

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18th September 2013

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Plenderleith (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors Hood and Patten.

Labour Group

Councillors Bambrick and Bell.

OS/6. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mead and Pearson

OS/7. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Special Meeting held on the 15th May 2013 and the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on the 15th May 2013 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

OS/8. **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 – REPORT ON USAGE**

The Committee received a report on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) since May 2013. Members were reminded of the purpose of the legislation and recent changes to it. The Council had approved the amended RIPA Policy and Guidance document at its Meeting on 24th January 2013. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was authorised to review the Council's use of RIPA and for the period May to July 2013, there had been no authorisations requested for the use of these powers.

It was agreed to note the report.

OS/9. **ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTEERING**

The Environmental Development Manager made a verbal report updating the Committee on progress with the project. She stated that she was seeking local companies to become involved in the scheme and asking them for suggested projects to work on. Bison, Toyota, Nestle and Rolls Royce have all been approached. The Environmental Forum had also been invited to submit project ideas for volunteer groups.

The Committee was advised that a casual member of staff had been appointed to the Environmental Education Project Team to provide support to volunteer groups.

It was reported that the aim was to launch the project in March or April of next year to co-ordinate with the preferred season for business volunteering in May onwards.

Members of the Committee asked a number of questions relating to funding of the project and the costs to be charged.

It was agreed to note the report and to request a further update before the end of the year.

OS/10. **COUNCIL TAX RECOVERY-OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services setting out the processes for the collection of Council Tax and in particular the methods for dealing with arrears.

The Members asked a number of questions relating to costs, support for those who are unable to pay, the use of bailiffs and the rules relating to liability for and exemptions from Council Tax.

It was suggested that a presentation could be made to Members of Council by one of the bailiff firms used by Revenue Services and officers undertook to arrange this.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

OS/11. **OVERVIEW & SCUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

A draft work programme was circulated for the Committee's consideration. A verbal update was given by two Members on their shadowing exercise with the Clean Team. The Members praised the hard work of the team.

They also identified a number of issues including the reporting of problems by those on the front line, concern about the roadworthiness of council vehicles, dog fouling and the positioning and emptying of litterbins. They agreed to request a report on the work of the Clean Team to a future meeting of the Committee.

With regard to the Committee's work programme, members discussed the timing of the report on crime and disorder issues. It was suggested that this should be in December.

The updated work programme for 2013/14 was then approved.

MRS. A. PLENDERLEITH

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.