

**Report of Scrutiny and Overview Committees
held between 3rd January and 3rd April 2007**

COUNCIL

Date 19th April 2007

Purpose

- To report issues considered by the Scrutiny Committee, the Health Scrutiny Committee and the Council's Overview Committees between 3rd January and 3rd April and, where appropriate, to report on the outcome of their deliberations.

Minutes for Confirmation and Recommendation

- To note the proceedings of the Scrutiny Committee, Health Scrutiny Committee and Overview Committees held since the last meeting of the Council.
- There are no minutes of the Scrutiny Committee, Health Scrutiny Committee or Overview Committees requiring the confirmation of the Council.

1. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1.1 Meeting of 8th January 2007:

a) Scrutiny Theme - Policing in Swindon

In accordance with its responsibility to hold to account and scrutinise the performance of organisations external to the Council whose operation can affect the wellbeing of the people of Swindon, this meeting afforded the Committee the opportunity to put questions to Mr Andy Tatam, Divisional Commander of Wiltshire Police, on issues relating to policing in Swindon.

Issues raised by members included:

Roll Out of Neighbourhood Policing

- progress towards meeting the April 2007 target date for the roll out of dedicated neighbourhood policing teams
 - the allocation of neighbourhood police resources
 - by political ward and/or other community based areas
 - 23 neighbourhoods, based on Neighbourhood Renewal areas
 - the composition of the neighbourhood policing teams
 - the role of Community Support Officers
- the tailoring of the service to meet the differing demands of each area
 - joint working with other partner agencies
 - local neighbourhood teams encompassing the input of other partners
 - neighbourhood forums in each area to promote meaningful dialogue

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from
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- the importance of partnership working between the police and the local authority and other agencies
 - community policing and the advantages of ensuring a level of continuity in the staffing of area teams
 - policing in the town centre and the impact on adjacent ward and community areas
 - the introduction of the neighbourhood policing model and the implications for policing standards during the period of transition
 - the impact of the changed policing arrangements on local communities

Anti Social Behaviour

- the fear of crime and anti social behaviour often being higher than levels of recorded crime might warrant
- the level of police resources available to tackle incidences of anti social behaviour
- shared responsibility between the police and the local authority to address problem
 - integrated management systems to provide consistent and effective response to anti social behaviour incidents
- role of neighbourhood teams in responding to anti social behaviour incidents
- the Police's anti social behaviour strategy and the recording and analysis of incidents
- mechanisms for ensuring local communities are advised of the police response to reported anti social behaviour incidents
- identification of hot spots and emerging issues
- mechanisms for engaging with young people

Crime Statistics and Performance

- the National "Operation XS" campaign and the increase in alcohol-related crime
- the police response to tackling alcohol-related crime
- alcohol and the incidence of domestic violence
- licensing controls as a mechanism for tackling alcohol-related crime
- community safety partnership seminar – alcohol abuse and violent crime
- CCTV – integrated system as a critical tool to support order and control in the town centre
- Alcohol Referral Programme/Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy
 - The availability of specific funding for alcohol treatment
- The recording of race and other hate crimes and the police response to such crimes
- rates of detection in relation to domestic burglary and vehicle crime

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- acquisitive crime and drug usage

Drug Related Crime

- partnership arrangements to tackle drug related crime
- the reporting and investigation of drug related crime
- police strategies to disrupt the supply of drugs in the area
- The Partnership's Drug Treatment Plan
 - Drugs intervention programme
 - Court orders
 - Attempt to break cycle of behaviour and rehabilitation
 - Young people's Substance Misuse Plan
- Conviction rates
- National Treatment rate statistics/ re-offending
- the impact of reclassification on drug crime strategy and the allocation of police resources

Vulnerable Victims

- measures being taken by the police to encourage the reporting of domestic violence and hate crime
- joint working to address the issue of domestic violence
 - Domestic Violence Co-ordinator and Hate Crime Co-ordinator
 - Dedicated staff dealing with incidents of domestic violence
 - Sanctions Scheme enabling victims of domestic violence to stay in their own homes
- Measures to reduce the Incidence of repeat victimisation
- Appropriate induction and training for dedicated police officers and staff from partner agencies
- Support services for the victims of domestic violence
- Vulnerable Adult Alliance Group

