

Minute Extract – Overview & Performance Scrutiny Forum – 3 April 2014

74 SCRUTINY REPORT ON COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES INVOLVEMENT (6.10 - 6.25 PM)

The Scrutiny and Policy Officer reported on the presentation of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny role to Community Assemblies.

The report included information about the priorities raised by the Community Assemblies, for inclusion in the scrutiny work programmes. It also included options to involve Community Assembly representatives in scrutiny work.

Each Community Assembly had been visited by the Scrutiny and Policy Officer and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs. A presentation had been given to the Community Assemblies, and workshops had been held to prioritise issues for scrutiny, using the 'issues for change' agenda already drawn up by each Community Assembly.

The priorities identified were, in order of importance:-

- community development for people of all ages;
- dealing more effectively with dog fouling;
- litter and street scene issues;
- protection of green spaces and verges;
- parking and roads issues;
- public service agencies working better together, and on community safety.

Community Assemblies would be kept informed of the response of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum to their suggested priorities.

Consideration was given to the future role of Community Assembly representatives in the scrutiny process, as co-opted members of Scrutiny Project Groups, or by attending meetings to give evidence and inform the scrutiny reviews. It was suggested that Community Assemblies be requested to put a Scrutiny item on their agendas at regular meetings, to provide an opportunity for an update on issues raised by the Community Assembly for action by Scrutiny, and to enable people attending the Assemblies to raise matters for Scrutiny.

The first two priorities for Scrutiny would be dog fouling and building communities, and the other priorities could be considered at a future Scrutiny meeting. Items raised by Community Assemblies would be covered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Two-way communication between Scrutiny and Community Assemblies was important, so that expectations of Scrutiny action raised at Community Assemblies remained realistic. It was also necessary to ensure that there was a good understanding of the Scrutiny process by Community Assemblies.

RESOLVED –

1. That the priorities outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report be considered when drawing up the scrutiny committee work programmes, prioritising community development and action to deal with dog fouling as the first two priorities to be added to the work programmes.
2. That involvement of Community Assembly representatives be encouraged, and further consideration be given to how best to achieve this objective at a future meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum.