

Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Town Hall, Colchester

10 February 2009 at 6:00pm

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel deals with reviewing corporate strategies within the Council's Strategic Plan, the Council's budgetary guidelines for the forthcoming year, scrutinising the Forward Plan, the performance of Portfolio Holders and scrutiny of Cabinet decisions or Cabinet Member decisions (with delegated power) which have been called in.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. You also have the right to see the agenda, which is usually published 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available at www.colchester.gov.uk or from Democratic Services.

Have Your Say!

The Council values contributions from members of the public. Under the Council's Have Your Say! policy you can ask questions or express a view to meetings, with the exception of Standards Committee meetings. If you wish to speak at a meeting or wish to find out more, please pick up the leaflet called "Have Your Say" at Council offices and at www.colchester.gov.uk.

Private Sessions

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss issues in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

Mobile phones, pagers, cameras, audio recorders

Please ensure that all mobile phones and pagers are turned off before the meeting begins and note that photography or audio recording is not permitted.

Access

There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from West Stockwell Street. There is an induction loop in all the meeting rooms. If you need help with reading or understanding this document please take it to Angel Court Council offices, High Street, Colchester or telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call, and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

Facilities

Toilets are located on the second floor of the Town Hall, access via the lift. A vending machine selling hot and cold drinks is located on the ground floor.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit. Make your way to the assembly area in the car park in St Runwald Street behind the Town Hall. Do not re-enter the building until the Town Hall staff advise you that it is safe to do so.

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www.colchester.gov.uk

Terms of Reference

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- To review corporate strategies
- To ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council
- To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, and make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions
- To link the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic / Action Plans
- To scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet and the East Essex Area Waste Management Joint Committee and Cabinet Member decisions (with delegated authority taking a corporate / strategic decision) which have been made but not implemented, and referred to the Panel through call-in.

The panel may a) confirm the decision, which may then be implemented immediately, b) confirm the decision back to the decision taker for further consideration setting out in writing the nature of its concerns, or c) refer the matter to full Council in the event that the panel considers the decision to be contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the Budget.

- To monitor effectiveness and application of the call-in procedure, to report on the number and reasons for call-in and to make recommendations to the Council on any changes required to ensure an effective operation.
- To scrutinise the Cabinet's performance in relation to the Forward Plan.
- To scrutinise the performance of Portfolio Holders.
- At the request of the Cabinet, make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet or creating difficulty for the running of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL 10 February 2009 at 6:00pm

Members

Chairman : Councillor Arnold.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Kimberley.
Councillors Barlow, Cory, Hazell, Higgins, Hogg, Naish,
Pyman, Taylor and Young.

Substitute Members : All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Members of the public may wish to note that agenda items 1 to 5 are normally brief and agenda items 6 to 9 are standard items for which there may be no business to consider.

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched to off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

2. Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3. Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal

interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

5. Minutes

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To confirm as a correct record the minutes from the meetings held on the 16 December 2008 and 6 January 2009.

6. Have Your Say!

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

7. Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members

(a) To evaluate requests by members of the Panel for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

(b) To evaluate requests by other members of the Council for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

8. Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any Portfolio Holder decisions, taken under the Call in Procedure.

The panel may a) confirm the decision, which may then be implemented immediately, b) confirm the decision back to the decision taker for further consideration setting out in writing the nature of its concerns, or c) refer the matter to full Council in the event that the panel considers the decision to be contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the Budget.

9. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions Review of key issues relating to the visual arts facility capital project

14 - 16

See documents appertaining to the above decision

Please note the report to this decision is confidential (therefore copied onto yellow paper) and not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1072 (financial/business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information).

As stated in the Constitution, a decision taken under special urgency provisions is reported to the next meeting of the relevant scrutiny panel for information. The panel is therefore asked to note the decision.

10. Greenways Care Home

On the 11 December 2008, Council requested that Essex County Council disclosed what intentions are proposed for the Greenways site as, at present, day care services are still being offered there and assurances are required that this will continue. Council also wanted confirmation from Essex County Council that the care of older people in Colchester will remain of the highest priority for Social Services, and that an invitation would go to the Portfolio Holder for Adults, Health and Community Well Being to attend an Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting to explain the circumstances which led to the recent situation at Greenways.

Councillor David Finch, Portfolio Holder for Adults, Health and Community Well Being, Essex County Council, will attend the meeting for this item.

11. Work Programme 2008-09

See report from the Scrutiny Officer

12. Scrutiny Report

17 - 23

See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

13. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

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See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

14. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Customers

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See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

15. Exclusion of the public

Occasionally the Panel will need to discuss issues in private. When the Panel does so, members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting.

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
10 February 2009 at 6:00pm**

Agenda - Part B
(not open to the public or the press)

	Pages
16. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions Review of key issues relating to the visual arts facility capital project	26 - 28

The following report contains exempt information (financial/business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

See documents appertaining to the above decision.

Please note the report to this decision is confidential (therefore copied onto yellow paper) and not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial / business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information).

As stated in the Constitution, a decision taken under special urgency provisions is reported to the next meeting of the relevant scrutiny panel for information. The panel is therefore asked to note the decision.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

16 DECEMBER 2008

Present :- Councillor Christopher Arnold (Chairman)
Councillors Nick Barlow, Mark Cory, Pauline Hazell,
Peter Higgins, Margaret Kimberley, Kim Naish,
Nick Taylor and Julie Young

Substitute Members :- Councillor Mike Gamble for Councillor Mike Hogg
Councillor Gaye Lewis for Councillor Gaye Pyman

25. Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 4 November 2008 was confirmed as a correct record.

26. Work Programme 2008-09

Mr. Robert Judd, Scrutiny Officer and Ms. Pam Donnelly, Executive Director explained that the item on the review of the Colchester2020 partnership arrangements, originally scheduled for the 6 January 2009, would need to be deferred, until later in the year, possibly at an extra meeting arranged in late April or early May. This was due to recent changes to the roles of board members, a new Chairman, Colonel Tony Phillips and the financial climate, all culminating in the current redrafting of their Strategy.

Ms. Ann Wain, Executive Director, addressed the panel, explaining the completed draft of the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan would be presented to the panel on the 6 January 2009. Ms. Wain said that with the panel's agreement, a report on National Indicators, an introductory report giving an overview of the current situation, would also be reported to this meeting.