Equality and Diversity in the workforce

- Measures being taken to improve the diversity of the workforce
- Race equality and the maximisation of opportunities for recruitment from minority communities
 - Positive Action Team
 - National Exit Interview Scheme
- Community action to promote career opportunities
- Annual staff intake and the opportunity to increase diversity
- Relatively low turnover of both warranted and non-warranted staff
- Positive discrimination as a tool for promoting equality and diversity

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Project Optimus

- The proposed internal restructuring of the Police Force and the main areas of change
 - Local policing – neighbourhood policing teams
 - Major and serious crime
 - Establishment of full time Major Incident team
 - Detection rates
 - Contact management issues
 - Single non-emergency number
 - Improved call handling and investment in the call-handling resource
 - Response times

1.2 Meeting of 22nd January 2007:

a) Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

In accordance with its responsibility for reviewing the policies, process and implications of Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer decision making and the way in which Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions are made, the Committee received the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th January. The Cabinet minutes were accepted and no matters were referred back for further consideration.

The following issues, arising from the minutes, were discussed by the Committee in detail:

- Development of proposed 0 – 19 Academy
- Fixed Penalty Notices – Scale of Charges and revisions to the Enforcement Policy for environment and Health and Planning Services
- Allocation of One Year Community Grants 2007/8

b) Budget Scrutiny - Stakeholder Consultation Process

The Committee received a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services on the outcomes of the first phase of the Budget Consultation for 2007/08 (Service Priorities Consultation Outcomes) and how these would be used to help inform initial budget proposals for 2007/08 and provide feedback to residents and stakeholders across the borough.

Councillors Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, and Nick Martin, Cabinet Member for Resources, and the Council's Principal Policy and Research Officer were in attendance to respond to Members' questions regarding the 2007/8 budget consultation process and the Cabinet's identified Budget Strategy and priorities, as set out in its 2006-2010 Medium Term Resourcing Plan.

Issues raised by members during their consideration of this matter included:

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- the identification of the specific “areas of saving” identified in the Stage 2 consultation document and the reasons for excluding other service areas where efficiency savings have had to be made
 - increased income from youth service charges
 - the rationalisation and reconfiguration of the Street scene function
 - top slicing of highways function
 - the promotion and usage of the Council's website and the response rate for completing the consultation questionnaire online
 - capital Investment in Park and Ride
 - the proposed discontinuation of the grant to Swindon Music Co-operative
 - the purpose of the consultation in respect of Walcot Family Centre
 - the “mothballing” of the Wroughton Park and Ride site
 - the distribution and promotion of the budget questionnaire
 - the level of supplementary consultation (in addition to the questionnaire)
 - the timeframe for the budget consultation process and the role of Scrutiny within that process
 - the assessment of consultation responses and their impact on the prioritisation of council spending

The Committee resolved that the consultation process used by the Council in support of its budget setting procedures be noted and that a task group be established in the next Municipal Year to review the Council's 2007/8 budget consultation process, particularly in relation to the role of the Scrutiny Committee within that process and the timeframe available for budget scrutiny.

(c) Budget Scrutiny - Financial Planning Advisory Group

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report inviting the Committee to review the role of the Finance Planning Advisory Group (FPAG) in the Council's budget setting process for 2007/8.

Councillor Nick Martin, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report, expanding on the purpose of FPAG and its relationship with both the Conservative Group and the Council as a whole. He emphasised the purely advisory capacity of the Group, utilising its membership's areas of expertise in order to formulate recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet.

Following his introduction, the Committee was given the opportunity to put questions to Councillor Martin regarding the role of FPAG. Issues raised by members included:

- The relationship between FPAG and the Conservative Group and its relationship with the Cabinet

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- The level and nature of officer support for FPAG
 - The budget consultation process and the need to align the roles of Scrutiny Committee and FPAG
 - The role of FPAG in supporting the Cabinet Member for Resources and the mechanisms for reporting to Cabinet
 - Attendees at FPAG meetings and the reasons for limiting member access to its meetings

The Committee thanked the Cabinet Member for Resources for his attendance at the meeting and for his comprehensive explanation and assessment of the role of FPAG in support of his portfolio and agreed that, in furtherance of its function to review the Council's budget setting process, arrangements be made for the Cabinet Member for Resources to report to the Scrutiny Committee on issues debated at FPAG that are likely to impact on the 2007/8 Revenue and Capital budgets.

(d) Environment & Leisure Overview Committee Progress Report

Councillor Glenn Smith, the Chair of the Environment and Leisure Overview Committee, reported to the Committee on progress in completing its agreed work programme for 2006/7 and some of the issues that had been considered at recent meetings.

(e) Resources, Partnership and Performance Overview Committee Progress Report

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report on progress made by the Resources, Partnership and Performance Overview Committee in completing its agreed work programme for 2006/7 and some of the issues that had been considered at recent meetings.

(f) Presentation by the Leader of the Council - Update

Councillor Roderick Bluh, the Leader of the Council, attended the meeting to report on progress made in relation to the service issues and priorities identified in his report to the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12th June 2006 (Minute 5 refers) and on the Council's continuing recovery and performance improvements. Councillor Bluh summarised the Council's performance against a very challenging agenda over the last seven months as "sustained progress on all fronts", advising that the Council had already delivered on seven of its 50 promises, that a further promise was close to being met and that all the remainder were "on track".

Councillor Bluh cited a number of achievements of particular significance, including the successful Corporate Games, the demonstrable progress evidenced by the most recent Corporate Performance Assessment, sustained improvements in education provision and standards and progress towards the

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regeneration of the town centre, and outlined what he felt would be the priority areas for strategic development and service delivery in the coming year.

Following the presentation, Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to comment on the issues raised and to put questions to Councillor Bluh on his assessment of the Council's performance and its priorities for the remainder of the year. Issues raised by Members included:-

- The Leisure Strategy, including the provision of a major sports centre and proposals for a football stadium
- The ASPIRE contract
- Safety in local schools and media representation of recent incident
- The publication of the Council's vision for the regeneration of the town centre
- The future of the Railway Village and the Mechanics Institute
- The future of the Locarno in Old Town

(g) Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2006/07

The Committee received a report on the Committee's work programme for 2006/7, inviting members to note alterations made to the programme and confirm that the meeting scheduled for 25th March be used to review the performance of the Council's Scrutiny function.

1.3 Meeting of 12th February 2007

(a) Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

In accordance with its responsibility for reviewing the policies, process and implications of Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer decision making and the way in which Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions are made, the Committee received the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th February. The Cabinet minutes were accepted and no matters were referred back for further consideration.

(b) Budget Question and Answer Session

Councillor Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, and Councillor Nick Martin, the Cabinet Member for Resources, attended the meeting to report on the outcomes of the Council's Stage 2 Budget Consultation and the impact of the consultation exercise on the Council's 2007/8 Budget proposals and to respond to members' questions in relation to the adequacy of consultations and the budget setting process.

Issues raised by the Committee included:

- The recharging of General Fund cost increases to the Housing Revenue Account

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- Items of one-off expenditure in the 2007/8 budget proposals and the identification of permanent funding streams for ongoing budget pressures in 2008/9
 - The restructuring of departments and confidence that projected efficiency savings will be achieved
 - Increased spending on frontline service provision
 - The availability of grant monies to support waste recycling measures
 - Youth service initiatives and increased charges for certain activities

The Committee agreed to note the results of the Stage 2 Budget Consultation questionnaire and that the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2007/8 were to be fully debated at the meeting of the Council to be held on 15th February, when the council's Revenue Budget 2007/8 would be determined.

1.4 Meeting of 12th March 2007

(a) Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

In accordance with its responsibility for reviewing the policies, process and implications of Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer decision making and the way in which Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions are made, the Committee received the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th March. The Cabinet minutes were accepted and no matters were referred back for further consideration.

The following issues, arising from the minutes, were discussed by the Committee in detail:

- .Adoption of Powers – Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and Representation on the Wiltshire Waste Partnership (Minute for Confirmation)
- Motion at Council – Free Bus Travel for Senior Citizens (Minute for Confirmation).
- Section 31 Agreement for Substance Misuse

(b) Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

Councillor Peter Greenhalgh, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Strategic Planning attended the meeting and responded to Members' questions on issues within his portfolio of responsibility.

Issues raised by members included:

- Promise 25 and the Council's measurement of increased usage of Council tracks
- Promise 37 and planning schemes accompanied by transport schemes
- The Council's ability to facilitate the planning of maintenance works carried out by utilities companies

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- Work with Bus Companies to increase the number of bus routes
 - The establishment of Bus Indicator Boards be in place
 - Progress with individual traffic Schemes

(c) Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

The Committee's approval was sought to the timetable and format for the production of the 2006/07 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. The Committee approved both the timetable and draft format for the production of the 2006/07 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report, subject to a strict length limit to ensure it is accessible. In addition, the Committee asked that the Scrutiny Officers look at how the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Function can be measured and this inform the discussion of the work programme proposals at the Scrutiny Conference in May 2007.

1.5 Meeting of 26th March 2007

Centre for Public Scrutiny Self Evaluation Framework

The Committee received a report providing an introduction to the Centre for Public Scrutiny Self Evaluation Framework for local authority overview and scrutiny functions and inviting the Committee to complete the Framework in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the process with a view to improving the function for the 2007/08 Municipal Year. The Committee debated a number of issues relating to the performance and operation of the Council's overview and scrutiny function and asked the Scrutiny Support Officer to summarise these viewpoints in a report to the next meeting when the Committee's response to the self-evaluation request will be confirmed.

2. HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.1 Meeting of 11th December 2006.

The Director of Public Health's Report 2004-2006

The Director of Public Health with the Swindon Primary Care Trust, presented her Annual Report, "The Health of the Population of the Swindon Primary Care Trust", for the period 2004–6. It was the purpose of the report to:

- provide an independent view of the health of the population
- promote action for better health through measuring progress towards health targets
- assist with planning and monitoring of local programmes and services that impact on health over time
- set out a series of recommendations for action, to be monitored in each subsequent report.

The Committee noted that, in order to inform decision making regarding future service priorities, the report had been circulated widely for consultation.

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Issues addressed by the Director during her presentation of the Annual Report included:

- The context of the report
 - The changing profile of the population
 - Increasing population, particularly in middle to early old age
 - Increasing number of people in their 20s
- Deprivation and poor health
 - Index of multiple deprivation
 - Less deprived than England as a whole (above national average) but significant level of deprivation in relation to
 - Education, skills and training
 - Barriers to housing and services
 - “super output areas” (most deprived areas)
- Life expectancy, mortality rates and premature deaths
- Skin cancer and awareness
- Reduction in the rate of teenage conceptions
- Health Profile for Swindon 2006
 - Lower rates of violent crime and poor quality local authority housing
 - Worse rates of GCSE achievement than national average
 - Rate of teenage pregnancies is higher than the average for England
 - Life expectancy is improving

The Director concluded her presentation by summarising the report's recommendations for 2006-7, these focussing on:

- Tackling the key determinants of health
- Promoting the health of vulnerable communities
- Health improvement
- Promoting the health of children and young people
- Health protection

The Director's presentation was followed by a brief question and answer session.

(b) Developing Pulmonary & Coronary Care Services

The Director of Public Health submitted a report providing the Committee with an overview of the development of pulmonary and coronary care services, particularly in relation to hospital and community based exercise and rehabilitation programmes for patients with chronic heart or respiratory disease. Gill Saunders, the Primary Care Trust's Diabetes Network Manager, introduced the report, emphasising the importance of exercise as a major contributor to the

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reduction in growth in Chronic Heart Disease in the population and in the improvement in the quality of life for patients with chronic heart or respiratory disease. Gill briefly outlined the programmes available to assist patients in making necessary lifestyle modifications, these involving education and psychological input as well as exercise training, and responded to members' specific questions regarding these services. The Committee noted the report.

(c) Review of Maternity Services Progress Report

Adina Grace of the Swindon Primary Care Trust presented a report to the Committee on the response of the PCT to a number of recommendations made by the former Health and External Scrutiny Committee of the Council regarding the availability of choice for expectant women in Swindon of alternative birthing care facilities and, in particular, the establishment of a stand alone birthing unit. The Committee was advised that the PCT had concurred that pregnant women should be offered a choice of where they wished to deliver and had agreed to take on board the recommendations of the former Committee. However, the PCT had become aware of research in this area being undertaken by both the Department of Health and the Healthcare Commission and, as a consequence, felt it prudent to await their outcomes to inform future direction for maternity services. Adina advised that both the PCT and the Hospital Trust were committed to the provision of service choice for pregnant women and would work together to agree a future model for maternity services once the outcomes of the aforementioned research was available.

Lyn Hill Tout, the Chief Executive of the Swindon and Marlborough Acute Trust, acknowledged the difficulties of setting up a birthing centre environment next to a consultant led unit in a hospital but commented that the Trust was receptive to the idea and had asked its Maternity Services Team to consider changes to the clinical environment, and ways in which care is provided, in order to introduce a more friendly "birthing centre ethos". In addition, Ms Hill-Tout advised that the Trust was endeavouring to introduce a greater level of flexibility in the operation of its midwifery teams and the provision of community services to better respond to situations where difficulties were being experienced with particular wards.

The Committee noted the report and also recorded its disappointment that no action can be taken at this time in furtherance of the establishment of a stand alone birthing centre in Swindon.

(c) Swindon & Marlborough NHS Trust Impact Assessment

Lyn Hill-Tout, Chief Executive of the Swindon and Marlborough Acute Trust, presented the details of the Impact Assessment carried out by the Trust in respect of a proposed reduction in the overall complement of inpatient beds.

The Committee concurred with the Swindon and Marlborough Acute Trust's determination, following its Impact Assessment, that proposals to reduce the overall complement of inpatient beds did not constitute a substantial variation in service.

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(e) South West Health Scrutiny Network

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on progress in establishing a South West Regional Health Scrutiny Network, utilising funds made available through a successful bid to the Centre for Public Scrutiny's Health Scrutiny Support Programme. The Scrutiny Support Officer presented the report, advising the Committee of the detail of the proposal and the role of the Project Board set up to oversee the implementation of the Network and to approve all expenditure incurred.

The Committee noted that the inaugural meeting of the Project Board had been held 12th February 2007 when it was agreed that the Network should initially focus on facilitating regional events and working groups in response to issues which impact on Health Scrutiny. The first of these events is planned for June 2007 in relation to the impact of Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) on Health Scrutiny.

(f) Health Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2006/07

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report on progress made by the Committee in completing its agreed Work Programme for 2006/7 and on arrangements for determining a work programme for 2007/8 via a health Scrutiny Conference to be convened in May.

3. CHILDREN'S OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

3.1 Meeting of 8th February 2007

a) School Standards Report

The Committee considered a report and presentation of the Director, Quality and Standards, and introduction to the report from Member Champions, summarising school performance data for the 2006 results and highlighting successes, areas for development and issues to be tackled. Key recommendations arising from the report were:

- All Councillors receive a booklet of the report to understand school performance.
- A proposal come to the next Committee for a 'balanced-scorecard' approach to reporting schools performance to Members;
- The academic achievement of Looked After Children continue to be monitored and supported by the Corporate Parenting Advisory Forum.
- The issues of provision of services for children for whom English is a second language, support for children in challenging circumstances and backgrounds, and provision for children with special educational needs be included as potential areas of focus for the 2007/08 Work Programme.

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b) Issues Relating To Performance In Social Care Of Children

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Families summarising the trends in 2005/06 and the first eight months of performance for Children's Social Care using the Performance Assessment Framework Indicators that would contribute to the Ofsted rating of Children's Services in 2007. The Committee noted key improvements in performance and challenges.

3.2 Joint Meeting of Health Scrutiny Committee and Children's Overview Committee – 29th March 2007

a) Teenage Pregnancy Report

The Committees considered a report and presentation from the Sexual Health Strategic Development Work from Swindon PCT on the current situation with regards to Swindon's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, including:

- the key targets in the local strategy,
- current performance against those targets and compared to national indicators,
- the links of teenage pregnancy to deprivation rates and levels of education attainment, and targeting through the Action Plan of support for schools and parents and increased access to health services and advice for teenagers,
- the way in which action to target teenage pregnancy rates and the profile of the work has increased in recent years through the Action Plan and within the Council, PCT and other agencies through the Local Area Agreement,
- the importance of promoting all round sexual health to make young people aware of the risk of sexually transmitted infections as well as pregnancy.

b) Sex and Relationships Discussion Groups Feedback.

The Committees considered feedback from 140 young people across Swindon following a series of nine Sex and Relationships Discussion Groups. The work commissioned by the Committees, and facilitated in conjunction with the Sexual Health Strategic Development Worker from Swindon Primary Care Trust and the Sexual Health Youth Worker from the youth service, had provided a snapshot of views of some young people in Swindon, rather than a formal consultation. It was noted that the majority of feedback endorsed many of the actions currently contained in the Swindon Teenage Pregnancy Acton Plan 2006/07.

Key recommendations arising from the meeting were to endorse the Swindon Teenage Pregnancy Acton Plan 2006/07, but also invite the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board to review the Plan the in light of the feedback to ensure that the issues identified are adequately addressed. In particular issues relating to support for parents and continued support for the specific needs of children who are 'looked after'. The Committee supported that ongoing

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involvement of Members as champions for the delivery of the Action Plan, and asked for a report back to the Committee during October 2007 on the implementation of the Action Plan following its next review.

4. COMMUNITY, HOUSING & SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

4.1 Meeting of 16th January 2007

a) Review of Community Grants

The Committee appointed a Task Group to consider the issue of minor grants to community groups

b) Adult Social Care: Annual Review of Performance 2005/06

The Committee congratulated officers on progress made and noted the outcome of the Annual Review. The Chair, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Social Care was requested to write to the Borough's Members of Parliament seeking their assistance in obtaining an explanation for Swindon's unfair family grouping for Adult Social Care.

c) Activity by other Service Providers to Support Adult and Community Learning

The Committee congratulated staff for the work being undertaken in respect of Adult and Community Learning, and the Director of Community was asked to prepare an article for inclusion in the Members' Bulletin.

d) Work Programme

The Committee received oral update reports on the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group and on the Sheltered Housing Review.

4.2 Meeting of 22nd March 2007

a) Review of Swindon Borough Council's Sheltered Housing by ARK Consultancy

The Committee considered a presentation and report reviewing the Council's Sheltered Housing. The Committee established a Task Group comprising Mr. Derek Benfield (Chair), Mr. Jo Osorio (Age Concern Swindon), Mr. Peter Cleary (Chair of T.A.S.H.), and Councillors John Ballman, Mavis Childs Owen Lister and Des Moffatt, to consider the issues raised by the consultants report on the Council's Sheltered Housing Stock and the Council's future strategy on Sheltered Housing and report their recommendations to the Committee in September 2007.

The Committee also thanked ARK Consultancy for their work and presentation.

b) Presentation: Carers Project of Older People

This item was deferred until 25th April 2007.

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(c) Work Programme

The Committee received oral update reports on the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group and the Community Grants task Group.

5. RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

5.1 There were no meetings of the Resources, Partnerships and Performance Overview Committee during this period

6. ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

6.1 Meeting of 21st March 2007

(a) Canal Feasibility

The Committee considered the current situation with regard to the potential development of the Wilts and Berks Canal and its links to the regeneration of Swindon Town Centre. The Committee welcomed the proposal and felt that the Canal provided a major opportunity for a Town Centre tourist destination with a view to it being a part of the developing framework for the Town's regeneration and in particular as part of the emerging public realm plans for the Exchange and Arena areas of the Town Centre.

(b) A Vision for Transport to 2030

The Committee considered the draft Vision for Transport to 2030 for Swindon, including strategies for the Town Centre and for parking, prior to it being approved by Cabinet for widespread consultation. The Committee welcomed the Vision noted that it was to be the foundation of a major consultation and modelling exercise to be undertaken throughout 2007, with a view to formal adoption in April 2008. The Committee recognised the Vision was an aspirational document and the funding of which would be considered at a later time, although it was noted that without Central Government funding, much of the Vision could not take place.

Background Papers and Information

- Reports for all Scrutiny and Overview Committees and the related Minutes are available in full on the Committee and Member Information Pages of the Council's Intranet and Website (www.swindon.gov.uk) or on request from Committee and Member Services.

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