

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

**FROM: Overview and Scrutiny
(Stewardship) Committee**

REPORT NUMBER E1

COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING 19 April 2005

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (STEWARDSHIP)
COMMITTEE**

1. **SUMMARY**

In accordance with the Constitution, the Committee must report annually to Council on its work during the last year and make recommendations for future work programmes and if appropriate, amended working methods.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee's Annual Report for 2004/05 be noted.

2.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee's Work Plan for 2005/06 be approved.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There have been no financial implications to date other than the costs of officer time and normal allowances for Members that are included in the budget.

3.2 Any development of the work of in depth scrutiny, including items such as the payment of out of pocket expenses for expert and other witnesses can be accommodated within existing budgets for 2005/06. The position for future years will be addressed through the Service and Financial Planning Process.

4. **KEY INFORMATION**

4.1 **WORK IN 2004/05**

Appendix 1 comprises a table which outlines the Committee's main areas of work in 2004/05. The majority of items included in the Committee's original work plan have been progressed by the Committee and the following is a brief summary of its other main achievements:

Modernising and Transforming the Council's services

- As a result of the success of the Member Working Group set up to review the services provided by the Revenues Division the methodology used by that group is being recommended for use in other service areas. One further review meeting is scheduled for the early part of 2005/06.
- Member's roles in achieving efficiency savings will be further developed when a Best Value Review Programme can be formulated.

Securing Effective Decision Making Within the Council

- The adoption of a General Delegation Scheme will increase the speed of decision making by reducing the number of reports considered by Committee.
- Officers have been requested to monitor the use of the General Delegation and report back to Committee.
- A new report template has been approved which should assist in making reports easier to understand, reduce paper and postage costs and minimize download time.
- A number of recommendations on the Review of the Constitution have been deferred pending consideration through the Political Groups and then at a Members Seminar.

Youth Strategy

- Another successful Youth Conference was held in October 2004. Two main issues “Things to do” and “Transport” were highlighted, and initiatives and actions for each issue have been identified for further consideration.

Service and Financial Planning Review

- A considerable amount of work was undertaken by the Service and Financial Planning Member Group and Committees to ensure that draft budgets reflect the Council priorities and approved policies. A joint meeting of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees was held to consider the Budget Framework

4.2 WORK PLAN FOR 2005/06

Appendix 2 sets out a list of items of work that Members and Officers have identified for consideration by the Committee during 2005/06. The Committee proposes to continue to give high priority in 2005/06 to items relating to the Youth Strategy and the Modernising and Transforming of the Council’s Services. In addition, it is planned to consider two new major items, as follows:

- Performance Management
- Review of the Overview and Scrutiny role and approach

5 APPENDICES

- (a) Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee: Resume of Work in 2004/05
- (b) Appendix 2 – Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee: Proposed Work Plan for 2005/06

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (STEWARDSHIP) COMMITTEE**RESUME OF WORK IN 2004/05**

The items marked with an asterisk identify matters set out in the Committee's original work plan for 2004/05.

WORK TOPIC		ACTION BY COMMITTEE	
		DATE	ACTION
1	Modernising and transforming the Council's services.		
A	E-government	18.05.04	Noted progress on delivery of E-government programme.*
		06.07.04	Considered progress report by E-Government Steering Group.*
		27.09.04	Noted progress on E-government and ICT capital programme for 2004/05.*
		01.02.05	Noted progress on E-government and ICT projects.*
B	Procurement of services	18.05.04	Considered draft Procurement Strategy and Action Plan and made recommendations to Strategy.
		22.03.05	Considered a progress report on implementing the Procurement Strategy. Called for an Action Plan for business improvement and for reviewing options for the E-marketplace. Made recommendations on the composition of the Procurement Group for 2005/06.
C	Effective Change Management	06.07.04	Agreed to concentrate on Benefits and Revenues Service within context of recently approved Best Value Improvement Plan. Working group established.
		01.02.05	Considered findings of Member Working Group set up to review the services provided by the Revenues Division.
D	Debt counselling/management	17.08.04	Considered a report from the Debt Counselling Working Group and made recommendations to Strategy.
		17.08.04	Considered proposed Debt Management Strategy and Policy and made recommendation to Strategy.
		22.11.04	Considered progress in providing debt advice and support service and made recommendations to Strategy.
E	Housing Stock Options Appraisal	22.11.04	Considered progress report by Stock Options Appraisal Steering Group.

WORK TOPIC		ACTION BY COMMITTEE	
		DATE	ACTION
F	Member Involvement	01.02.05	Considered current and future Member involvement in modernising and transforming services and made recommendations to Strategy.
2	Securing effective decision making within the Council.		
A	Review of Officers' delegations	06.07.04	Preliminary consideration of issues relating to Officers' delegations.*
		17.8.04	Made recommendations to Strategy on scheme of delegations affecting Development Committee and Licensing & Appeals Committee.*
		01.02.05	Made recommendations to Strategy about a general delegation to Officers.*
B	Issues relating to the Constitution	06.07.04	Considered comments made about the Constitution at a Members' Seminar on 28.05.04.*
		17.08.04	Made recommendations to Strategy on issues relating to review of Constitution, timetable and methodology.*
		01.02.05	Considered proposals of Working Groups set up to review the Constitution and made recommendations to Strategy.*
3	Youth Strategy		
	Promote and monitor progress for the Youth Strategy	18.05.04	Joint working group with O & S(CS) established to progress the Youth Strategy project.*
		06.07.04 17.08.04	Noted progress report from Youth Strategy working group.*
		22.11.04	Noted report about Youth Conference held on 15.10.04.*
4	Service and Financial Planning and Review		
		18.05.04	Appointed Members to serve on Service and Financial Planning and Review Group.
		18.05.04	Noted Capital Programme outturn for 2003/04.
		17.08.04	Considered a report by Service & Financial Planning and Review Working Group and made recommendations to Strategy.
		17.08.04 22.11.04 01.02.05	Revenue budget – quarterly monitoring.

WORK TOPIC		ACTION BY COMMITTEE	
		DATE	ACTION
		17.08.04 22.11.04 01.02.05	Capital programme 2004/05 - monitoring.
		22.11.04	Considered a report on the policy and budget framework. Agreed to hold a joint meeting with O & S (CS) to consider matter further.
		14.12.04	Considered a report on policy and budget framework (jointly with O & S (CS)) and made detailed recommendations to Strategy.
		01.02.05	Budget scrutiny – recommendation on to Strategy.*
5	Comprehensive Performance Assessment		
A	Peer Review Team	18.05.04	Considered report on follow-up visit by Peer Review Tam and made recommendations to Strategy.*
B	Corporate Self-Assessment	18.05.04	Considered issues to be developed with the CPA corporate self-assessment.*
		18.05.04	Considered latest position on Council's self-assessment of the Benefits Service and made recommendations to Strategy about the Developed Vision Statement and the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy.*
		18.05.04	Noted latest position relating to District Auditor's assessment of certain aspects of the Council's financial arrangements and other areas addressed as part of CPA.*

