) to endorse the 2008/09 Annual Report for publication

Council (1 July 09): Update for Young Peoples Life Opportunities Commission

Council had received an update on the work undertaken by the Commission and was due to receive the final report and recommendations from the review at its meeting on 23 September 09.

**207
MINUTES**

AGREED that the minutes from the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 22 April 2009, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

**208
DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

NOTED

1. The programme of dates for future meetings of the Committee during the 2009/10 Municipal Year.
2. The next ordinary business meeting of the Committee had been scheduled for 7.30pm on Thursday 17 September 2009.

**209
EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED in accordance with the principles of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

**210
CALL-IN: CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL ASSESSMENTS**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) continued with consideration of the call-in started under Part 1 of the agenda (Min.199 refers), relating to the decision by the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene on the award of a contract for Concessionary Travel Assessments. As part of the review consideration was given to the content of the report relating to the called-in decision circulated as a Part 2 agenda item.

NOTED

1. The concerns raised by Councillor Bond in relation to the company who were due to be awarded the assessment contract were also shared by a number of Committee members, particularly in relation to:
 - a. their procedure for undertaking individual assessments, with examples of specific cases highlighted at the meeting;
 - b. their overall level of experience and local knowledge;
 - c. their administrative processes and review of feedback on the service.

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2. The following comments from Councillor Neville (Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene) in response to the call-in:
 - a. Confirmation was provided that the assessment of cases under the new arrangements would only apply to Blue Badges and the Disabled Persons Freedom Pass. The Elderly Persons Freedom Pass would not be included.
 - b. The new assessments arrangements had been designed to comply with guidance from the Department of Transport (DfT) which had strongly recommended the assessment of non-automatic Blue Badge and Disabled Freedom Pass cases by an independent health professional, as opposed to existing GP endorsement. A key aim was to put in place a robust methodology enabling all applications to be considered in a fair, transparent and equitable way, allowing services to be focussed on those most in need, whilst also reducing inappropriate applications, fraud and misuse.
 - c. In terms of their experience the company to which the contract was due to be awarded had been undertaking assessments for Enfield since 2007 and were also providing similar services to Westminster, Hackney and Harrow. In view of the concerns raised, it was confirmed that the procurement process had fully complied with the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
 - d. The tender bids received had been assessed by an evaluation panel including representatives from Age Concern and Enfield Disability Action. The decision on award of the final contract had not purely been based on cost but had involved a combined assessment of quality (70%) as well as price (30%).

The following issues raised by members in relation to the call-in:

- (a) having expressed reservations at the meeting regarding the company to whom the assessment contract was due to be awarded, support was expressed for the DfT guidance and measures designed to tackle abuse and fraud of the Blue Badge and Disabled Person Freedom Pass system.
- (b) the high standard of service provided by council officers in assisting to resolve appeals against individual assessments.

AGREED that

- (1) having considered the information provided at the meeting, Overview & Scrutiny Committee unanimously refer the original decision regarding the award of contract for concessionary travel assessments back to the Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene for reconsideration with a request:
 - (a) that a review be undertaken into the concerns raised at the meeting in relation to the performance of the company who were due to be awarded the contract; and

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- (b) that the outcome of the review be reported back to the next OSC meeting on 17 September 09, prior to any award of contract being confirmed.

Councillor Neville (as Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene) confirmed at the meeting that he would be willing to suspend the award of contract pending a review of the issues that had been raised and report back to OSC in September 09.

- (2) in reaching the decision in (1) above Overview & Scrutiny Committee, noted that the concerns highlighted for review had not included the tender process, which it was recognised had fully complied with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- (3) under the terms of the call-in procedure the original decision to award the contract for concessionary travel assessments would now remain suspended until its reconsideration had been completed, as outlined in (1) above.

(Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended).