

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

**(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)**

**3RD JANUARY 2012
5TH JANUARY 2012
10TH JANUARY 2012**

WORK PLAN STUDIES (Report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. STUDIES

2.1 The Council has a duty to improve the social, environmental and economic well-being of the District. This gives the Overview and Scrutiny Panels a wide remit to examine any issues that affect the District by conducting in-depth studies.

2.2 Studies are allocated according to the Overview and Scrutiny remits. Details of ongoing studies being undertaken by the two other Panels are set out in the attached Appendix.

2.3 Members are reminded that if they have a specific interest in any study area which is not being considered by their Panel there are opportunities for involvement in all the studies being undertaken.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The Panel is requested to note the progress of the studies selected.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Minutes and Reports from previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**Contact Officers: Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer
01480 388006**

**Mrs J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
01480 387049**

**Mrs C Bulman, Democratic Services Officer
01480 388234**

ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy	To consider issues relating to Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy.	Economic Well-Being	<p>Further information requested on the cost of the tourism service and the benefits it brings to both the Council and to the District.</p> <p>Noted that Tourism activity is not currently being undertaken. Study is on hold until circumstances change.</p>	Whole Panel Study
Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure	<p>To review the overall financial performance and monitoring arrangements. To consider the current / future business structure.</p> <p>To consider whether an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres.</p>	Economic Well-Being and Social Well-Being	<p>Interim report submitted to Cabinet on 23rd June 2011. Cabinet requested the Executive Councillor for Organisational Development to review the Council's IT costs, including the basis upon which the IT network service is re-charged to users.</p> <p>Meetings of the Working Group held on 3rd March, 28th April, 23rd June, 1st September, 7th November and 8th December 2011.</p> <p>Report to be submitted to January Panel meetings.</p>	Joint Working Group

			Further meeting to be held in due course to discuss the future strategic direction of the service.	
A14 improvements.	To review the implications to the local economy of the decision not to proceed with the A14 improvements.	Economic Well-Being	<p>Agreed to invite a representative of the Highways Agency to a future meeting to discuss their plans in the event of an interruption to traffic flow.</p> <p>Department for Transport is currently undertaking a consultation on the programme of improvements – A14 Challenge. Closing date for comments is the end of January 2012.</p>	Whole Panel Study.
Tree Strategy	To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.	Environmental Well-Being	Working Group met on 27 July 2011. Draft Tree Strategy circulated to officers for comment. Councillor Davies reported to September meeting. It is hoped that the Strategy will be available for the Working Group to view in February 2012.	Working Group.

Land Use for Agricultural Purpose in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.	To review the lack of promotion and protection of land for this purpose.	Environmental Well-Being	Scoping report to be submitted to a future meeting.	To be determined.
Rural Transport	To review the provision of transportation in rural areas.	Environmental Well-Being	Transport for Cambridgeshire report received in July 2011. Comments conveyed to Cabinet. Final report expected in April 2012.	To be determined.
Maintenance of Water Courses	To receive a presentation on the maintenance arrangements in place for Water Courses within the District.	Environmental Well-Being	The County Council's Flood and Water Manager will attend the February meeting to advise of the County's growing responsibilities. SUDs report due in April 2012.	To be determined.
Waste Collection and Recycling Policies	To investigate the Council's waste collection and recycling policies.	Environmental Well-Being	Waste Collection Policies being prepared by Eric Kendall to be presented to the Working Group for comment prior to submission to the Panel. A meeting is scheduled for 4 th January to discuss communication and public satisfaction.	Working Group

District Council Support Services	To review the services provided by the District Councils Document Centre to form a view on its efficiency and cost effectiveness.	Economic Well-Being	<p>First meeting of working group held on 15th December 2011.</p> <p>Working Group has formed two sub groups to consider:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the financial cost of the service; and b) the operation of the service <p>Background meetings currently being arranged for January 2012.</p>	Working Group
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FUTURE STUDIES

Design Principles for Future Developments	To be determined.	Environmental Well-Being	Working Group to be established in January 2012. Councillors Banerjee, Curtis, Godfrey, Harlock appointed.	To be determined.
Business Rates	To consider the implications to the Authority from changes to Business Rates.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be prepared when further information is available.	To be determined.