It had been the intention to present the 2009-10 Budget Strategy at the same meeting as the draft Strategic Plan. This would not be possible for the meeting of the 6 January 2009, and the Chairman explained that this piece of scrutiny would need to be done at a meeting later in January, but prior to the Budget Strategy decision being taken by Cabinet on the 28 January 2009.

RESOLVED that the panel;

- i) Noted the 2008-09 rolling Work Programme, including the aforementioned changes and additions.
- ii) Agreed to the Scrutiny Officer arranging a meeting in late January for the panel to be able to jointly scrutinise the 2009-12 Strategic Plan and 2009-10 Budget Strategy.

Councillor Julie Young (in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council, and her husband being a Cabinet Member) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)

Councillor Peter Higgins (in respect of his wife being a Cabinet Member and a Member of Essex County Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)

27. Life Opportunities targets 6-month performance report

Councillor Dopson, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships, introduced the item on Life Opportunities targets 6-monthly performance report.

Councillor Dopson said the targets were set in October 2007 by the Public Service Partnership, a sub group of the Local Strategic Partnership, and commenced from April 2008. The targets were set voluntarily and were specifically set to enable the Borough to focus on issues of interest to Colchester, such as areas of deprivation and local people experiencing difficulties in the issues within the targets set.

Mr. Matt Sterling, Community Partnerships Manager presented the report to the panel, explaining in detail each of the targets and the progress so far being made against each target.

In response to Councillor Young's question concerning the apparent mismatch in the targets set, for example some housing targets appeared far more stretching and ambitious than the educational targets, Mr. Sterling said the scale of ambition of each target is what partners consider to be achievable, and is decided with the lead agency providing the knowledge and the partners providing the challenge, culminating in an agreed target. In response to Councillors Young and Kimberley, Mr. Sterling said the Council looked at deprived areas where there is a particular problem, focusing on as small a geographical area (super output areas) as data will allow, but acknowledging the difficulty in assimilating the relationship between school and residency data. Whilst focusing on small areas, if need dictated, targets were flexible, enabling resources to be redirected to other areas.

In response to Councillor Gamble, Mr. Sterling said the current financial climate would inevitably have a detrimental effect on household homelessness, though the Housing Team is hopeful that the implementation of new ideas could improve the overall results.

In response to Councillor Naish, Mr. Sterling said he would provide members with ward details in respect to the Health targets (the number of wards targeted numbered between 4 – 10 according to the target), and would check the accuracy of 'Berechurch Ward' under the skills target, rather than Shrub End Ward.

In response to Councillor Gamble, Councillor Young said there was no police evidence to show that the improvement in crime in the St Andrews Ward had resulted in the dispersal of crime to neighbouring wards, though Councillors Arnold and Higgins confirmed that whilst there had been a small amount of crime / anti-social behaviour spill over to their wards, from neighbouring wards, it had been speedily dealt with.

Mr. Sterling acknowledge the comment of Councillor Hazell, that in reference to teenage pregnancy and sex education, the Change makers Programme had highlighted the poor delivery of sex education locally. In response to Councillors Higgins and Arnold, Mr. Sterling said he would address the need for a better definition in regards to the age range for teenage conceptions, and would forward this information to the members of the panel.

In response to Councillor Cory, concerning the lack of knowledge of panel members to make an informed judgement, Mr. Sterling said the challenge in understanding the detail of each individual target was the responsibility of each lead partner, the Council's role was to take an overview of the targets and results and comment accordingly. Councillor Arnold said this was an opportunity to comment on the work being done, that the views of this panel did have some influence. Panel members were not required to be experts, but were part of the democratic process, and did on occasions come up with some 'gems' of advice or comment.

Councillors Kimberley and Gamble congratulated officers on the results so far achieved in 2008-09.

RESOLVED that the panel commented and noted upon the first 6-month performance data for the Life Opportunities targets and requested a further update of the year end results in early June 2009.

28. Climate Change and Carbon Management

Mr. Chris Dowsing, Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager, introduced the item on Climate Change and Carbon Management.

Spontaneous applause and congratulations on behalf of the Council was given by the panel members to officers, on hearing that the Council had for the second year running received the Colchester Business Award for Environmental Awareness.

Ms. Sam Preston, Climate Change Officer, gave a presentation on the Council's commitment to climate change and the Nottingham Declaration Strategy, with reference to the Council's targets for National Performance Indicators and the Colchester2020 Carbon Challenge of a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions across the Borough by 2020. Ms. Preston explained the Council's priorities within the Nottingham Declaration, the results of local consultation on climate change and the local carbon footprint, and details of some commissioned projects and their potential CO2 savings. Ms. Preston concluded by speaking about the Council's delivery of sustainable services and being a community leader for this goal.

In response to Councillor Arnold, Mr. Dowsing said that Colchester2020 are currently in the process of developing a small group of partners to work on carbon reduction, led by the new lead partner, Mr. Paul Zollinger-Read.

Councillor Young, as a point of interest and awareness, said the County Library Service

now hire out monitors for households to gauge their energy usage.

In response to Councillor Young, Councillor Gamble, Chairman of the Planning Committee, confirmed that Ms. Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, was looking at carbon reduction issues being incorporated into the Local Development Framework, and this would have a knock-on effect on Planning Policy and applications. Mr. Dowsing confirmed to Councillor Young that the Council's service fleet vehicles did run on bio-diesel fuel.

Mr. Matthew Young, Head of Street Services, confirmed to Councillor Young that Councillor Barton, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning, had commissioned Mr. Ian Vipond, Executive Director, to take a lead on the Sustainable Communities Act, and this piece of work would be reported on shortly.

In response to Councillor Barlow, Mr. Dowsing agreed that there was still a lot more scope for working with other Council's and organisations to improve our carbon footprint, and agreed with Councillors Barlow and Arnold that a huge amount of work was still needed to work across all Council services, understand the linkages and assimilate our own carbon reduction, with a need for the awareness of carbon reduction to be imbedded into the organisation.

Councillor Arnold suggested that the Cabinet should consider, with qualification, that all Cabinet and Cabinet Member reports / decisions should incorporate 'carbon impact' as a standard item.

In response to Councillor Cory, Mr. Dowsing confirmed that the Council were supporting the work of the University of Essex (a Colchester2020 partner) on the project to examine technological advances in the home that will reduce energy usage.

RESOLVED that the panel;

- i) Commented and noted the Council's actions planned and taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- ii) Requested the Cabinet to consider with qualification, that all Cabinet and Cabinet Member reports / decisions should incorporate 'carbon impact' as a standard item.
- iii) Requested a further update in one year's time (2009-10).

29. Performance Related Pay for Cabinet Members

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business, introduced the report on Performance Related Pay for Cabinet Members.

Councillor Smith said this was a proposal to introduce a scheme to provide for an apportionment of the Cabinet Member Special Responsibility Allowance to be linked to performance. Councillor Smith said this proposal could be trialled, prior to

implementation, and he would be happy to be subjected to the first review.

Councillor Young said she failed to comprehend this proposal that would cut the responsibility allowance to a Cabinet Member by 60% if they achieved their goals and only paid the full allowance if they exceeded their goals or was judged to be outstanding. Councillor Young said the banding was entirely wrong, and any person considered outstanding should surely receive an allowance above 100%.

Councillor Young said whilst she was not against a scheme in principle, many issues with this scheme would be raised that needed clarifying and that the responsibilities are far more difficult to measure, than was the case with the staff scheme. The current financial climate and more challenging times ahead could limit resources in certain areas and could make it extremely difficult for targets to be met.

Councillor Hazell said more information and Councillor feedback was needed before any scheme would reach agreement, and felt that any scheme that was introduced could not be compared with the Performance and Reward Scheme for staff.

Councillor Gamble was against the scheme in principle, but also said taking a proportion of an allowance away before a review was like being guilty until proved innocent, that went against the grain. The idea of having less and having to earn back an allowance did not sit easy. Councillor Gamble concluded by saying the allowance paid was for the responsibility of the role and work in public life and should not necessarily get linked to incentives.

Councillor Naish said he believed in the principle of performance related pay to possibly all members, but felt the details of the scheme proposed needed much refining.

Councillor Kimberley asked whether members, as a jury of their peers, are qualified to do such a task. Councillor Kimberley questioned whether a genuine assessment of a portfolio holder's performance could be undertaken, especially given that responsibilities could change, are extremely diverse and some targets may through no fault of the portfolio holder be impossible to meet.

Councillor Arnold said the Special Responsibility Allowance given to members was not pay, but an allowance made in lieu of the time spent in public service, and cannot therefore be spent earning an income, a reward in its own right. Councillor Arnold said given the time he had given as a portfolio holder, which equated to half the minimum wage, to take this away seemed monumentally unjust. Councillor Arnold also questioned the equity of the portfolio holder's responsibilities.

Councillor Barlow said he agreed with the basic principle, but like others believed the scheme being offered was not workable and a lot more work would be needed to provide a scheme that would gain agreement.

Councillor Higgins said before we even got to an agreeable scheme, members may not come to agreement on measurable objectives, and measurable objectives could

hinder a portfolio holder who focused on certain targets. Councillor Higgins also thought the press reaction to any portfolio holder who had been judged to have failed could create more problems and be counterproductive to the purpose of the scheme.

Councillor Hazell said some of the problems raised by members could potentially discourage young people and many others to work in public life.

Councillor Smith thanked panel members for their comments.

RESOLVED that the panel would not recommend the introduction of a scheme to provide for an apportionment of the Cabinet Member Special Responsibility Allowance to be linked to performance.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

6 JANUARY 2009

Present :- Councillor Christopher Arnold (Chairman)
Councillors Nick Barlow, Mark Cory, Pauline Hazell,
Peter Higgins, Margaret Kimberley, Kim Naish,
Gaye Pyman, Nick Taylor and Julie Young

Substitute Member :- Councillor Mike Gamble for Councillor Mike Hogg

30. Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 16 December will be confirmed at the next meeting.

31. Work Programme

The Chairman explained that the outstanding item on Going for Growth, postponed in the autumn, would be pursued, hopefully to be reviewed before the end of the Municipal year. Following on from the December meeting, the Chairman said the 2009-10 Budget Strategy would now go to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel on the 20th January as originally planned, and an additional meeting for this to be scrutinised together with the Strategic Plan, and provisionally set for the 27 January, was now cancelled.

RESOLVED that the panel;

- i) Noted the 2008-09 rolling Work Programme
- ii) Agreed that an invitation should go from the panel to the Essex County Council Portfolio Holder for Adults, Health and Community Well Being, to attend a meeting in conjunction with the Council motion about the Greenways Care Home.

32. The Strategic Plan 2009-2012

Councillor Dopson, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships, supported by Mr. John Gilbert, Interim Head of Resource Management, introduced the new draft of the Strategic Plan 2009-2012.

Councillor Dopson said the new Strategic Plan has developed over recent months, with a deliberate shift to a short document, that lists the three main objectives, all underpinned by the nine priority areas to improve the quality of life for local people.

Mr. Gilbert said the document had deliberately been kept short, for ease of reading, and further detail will be in the accompanying action plans for each priority that will set out the intended outcomes, align actions to the budget, and demonstrate linkages to the Local Area Agreement and National Indicators. Mr. Gilbert explained the reasoning

behind the consultation work undertaken during the creation process, and that highlighted resident's views, which were reflected in national trends.

Noting the brevity in the research data on older people by comparison with young people, Councillor Dopson said current government demographic data gives priority to younger people, and is reflected in the high priority for younger people by Essex County Council, though this will not change Colchester's priority links to services provided to the elderly and vulnerable, and the need in this current climate and an ageing population, to address issues around welfare rights and poverty.

Councillor Kimberley said the document was very general, with little detail and did not provide sufficient information for members to comment upon. Councillor Kimberley questioned the factualness of the comment that "we will improve the health of the public", with a more realistic, less ambitious aspiration being "to work towards improving the health of the public". Councillor Kimberley concluded by suggesting the comment that the Strategic Plan needed to be flexible was a get out clause, in that no-one knew what the future holds.

Councillor Dopson, in response to a 'flexible Strategic Plan', said this did not suggest there was no commitment, but that the nine priorities areas will remain a commitment, though the outcomes on delivery may differ, according to funding.

In response to Councillor Young, Councillor Dopson said the Council would need to look at innovative ways of providing the same services within the current budget restraints e.g. 'care villages' to help the elderly and vulnerable.

In response to Councillor Barlow, Councillor Dopson and Mr. Gilbert confirmed that a range of other local authority strategic plans were looked at. It was thought the new format would be more accessible to local people than that of a document the size of previous year's plans. Mr. Gilbert said organisations have a cycle 'slimming down' the size of documents over time as their understanding improves, while continuing to have explicit links into budget priorities and seeking for alignment with the local area agreement and national indicators, where appropriate.

