

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 7 October 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **7 October 2003** when there were present:-

Cllr P K Savill (Chairman)
Cllr C A Hungate (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr C I Black
Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr K H Hudson
Cllr D A Weir

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr P F A Webster.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren - Chief Executive
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

455 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2003 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

456 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee received the Schedule relating to progress on decisions.

Rochford District Highway Maintenance and Capital Programme 2003/04 (Minute 349/03)

Members were concerned that a letter from County Highways confirming details of the winter salting programme had made no reference to road maintenance in the district.

457 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – DRAFT SELF ASSESSMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive asking Members to comment on an initial draft of the Council's Self-Assessment.

It was noted that the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees would consider the same draft Self Assessment and that any comments would be incorporated into a draft that would be discussed at full Council on 30 October. The document would provide a framework for the Peer Review in November and would be amended according to comments received during the Peer Review. A final version would be considered by Council in December and would subsequently form a key part of the comprehensive performance assessment inspection in February.

The Committee considered the draft Self Assessment document and made a number of comments on its content. Members considered that throughout the document the size of the Council was a strength rather than a weakness and the self assessment should convey this.

It was felt that the section on ambition should be strengthened, with less emphasis on the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership. The ambitions delivered through the Council's major external contracts should be introduced. Better explanation was required around the shifting of resources to priority areas and more emphasis should be placed on the Council's ability to meet unexpected challenges, such as that posed by Foot and Mouth, remembering that the second outbreak nationally had been in the District.

Given that the achievement section carried most weight, it was important to strengthen and add to the examples quoted. Further development was needed, too, of the investment and future plans sections.

The Committee also considered the draft Summary Assessment based on the Key Lines of Enquiry. There was general consensus that the ambition and future plans sections should be further developed.

Overall, Members made a number of suggestions with respect to the wording and ordering of the document, which will be considered along with all the other comments received on this early draft set of documents.

Resolved

That the comments outlined be considered as the Self Assessment and supporting documentation is prepared for consideration by Council at the end of October. (CE)

The meeting closed at 10.32 pm.

Chairman

Date