

Community and Partners Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Annual Report 2007/2008

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION.

This Overview and Scrutiny Commission deals with:

- Culture
- Housing
- Public Protection/Community Safety
- Taxation and Benefits



Valley Gardens

WORK PROGRAMME 2007/2008

During 2007/08 the Commission held eleven meetings. Highlights of the Commission's work include:

- The establishment of a Community Call for Action Working Group – tasked with the assessment of new government legislation and the implications for the council. The group, made up of Councillor Clark, Councillor Mrs de Courcey-Bayley and Councillor Pat Marsh met on two occasions in 2007/2008 and will report back to the Commission mid 2008/2009.
- Scrutiny of the Turkish Baths – managers of the leisure facility met with the Commission to discuss the financial situation and plans for the coming year. The Commission undertook questioning regarding performance and the opportunities for improved service and income. The Commission are to receive a second report in 2008/2009.
- Chief Inspector Barry Smith of North Yorkshire Police attended a meeting to discuss issues surrounding Community Policing in Harrogate. The Chief Inspector and Commission members discussed the role of Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Police Community Support Officers and the benefit of links with Ward Councillors.
- Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police, Mr Grahame Maxwell attended a separate meeting to provide the Commission with an overview of his policing strategy in North Yorkshire. The Chief Constable discussed with the Commission his vision and priorities for the Harrogate district. Mr Maxwell was questioned on a range of issues including; events management, speed cameras, underage drinking and people trafficking, he has been invited to return to the Commission next March.
- Scrutiny of the Draft General Fund Budgets – involving the review of budgets for the forth-coming year in areas within the Commission's remit.

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The Community and Partners Commission uses Performance Information, reported quarterly to record the Council's performance in areas within the Commissions remit, in the past year the Commission has considered information relating to, housing, crime and unemployment

Comment on 2007/08

The Community and Partners Overview and Scrutiny Commission helps to develop and monitor work to build relationships and develop initiatives with outside organisations as well as ensuring Harrogate's services to local people are maintained. During 2007/08 the Community and Partners Commission received reports on the following areas of Community interest:

- Youth Participation Plan - The Commission were included as part of a Consultation process regarding this plan, to improve the involvement of Young People in Council policy and service development and delivery.

- Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Strategy - This was presented to the Commission in June 2008, the Strategy sets out the different types of funding and support that the Council offer to the sector.

- The Community Chest Application Process - The Commission were consulted regarding the application process for those organisations applying for a grant from the Community Chest.

- Brimhams fitness and leisure facility at the Hydro – as part of a previous review the Commission have monitored the performance of the Brimhams fitness and leisure facility at the Hydro.

In addition to these, the Commission has also provided examination and analysis of many other Key Decisions facing the Council enhancing the Council's services to the community.

CALL-IN OF CABINET/ CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Through 2007/2008 the Community and Partners Overview and Scrutiny Commission Called-In one Key Decision. This was regarding the delay of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of the Valley Gardens on the basis that the delay in applying for the grant could lead to the deterioration of the Gardens.

Commission Members 2007/08

Chairman:

Vice-Chairman:



Councillor Bill Hout



Councillor Jayne Brotherton

Cllr Caroline Bayliss

Cllr Pat Marsh

Cllr Jim Clarke

Cllr Trevor Chapman

Cllr Stan Beer

Cllr Andrew Goss

Cllr Michael Harrison

Cllr Pauline McHardy

Cllr Nicholas Wilson

THE YEAR AHEAD...

The Commission has yet to agree its formal work programme for the year 2008/2009 but items that will follow over into the Commission's plan are:

- ❖ CCfA working group.
- ❖ Turkish Baths update.
- ❖ Brimhams Leisure Centre Monitoring.
- ❖ Valley Gardens.
- ❖ The use of Commuted Sums.

There will also be the opportunity for the Commission to scrutinise the Corporate Rural Investment Action Plan.