Councillor Taylor questioned whether plan objectives reflected the needs of local people or those of our partners and questioned whether people's priorities did not change significantly. In response, Mr. Gilbert said analysis by Ipsos MORI revealed that people's priorities were relatively stable over periods of time and therefore it was appropriate to use the wide-scale consultation data drawn from the 2006/2007 BVPI survey, augmented by specific focused consultations. These showed that, for example, traffic issues such as congestion remained significant for people, even with the current economic downturn, partly because a lot of the issues were by their nature long term. Councillor Dopson said the impetus of the new plan was definitely for local people, to some extent, generic to the area, and linked through the Local Area Agreement and National Indicators to improved performance. Councillor Dopson confirmed that the Local Strategic Partnership was currently reviewing their arrangements in consultation with all partners, and a new community strategy document was expected shortly.

Councillor Gamble commented that the plan and the report was easy to understand as it was a simple report put simply, without being simplistic and he commended those involved in their preparation and presentation.

Councillor Arnold said that if the word 'Colchester' was taken out of the plan, the plan would work for almost every other authority in England, so how did the plan set Colchester apart from other local authorities? In response, Councillor Dopson said what sets us apart through the plan, is the focus on local people and the enabling of residents to get on with their lives, supported by their local Council to provide the services they need, which was different to previous years and the aspiration to make Colchester a strategic centre of excellence.

Councillor Hazell whilst commenting that the plan lacked substance, with a lot of promises with little substance and felt like a recipe for a clone town, but she as trusted that it would be fleshed out through the accompanying action plan. Councillor Kimberley commented that the use of "We will ..." in the priorities was an aspiration but she had no idea whether they could be delivered in the current economic environment. Councillor Dopson said the detail would be forthcoming.

Councillor Arnold suggested that the plan document should show the period over which it was intended to operate and, with agreement from Councillor Dopson, Mr. Gilbert confirmed that the document would be dated in the version to go to Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the panel considered and noted the proposed new Strategic Plan 2009-2012.

33. National Indicators - Interim Review

Councillor Arnold explained to the panel that at the previous day's briefing, it was confirmed that the report on National Indicators being reported to the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel was a one-off review, that was a strategic overview of the new performance framework, and that all future reports dealing with the detail of the results would be presented regularly to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel.

Mr. John Gilbert introduced the report on National Indicators, a new performance framework replacing the old Best Value performance Indicators (BVPI). Mr. Gilbert said it was not the intention to scrutinise the detail, but welcomed comments on the formal delivery and commentary. Mr. Gilbert explained this was a transitional year, hence no centrally set targets, though some targets for indicators that were existing Local Area Agreement commitments or existing BVPI target are included.

In response to Councillor Barlow, Mr. Gilbert said there was no historical detail (e.g. previous year's results) for benchmarking purposes, to include for the new indicators, but where a direct comparison could be made, previous years results could be included.

In response to Councillor Young, Mr. Adrian Pritchard, Chief Executive, addressed the panel explaining the Colchester's last CPA assessment rating was 'excellent'. Mr.

Pritchard said the new CAA assessment will not provide an individual local authority rating, that their will be a countywide assessment made of all public sector organisations to determine the effectiveness of these partnerships in working, and these findings will be reflected in this Council's direction of Travel' and 'Use of Resources' within the Annual Audit Inspection Letter reported annually to the Accounts and Regulatory Committee.

In response to Councillors Arnold and Cory, Councillor Dopson said the suggestion that the monitoring results of National Indicator that fall within a portfolio, should be presented to the panel at the time of the review of the Portfolio Holder was a good idea, something Councillor Taylor confirmed had been common practice in previous administrations.

Mr. Gilbert said the results of staff sickness absence continued to monitored, but was not a National Indicator. Mr. Gilbert explained that the Council's Performance Dashboard was split into four quadrants, Organisation (National Indicators), Customer Services, People and Resources (Finance). Staff sickness absence remained a local indicator, reported as part of all the Human Resources local indicators within the People quadrant. Mr. Gilbert confirmed to Councillor Taylor that it would be possible to report Staff Sickness Absence as part of the future National Indicators report.

RESOLVED that the panel;

- i) Considered and noted the interim review of the new National Indicators introduced on 1 April 2008.
- ii) Requested that all future monitoring reports to be reported to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel should include the local indicator results for Staff Sickness Absence.
- iii) Requested at the time of the review of each Portfolio Holder, for the report to be accompanied by the current results for the national indicators that fall within the responsibilities of the portfolio.
- iv) Requested data from previous years results, once available, to be added to the National Indicator monitoring report for comparison purposes.

34. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business, before summarising the work within his portfolio, thanked officers for the help and cooperation during his term as the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.

Councillor Smith said the Concessionary Fare Scheme was now extended, to run between 9.00 am and 12.00 midnight, with the highest take-up of any local authority in Essex, that would help the elderly and contribute to an easing in traffic congestion. This contract had also been renegotiated by officers resulting in a £400,000 saving to the Council, a positive achievement. Councillor Smith commended Mr. Adrian

Pritchard, Chief Executive, for bringing together all the Essex authorities to discuss and iron out the problems that had previously been experienced with the scheme.

Councillor Smith spoke of the effects of the economic downturn and the Council's revenues, with a dramatic fall in planning applications and Council House sales, a negative effect on Business Rate collection rates and a dramatic increase in all types of Benefit applications, with the Benefits service struggling with the new demands and unlikely to meet their annual targets.

The purchase of Rowan House has proved a success with the Council reaping an annual saving of £50,000 as a result of this business. Councillor Smith also mentioned the Council's insurances had been renegotiated, with improved coverage, and a saving of £120,000 per annum.

Councillor Smith was pleased to announce a dramatic decrease in the level of staff sickness absence in the authority. Ms. Pam Donnelly, Executive Director said the Council had introduced a plan of action to address the issue of sickness absence, with greater support to line managers, development of skills and techniques to deal with sickness absence, appropriate advice and counselling to staff through the Council's Wellbeing Policy and an active follow through of procedures and firm action.

In response to Councillor Young, Councillor Smith said he did not know the retail outlets that would fill large empty stores such as Woolworths. In response to Councillor Naish, it was confirmed that the drop in car parking income was more the result of the delay in the implementation of the 2008-09 charges, rather than a downturn in the number of cars visiting the town centre.

In response to Councillor Arnold about what the Council was doing to improve car parking queues at multi-storey car parks, Councillor Smith confirmed that queue management within the town centre had reduced queuing at the multi-storey car parks, though these were forecast to improve following special offers to visitors who park at the less popular outlying car parks.

Councillor Smith acknowledged the misuse of the Residents Parking Scheme, but confirmed to Councillor Barlow that the new scheme had been submitted to Essex County Council for approval. It was envisaged that changes to the scheme would eliminate much of the misuse, for example, restrictions on large commercial vehicles, stricter enforcement action and efforts to prevent the black market of selling on tickets.

Councillor Smith confirmed to Councillor Taylor that there had not, to his knowledge been a reduction in member development courses and that the Council had embarked on joint working with Tendring and Ipswich to provide many member development courses. Councillor Smith also said the Debt Management Policy had been revised, primarily due to a keenness to separate 'cannot pays' from 'will not pays' and to provide a quicker response to debt, which has been proven to reduce levels of debt. Councillor Smith was unaware of any substantial debts e.g. multiple years of rent arrears. In response to Councillor Young, Councillor Smith said he would look favourably to including an article on debt management in the Courier that would also advise local people on whom to contact for advice.

Councillor Smith confirmed that the Essex County Council Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste, Councillor Tracey Chapman would not be sanctioning the release of the £100,000 grant for improving recycling.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Smith for attending the meeting and appearing without supporting officers.

RESOLVED that the panel;

- i) Noted the responses from the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Businesses
- ii) Requested the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Businesses, given the economic downturn, to ensure the local Courier included an article on debt management, advising local people on whom to contact for advice.

Councillor Peter Higgins (in respect of his wife being the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)

35. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity

Councillor Theresa Higgins gave a brief summary of the work within her portfolio.

Councillor Naish responded by praising the staff of Colchester's Visiting Centre, for their excellent work.

In response to Councillor Barlow, Councillor Higgins said the economic downturn could have a positive effect on local tourism, with people staying local and taking holidays in Britain rather than abroad. Special offers e.g. at the Castle would help encourage people to local attractions, though Councillor Higgins said there was still the need for 'local boutique hotels' and improved large conference facilities in the area, and this would hopefully be addressed through the renaissance programme.

Councillor Higgins concurred with Councillor Young that the town centre needed a greater variety of major retail outlets to reflect young people's tastes, e.g. Primark, Zara and H & M, and the Council needed to learn (and engage) from the way young people had responded recently to this issue on 'Face Book'. Councillor Higgins also expressed a need for vigilance in ensuring only those retail outlets that maintain high ethical standards in terms of the pay and conditions of employees are considered as suitable retail outlets.

Councillor Higgins confirmed to the panel that progress was being made in achieving level 3 of the Equality Standard, and the Council would be assessed externally with the Equality Standard implemented within a year.

Councillor Higgins confirmed to Councillor Young that she had seen the first draft of the Firstsite Business Plan, though she did not know how Firstsite would respond to the

economic downturn, given the expensive costs involved with the supporting art programmes. Councillor Higgins said the branding logos on the Firstsite Business Plan, including Firstsite, the Mercury Theatre and Colchester Arts Centre, would need to have the Colchester Borough Council logo added, to reflect the Council's ongoing support of the organisation.

In response to Councillor Arnold, Councillor Higgins said it was still the intention of the partnership group (Colchester Borough Council, Essex County Council, The Mercury Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre and Firstsite, to continue the cultural legacy for Colchester by holding a major exhibition and that consideration was being given to an autumn Colchester Festival, to be held every other year.

In response to the outcomes of the 4 November review of the Roman Heritage, Councillor Higgins said at present there was no provision in the 2009-10 Budget for the reinstatement of the Heritage Fund Reserve, and officers are still working on submitted bids in reference to innovative ways of marketing Colchester's Roman Heritage, and this would be considered, subject to funds, though she reiterated that the Roman Heritage would continue to be preserved.

Councillor Hazell congratulated the Portfolio Holder for this years town centre Christmas lights which she considered good and tasteful.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Higgins for attending the meeting and appearing without supporting officers.

RESOLVED that the panel noted the responses from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Explanatory Note

The Council has established Delegation Schemes by which certain decisions may be made by the relevant cabinet member or specific officers.

Such decisions are subject to review under the Call-in Procedure. From the date the notice of the decision made is published there are five working days during which any five Councillors may sign a request for the decision to be reviewed and deliver it to the Proper Officer. If, at the end of the period, no request has been made, the decision may be implemented. If a valid request has been made, the matter will be referred to either the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel if the Type of Decision is Service, or the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel if the Type of Decision is Strategic/Corporate.

For decisions which are deemed to be Key Decisions:

- details of the matter must be included in the Forward Plan and 14 days must elapse between publication of the Forward Plan and the decision being made;
- any related report (excluding confidential ones) must have been made available to the public at least five clear days prior to the decision being made.

Part A – To be completed by the appropriate Cabinet Member/Officer

Title of Report

Review of key issues relating to the visual arts facility capital project

Delegated Power

The award of the lowest tender s under £500,000 and for which there is financial provision.

Decision Taken

To agree the appointment of solicitors to provide legal advice in relation to a review of some of the key issues on the Visual Arts Project and to delegate the authority requested in this report to the Chief Executive in consultation with Leader of the Council for the reasons set out in paragraph 5.4 of the report.

Key Decision

No

If YES, indicate date when report made available for public inspection must be 5 clear days prior to date in Authorisation box overleaf:

_____ N/A

Forward Plan

For Key Decisions state whether details have been included in the Forward Plan (see information at top of this form regarding notice requirements)

N/A

Reasons for the Decision

The project costs have significantly overrun the allocated capital funding allocated by the Council and its funding partners. The Council wishes to review key issues on the project in order to determine the best way forward for the project.

Alternative Options

Not to appoint solicitors to review the project. However this has been rejected as it would not satisfy the Council's requirements and would result in less certainty and confidence from the Council and its funding partners to move the project forward.

