

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)**

**4 JUNE 2013
6 JUNE 2013
11 JUNE 2013**

**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.

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ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Great Fen	To monitor the latest developments in respect of the Great Fen.	Environmental Well-Being	Site visits undertaken by the Panel in July 2010 and October 2012. A Socio-Economic Study was presented to the Panel at its March 2013 meeting. Further updates will continue to be provided to the Panel at appropriate times. Site visit to be held in September 2013.	Whole Panel.
Tree Strategy	To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.	Environmental Well-Being	Work is yet to commence on the Draft Tree Strategy. Owing to resource constraints within the Planning Department alternative ways of finalising the Tree Strategy are being considered. A proposal for a programme of work to complete the Strategy is awaited from the consultant. Likely timescales to be advised in due course.	Working Group.
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. Cllr Mrs Banerjee, as the Panel's appointed	To be determined.

			representative, attended a Cambridgeshire Future Transport meeting on 27th March 2013 and reported upon its outcome at the Panel's April 2013 meeting.	
Maintenance of Water Courses	To receive a presentation on the maintenance arrangements in place for Water Courses within the District.	Environmental Well-Being	<p>Following consideration of the St Neots Surface Water Management Plan and discussions on widespread drainage problems within the District, a working group was convened to engage with Anglian Water in order to establish their general powers, responsibilities and the limitations on its ability to prevent flooding.</p> <p>Meetings have been held with representatives from Anglian Water and the Environment Agency. The Working Group has produced a report on its findings. Panel has received an update on the outcome of negotiations between Anglian Water and the County Council on drainage in Yaxley. This was delivered to the Panel at its January 2013 meeting and a further update has been requested for July 2013.</p>	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	The final report was submitted to the Cabinet Meeting in March 2013. The Cabinet has asked the Managing Director, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources and the Panel's Document Centre Champion, to consider the Group's recommendations. The Panel has requested a report on progress in six months.	Working Group
Design Principles for Future Developments	To examine issues that have arisen at Loves Farm, St Neots and to make recommendations to inform future developments.	Environmental Well-Being	The Working Group has produced a report detailing its findings to date. The Working Group will now focus on detailed aspects of the design guide with the Council's Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader. This is expected to be made available to the Working Group in due course.	Working Group.
Economic Development	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	The findings from the Local Economic Assessment were presented to the Panel in November. The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan 2013 to 2023 will be considered by the Panel in July 2013.	Whole Panel.

Corporate Plan	To assist the Corporate Office with the development of a new Corporate Plan.	All O&S Panels	<p>Executive Leader's Strategy Group considered the Council Delivery Plan on 14th January 2013 with a view to taking responsibility for the actions contained therein. A programme of bi-monthly meetings of the Working Group will be arranged over the course of the next year with a view to holding Executive Members to account. The Delivery Plan is currently undergoing refinement by the Corporate Office.</p> <p>A meeting of the Working Group will be held on 13th June 2013.</p>	Working Group
Waste Collection	To identify options for improving the Council's waste collection and recycling arrangements and for enhancing public satisfaction with the service.	Environmental Well-Being	<p>The Working Group has decided to focus on how best to engage with residents as to what should be placed in which bin. The Group may go on to study waste collection procedures in more detail, this is dependent on the work of RECAP. An update was delivered in April 2013. A further report on the Whole Waste System Approach will be delivered in October 2013.</p>	Working Group

			<p>The Panel expressed its support for the use of wheelie bin stickers to convey messages with community benefits, such as speed restrictions. In January 2013, representatives of Speedwatch and Hilton Parish Council presented a proposal intended to reduce speeding within the village to the Panel. A written proposal was submitted to the Panel at its meeting in April 2013. The proposal was endorsed by the Panel and the Executive Councillor for Environment.</p>	
Council Borrowing	<p>Agreed to establish a Working Group to develop an understanding of the District Council's approach to borrowing.</p>	Economic Well-Being	<p>The Panel's report was considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 18 April 2013.</p> <p>The Cabinet has endorsed the view that there should be a limit for borrowing costs of 15% of net revenue spending, which can only be exceeded with the approval of full Council.</p> <p>With regard to the Panel's recommendation that a narrower definition of capital expenditure should be used</p>	Working Group

			for funding from borrowing and that the remainder should be funded from revenue, the Cabinet has agreed to reconsider this issue when a balanced budget has been achieved.	
Budget Savings	To identify possible Budgetary Savings	Economic Well-Being	<p>The Panel's report was submitted to the Cabinet Meeting on 18th April 2013. In response, the Cabinet has:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ requested the Employment Panel to review the use of consultants and agency staff; ▪ referred the issue of training to the Member Development Working Group; ▪ agreed to convene an informal meeting of Executive Councillors, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and the Managing Director to discuss shared services, the Council's electoral 	Whole Panel

			arrangements and improved procurement.	
Customer Services Strategy	To contribute to the production of the new Customer Services and Channel Migration Strategy.	Economic Well-Being	Meetings of the Working Group have been held on 13 th February, 26 th March and 21 st May 2013 with the Executive Councillor. Representatives of the Working Group have also visited the Customer Services Centre at Newport. Officers will now undertake further work and the Group will reconvene once a draft proposal has been developed prior to its consideration by Overview & Scrutiny and the Cabinet.	Working Group
Grounds Maintenance - Service Standards	To review the Council's expenditure on grounds maintenance.	Environmental Well-Being	Matter raised at the O&S Joint Chairmen's Briefing as an area for the Panel to review. Panel agreed at its March 2013 meeting that they will include this within their work programme. A report is due to be submitted by the Head of Operations to the Panel at its June 2013 meeting.	Whole Panel.