Conflict of Interest

None

Type of Decision

Strategic

Dispensation

None

Authorisation

Signature _____ Councillor Martin Hunt _____

Designation _____ Portfolio for Communications and Customers _____

Date _____ 30 January 2009 _____

(**NB** For Key Decisions five clear days must have elapsed between the report being made available for public inspection (see date in **Key Decision** box above) and the decision being made i.e. signed)

Part B – To be completed by the Proper Officer (Democratic Services)

Call-in Procedure

Date Decision Notice published on The Hub, Website and placed in Members' Room and Customer Service Centre
_____ 3 February 2009 _____

Date by which request for reference must be made to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel if the Type of Decision is Service or the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel if the Type of Decision is Strategic/Corporate

5pm _____ N/A _____

Signed _____ Diane Harrison _____

Proper Officer

Reference Number

_____ COM-001-08 _____

Implementation

Date decision can be implemented if no request (Call-in) for the decision to be reviewed has been made

After 5pm _____ N/A _____

This decision can be implemented immediately. Decision was accompanied by an Urgency Authorisation Notice and therefore is not subject to the 5 day call-in procedure.

The report accompanying this decision is confidential and not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial/business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information)

Please contact the author Ian Vipond (01206) 282717



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item

10 February 2009

Report of	The Scrutiny Officer	Author	Robert Judd
Title	Scrutiny Report		Tel. 282274
Wards affected	None		

This is a report setting out the work of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel and Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel during 2007-2008 and the first half of 2008-09.

1. Action required

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the draft Scrutiny Report.

2. Reason for Action(s)

- 2.1 The Constitution states the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel shall report annually to the full Council on its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

3. Purpose and Content of the Annual Report

- 3.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Council of the work undertaken by the scrutiny panels, and for the Council to form an opinion of the effectiveness of the scrutiny function. The final report will be submitted to full Council for consideration and approval following endorsement by scrutiny panel members.
- 3.2 This Scrutiny Report includes a record of the reviews undertaken by both panels, where there is a specified outcome / resolution. The reviews include Pre-Scrutiny Reviews of decisions and consultation papers, Partnership reviews, internal service reviews and decisions referred to the panel under the call-in procedure.
- 3.3 Both panels continued to scrutinise standard items, for example, the continual reviews of the effectiveness of the work undertaken by each Portfolio Holder and the continued good practice of regular examination of Audit Activity, Risk Management, Revenue and Capital outturns.

4. Standard and Strategic Plan References

- 4.1 There are no policy plan references or financial, human rights, community safety or health and safety implications in this matter.
- 4.2 Scrutiny is a key function to ensure decisions being made have been subject to full appraisal and that they are in line with the aims of the strategic plan. The role of scrutiny is also an important part of our risk management, helping to check that risks are identified and challenged.

Colchester Borough Council

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Scrutiny Report

Period May 2007 – December 2008

An Overview

During 2007/08 and the first half of 2008/09, the scrutiny panels continued to play a vital role in the decision-making process at Colchester, contributing and making suggestions to the way the Council conducts its business.

The scrutiny function at Colchester is a very important one, offering an opportunity to look at policies and strategies from a borough-wide perspective, ensuring performance improvements actually make a positive difference. By doing this a culture of positive and meaningful challenge has been created.

The following information confirms that during the period of this report, the scrutiny function at Colchester remained challenging and effective.

Pre Decision Scrutiny

Whilst Call-In is an important part of Overview and Scrutiny's role, it has proven during this period of time to quite often be profitable to pre-scrutinise decisions, allowing the panel(s) to examine an issue in depth, take oral and written evidence and to make proposals to the Cabinet or portfolio holder in advance of that decision being taken. This was the case for example, for the Strategic Plan, Budget Strategy process and a number of Consultation Paper responses.

Scrutiny

Both scrutiny panels continued to conduct one-off investigations / reviews on a variety of topics, and Cabinet Members continue, as in previous years, to discuss with the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members, the progress and performance of the work which fell within their portfolio.

Scrutiny away from the Town Hall

The Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed in November 2007 to hold meetings where appropriate at venues in other urban and rural areas of the borough, but for all other meetings held in the Town Centre to be held at the Town Hall.

Creating Higher Value Jobs in Colchester – The University of Essex

This review was undertaken on 26 March 2008 at the University of Essex. The purpose of this review was to define 'higher value jobs', get a better understanding of the Colchester economy and the roles of The University of Essex, The Colchester Institute and the Council in helping to create jobs in the area.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Jim Addison, Director of Development and Quality (Colchester Institute), Councillor Don Henshall, Portfolio Holder for Business, Pamela Donnelly, Executive Director of Colchester Borough Council and Nigel Myers, Enterprise Manager, Colchester Borough Council.

Whilst the review was well received it was disappointing in so much as the timing of the meeting coming outside University term time and there being no representatives attending from the University.

A New Nuclear Power Station at Bradwell

This review was undertaken on the 23 September 2008 at the West Mersea Centre.

The meeting was held at West Mersea, across the estuary from Bradwell, in response to the Council's request. Mr. Adam Dawson, Director of New Nuclear (BERR), representatives from British Energy and the public agencies, four expert witnesses in the field of nuclear energy and approximately 100 members of the public attended the meeting in what was generally agreed to be a thoughtful and balanced debate.

The outcome from this meeting was the panel resolving to set up a Task and Finish Group to complete more in depth reviews on specific issues which remained of concern to the members, and to complete and recommend a draft response to the Government consultation (completed in November 2008).

The work by the Task and Finish Group will continue during early 2009.

In-depth Reviews

The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel is currently in the process of undertaking two in-depth reviews, each taking a period of several months to complete. These are the reviews of The Financial Arrangements for Firstsite:Newsite and the Decent Homes Programme. Details of these reviews are shown in the appendices. These reviews and subsequent outcomes will be determined during the first half of 2009.

Call in

There were five decisions referred to scrutiny in 2007-08, four of these decisions were upheld, the fifth, Concessionary Travel Scheme was referred back to the Portfolio Holder for further consideration.

Changes have been made to the Concessionary Travel Scheme, locally and county wide since this decision was called-in. See appendix for further details.

There have been two decisions so far referred to scrutiny in 2008-09, both of which were upheld by the panel.

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 2007-08

Membership for 2007-08: Councillor T Young (Chairman) and Councillors Bentley, Gower, T Higgins, Maclean, Pyman, Smith and Turrell (Deputy Chairman).

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has responsibility for reviewing corporate strategies within the Strategic Plan and Action Plan, the Council's budgetary guidelines for the forthcoming year, the performance of Portfolio Holders and Cabinet decisions being reviewed under the Call in procedure.

Type of Review, Title and date of review (S) Strategic, (P) Partnership, (I) Internal review (C) Consultation (CI) Call in	Reviews with a specified outcome(s) / resolution
(P) Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership - 12-June-07	A further review of the CCDRP in 2008-09, and partnership reviews of the Probation Service (11-Dec-07) and Essex Police (8-Jan-08). The panel would receive regular feedback on the Best Value Performance of Community Safety Indicators (National Indicators).
(C) Essex Rivers Health care NHS Trust Foundation Status 3-July-07	The panel noted the presentation on the ERHT's consultation process for applying for Foundation Trust, and expressed their endorsement of the trust's Foundation Trust bid.
(S) Country Wide Waste Strategy – Memo of Understanding – 3-July-07.	The panel voted against the proposal to refer the item to Full Council for further debate and voted in favour of the actions to be taken by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Environment.
(C) Proposals for a Single Equality Bill for Great Britain – 28-Aug-07	The panel requested the Portfolio Holder for Resources to consider five additions and amendments to the Council's response to the consultation paper. A further review of the current scheme, plus progress on level three of the Government's Equality Standard and the new single equality plan (see 25-Feb-08).
(S) Budget Strategy and Timetable – 28-Aug-07	The panel's following comments were referred to the Cabinet for consideration, including; i Opposition briefings on the Budget to be built upon and continued in 2007/08 and an additional update on the Budget Strategy and Timetable (see 26-Nov-08).
(C) Formula Grant Distribution – 25-Sept-07	The Portfolio Holder for Resources considered and agreed to the panel's comments to include within the response the need to ensure that the grant was increased in line with inflation, and emphasise the need to maintain the grant floor system.
(S) Colchester's Renaissance Programme – 25-Sept-07	The panel noted the progress of Colchester's Renaissance Programme and requested an update with progress on risk management (see 11-Mar-08).
(C) Consultation on changes to the Post Office Network – 22-Oct-07	The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods agreed to the panel's request to add to the Council's consultation response the following; i) The Post Office remove the number 11 bus route from the modelling completed on the Parsons Heath Branch. ii) The Post Office proactively resurrects discussions with the Mobile Library Service to determine a way of introducing joint working. iii) The Post Office investigate and considers the need for two post offices in the Town Centre. iv) The Post Office expand their modelling to include population and housing growth beyond 2011, to take account of future growth. Post Office representatives, present at the meeting understood the panel's concerns, and agreed to investigate the issues raised by the panel.

Type of Review, Title and date of review	Reviews with a specified outcome(s) / resolution
(S) CBC Vending for staff & Customers – 6-Nov-07	The panel noted the progress on healthy vending at Leisure World and asked the Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Culture to arrange for officers from Sports and Leisure Services to meet with the local Primary Care Trust to discuss all aspects of healthy active lifestyles (undertaken).
(S) A Review of Public Transport in Colchester – 6-Nov-07	The panel requested that Council officers liaise with County officers to examine the possibility of extending the wait time of buses that provide a bus link to the last train(s) into Colchester Station, when such trains are late running, and that the Portfolio Holder for Street Services ask County Officers to help the bus operators in finding a solution to extending the ways of purchasing BusPlus tickets beyond railway stations, and to investigate the opportunity of the offer by the local bus operators to free bus travel to parking enforcement officers around the Borough to hot spots in reference to cars parking illegally at bus stops / lay-bys so the appropriate parking enforcement action could be taken, and that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration investigated the opportunity for a co-ordinated approach to section 106 money for the improvement of the public transport system.
(S) Review of the Strategic Plan 2006-09 – 26-Nov-07	The panel requested the Portfolio Holder for Street Services to consider the work at Thurrock Council on litter campaigns and ticket enforcement.
(S) The work of the Essex Probation Service – 18-Dec-07	The panel requested the Executive Director, Lead Officer for the Innovations Panel to progress the partnership working on the programme of unpaid work for offenders.

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel – May to December 2008

Membership for 2008-09: Councillor C Arnold (Chairman) and Councillors Barlow, Cory, Hazell, P Higgins, Hogg, Kimberley (Deputy Chairman), Pymon, Naish, Taylor and J Young.

Type of Review, Title and date of review	Reviews with a specified outcome(s) / resolution
(P) Essex Police – Neighbourhood Action Panels (11-June-08)	Joint Action Group to consider a review of NAP boundaries. A need for NAPS to share good practice. Better use made of the Council's CRM facility, and better feedback from NAPs to residents. A further update in 2009-10.
(S) Budget Strategy and Timetable (8-Sept-08)	The Budget Strategy and Timetable was noted, with a request to Cabinet to give greater clarity to budget report with headings e.g. 'Projects put on hold', 'Impact of change'.
(S) A new Nuclear Power Station at Bradwell (23-Sept-08)	The panel resolved to respond to the Government's consultation on the Strategic Siting process and siting criteria, and to set up a task and finish group to complete more in-depth reviews on issues highlighted in the review.
(S/P) Investment in Firstsite (4-Nov-08)	A review, with representatives from Firstsite was undertaken. It was agreed that a further review should be undertaken, at the earliest convenient time, to review the Firstsite Business Plan + details of fundraising activities. A further review was requested for 2009.
(S) Climate Change and Carbon Management (16-Dec-08)	The panel noted the presentation and report and requested the Cabinet to consider with qualification, that reports should incorporate 'carbon impact' as a standard item. A further review was requested for 2009-10.
(IR) Performance Related Pay for Cabinet Members (16-Dec-08)	The panel proposed not to introduce a scheme to provide for an apportionment of Cabinet Member Allowance to be linked to performance.

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel 2007-08

Membership: Councillor G Oxford (Chairman) and Councillors Barton, Dopson, Kraft, Levy, Lewis, Scott-Boutell, Smith (Deputy Chairman) T Sutton and Willetts.

The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel has responsibility for monitoring the operational and financial performance of the Council. The panel receive regular updates on internal and external audit reports, financial monitoring reports and capital expenditure reports, and progress checks against Best Value Performance Indicators. The panel also review executive service decisions not implemented, but referred to the panel through the call-in procedure.

Type of Review, Title and date of review	Reviews with a specified outcome(s) / resolution
(S) Strategic (P) Partnership (IR) Internal Review (CI) Call in.	
(IRP) Financial Arrangements at West End Tennis Centre (24-July-07)(26-Feb-08)	The panel noted the financial arrangements relating to the new working arrangements at the West End Tennis Centre. The PH was asked to consider the points raised by the panel on 26-Feb-08.
(IR) Section 106 monitoring (21-Aug-07)	Officers agreed that the Planning Agreement Compliance Officer would look into the possibility of including within the S106 information on the Hub a breakdown of developments by Ward and with the name of the development / site included, and for ward members to be notified when new S106 money is agreed for development within their ward.
(IR) Sale of Jarmin Road/Brook Street (18-Sep-07)(13-Nov-07) (23-Jan-08)	Following a number of updates, the panel noted the sale of Brook Street and Jarmin Road.
(IR/P) Value for money review of funding to the Colchester Town Partnership (CTP) 23-Oct-07	The panel noted the funding arrangements in place for the provision of town management services from the CTP and requested the CTP to consider the introduction of tighter procedures on 'declarations of interest' and introducing a procedure whereby contracts over a stipulated value are let, subject to board approval.
(S) Financial Implications of Park and Ride (23-Oct-07)	The panel noted the report and requested a further update once a business case for a park and ride scheme is complete.
(IR) Decent Homes Programme (13-Nov-07)	The panel noted the report on the DHP and given the concerns over the contract being adrift, but soon to recommence, requested further reviews on the Inspace Contract, and a detailed chronological review of the DHP (13-Nov-07).
(S) 2008-09 Revenue Budget (23-Jan-08)	The panel referred the 2008-09 Revenue Budget back to Cabinet for further consideration. The Cabinet (30-Jan-08) noted the comments of the panel. The procurement of recyclable clear plastic sacks was a Portfolio Holder decision subject to call-in referred to the SOS (5-Feb-08).
(CI) Concessionary Travel Scheme (23-Jan-08)	The panel referred the decision back to the Portfolio Holder for further consideration on rural bus routes, the Government rationale for a scheme commencing at 9am. The Cabinet upheld the decision of the Portfolio Holder (30-Jan-08) but confirmed further work would be undertaken to investigate the impact of an earlier start time to the concessionary travel scheme. ECC officers (Local Bus Team) agreed with Heddinghams to extend by up to 5 minutes the waiting time for the last journeys from the station on routes 11 and 15.

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel – May to December 2008

Membership for 2008-09: Councillor Lissimore (Chairman) and Councillors Bentley, Bouckley, Goss, Harris, Maclean, Manning, Offen, G Oxford, Sykes and Willetts (Deputy Chairman).

Type of Review, Title and date of review	Reviews with a specified outcome(s) / resolution
(IR) Early Cessation of DH and Housing Repairs Contract (30-June-2008)(2-Sept-08) - ongoing	<p>The panel (30-June-08) agreed to a further review to determine the background, the extent of financial controls in place and the outstanding works.</p> <p>The panel (2-Sept-08) considered and noted the report by Anthony Collins Solicitors on the Mediation Process DHP, and agreed to follow-up meetings to discuss the DHP Contract from 2004 to May 2008 and the role of Colchester Borough Homes. A Members briefing was conducted to provide details of the DHP contract, the Final Default Notice and a timeline of key points and crucial events (23-Oct-08).</p>
(R) Treasury Management (29-July-08) Ethical Investments (19-Aug-08) Treasury Management Investments (21-Oct-08) Treasury Management Investment Policy (18-Nov-08)	<p>The panel noted the report and requested a further report on Ethical Investments. The panel also noted the report on Ethical Investments and agreed to review the Council's Lending List prior to approval of future Annual Treasury Management decisions. The panel noted the current situation in respect of the Council's outstanding deposits in the Icelandic Bank, Landsbanki (21-Oct-08). The panel noted the changes made to the Investments policy and requested a regular six monthly update report (18-Nov-08).</p>
(S/P) Firstsite:Newsite(25-Nov-08) - ongoing	<p>The panel, noting the report, requested the Cabinet to instigate an independent external review of the project, with a follow-up review undertaken by FASP in public.</p>



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item
13

10 February 2009

Report of	Scrutiny Officer	Author	Robert Judd Tel. 282274
Title	Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report sets out the responsibilities of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

1. Action Required

1.1 The Panel is asked to review the work of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.

2. Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

2.1 The responsibilities are as follows;

- (i) To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Borough Council's services relating to waste collection, environmental initiatives, litter enforcement and cleansing operations.
- (ii) To encourage operational activities which support the corporate priority to be the cleanest and greenest borough in the Country.
- (iii) To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Borough Council's policies relating to waste collection and environmental initiatives.
- (iv) To encourage strategic activities which support the corporate priority to be the cleanest and greenest borough in the Country.
- (v) To monitor the implementation of the Council's Waste Strategy.
- (vi) To oversee and monitor the Council's engineering services.
- (vii) To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Council's policies and services relating to all licensing activities.
- (viii) To agree the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and ensure that the Council is working with partners to meet the key targets identified within the strategy.

3. Standard References

3.1 There are no policy plan references or financial, human rights, community safety or health and safety implications in this matter.

3.2 Scrutiny is a key function to ensuring the work of the Portfolio Holder is subject to full appraisal and in line with the aims of the strategic plan.



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item
14

10 February 2009

Report of

Scrutiny Officer

Author **Robert Judd**
Tel. 282274

Title

Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Customers

Wards affected

Not applicable

This report sets out the responsibilities of the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Customers.

1. Action Required

1.1 The Panel is asked to review the work of the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Customers.

2. Responsibilities of the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Customers.

2.1 The responsibilities are as follows;

- (i) To examine and review the Council's Information Communication Technology Strategy and to represent the Council on the Partnership Board.
- (ii) To monitor, fund and arrange for the continuing delivery of the Council's t-government agenda.
- (iii) To examine and review the Council's customer service culture, processes and performance and to champion the customer point of view.
- (iv) To review, monitor and improve consultation and communication between the Council and its customers.
- (v) To improve communications and access to Council services by urban and rural communities within the borough.
- (vi) To examine and review the development of all forms of communication and community engagement.

Major Project of this portfolio is the Customer Service Centre.

3. Standard References

3.1 There are no policy plan references or financial, human rights, community safety or health and safety implications in this matter.

3.2 Scrutiny is a key function to ensuring the work of the Portfolio Holder is subject to full appraisal and in line with the aims of the strategic plan.