	WORK TOPIC	ACTION BY COMMITTEE	
		DATE	ACTION
6	Performance Management		
		18.05.04	Benefits Performance Customer Satisfaction.
		18.05.04	2003/04 General User Satisfaction Survey.*
		18.05.04	Considered Annual Internal Audit Report 2003/04.*
		06.07.04	Considered Audit and Inspection Work Programme.*
		06.07.04	Noted Benefits Service Quarterly Report and made recommendations to Strategy on: Delivering the Benefits Vision – Action Plan; Benefits overpayment policy; Revenues Home Visits policy.
		17.08.04	Noted findings of Audit Commission Inspectors’ assessment of Revenues Services and noted action taken as consequence.*
		17.08.04	Noted final position for Service Plans 2003/04.*
		17.08.04 22.11.04 01.02.05	Best Value Performance Indicators – quarterly monitoring.*
		27.09.04	Annual monitoring of complaints.
		27.09.04	Considered an internal audit follow-up report.
		27.09.04	Noted Benefits Service quarterly report and made recommendations to Strategy about revised Prosecution Policy.
		22.11.04	General User Satisfaction Survey 2003/04 – considered a report analysing complaints and the way they are handled.*
		22.11.04	Considered a proposal to introduce a handling fee on payments made by credit card and made recommendations on this to Strategy.
		01.02.05	Considered latest position on current Public Service Agreement targets.
		01.02.05	Considered a report outlining actions taken following approval of the Best Value Interactions with the Public Action Plan.
		01.02.05	Noted a Benefits Service quarterly report.
		22.03.05	Considered Audit and Inspection Annual Letter 2003/04.
		22.03.05	Approved Internal Audit work programme for 2005/06.*
		22.03.05	Considered 2003/04 National Performance Indicator Comparisons*. Called for quarterly reports on Land Charges.
		22.03.05	Considered a discussion document about the possible contents of a Performance Update – a brief update on a range of performance indicators to be e-mailed to all Members on a monthly basis.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (STEWARDSHIP) COMMITTEE**PROPOSED WORK PLAN FOR 2005/06**

	TOPIC	COMMITTEE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Modernising and transforming the Council's services	Review of Overview and Scrutiny role and approach	17 May 2005	Head of Legal and Administrative Services
	Revenues Transformation	5 July 2005	Bob Southgate
	Procurement Action Plan	16 August 2005	Barry Hunter
	Procurement Action Plan	31 January 2006	Barry Hunter
Securing effective decision-making	Review of revision to scheme of delegation	By December 2005	Head of Legal and Administrative Services
	Consultation and Communication Strategies	17 May 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Revised Risk Management Strategy	5 July 2005	Barry Hunter
Youth strategy	Youth strategy action plan	5 July 2005	Tim Mutum
Budget review	Budget Scrutiny	31 January 2006	Geoff Kistner
Performance management	Internal control statement	17 May 2005	Barry Hunter
	Land Charges – quarterly report	17 May 2005	Pauline McBride
	2004/05 Capital Programme outcomes	17 May 2005	Barry Hunter/Ryan Jones
	Benefits Service Quarterly Report	17 May 2005	Bob Southgate
	Final Performance on Service Plans 2004/05	17 May 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Best Value Review Programme	17 May 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Audit and Inspection Work Programme 2005/06	17 May 2005	Geoff Kistner
	Annual internal audit report 2004/05	5 July 2005	Barry Hunter
	Revenue Budget Monitoring	16 August 2005	Barry Hunter
	Capital Programme Monitoring	16 August 2005	Barry Hunter/Ryan Jones
	Review of Performance Management System	16 August 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Performance Management	16 August 2005	Andrew Hunkin

TOPIC	COMMITTEE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TOPIC
	Benefits Service Quarterly Report	16 August 2005	Bob Southgate
	Land Charges – quarterly report	16 August 2005	Pauline McBride
	Annual Monitoring of Complaints	27 September 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Benefits Service Quarterly Report	27 September 2005	Bob Southgate
	Capital Programme Monitoring	22 November 2005	Barry Hunter/Ryan Jones
	Monitoring the CPA Improvement Plan	22 November 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Service Standards	22 November 2005	Andrew Hunkin/Dawn Williams
	Performance Management	22 November 2005	Andrew Hunkin
	Benefits Service Quarterly Report	22 November 2005	Bob Southgate
	Land Charges – quarterly report	22 November 2005	Pauline McBride
	Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2004/05	31 January 2006	Geoff Kistner
	Revenue budget monitoring	31 January 2006	Barry Hunter
	Capital programme monitoring	31 January 2006	Barry Hunter/Ryan Jones
	Performance Management	31 January 2006	Andrew Hunkin
	Benefits Service – quarterly report	31 January 2006	Bob Southgate
	Land Charges – quarterly report	31 January 2006	Pauline McBride
	Partnership evaluation of CEP Area Forum	21 March 2006	Andrew Hunkin
	PSA (2) Targets – monitoring	21 March 2006	Andrew Hunkin
	Monitoring the Local Area Agreement	21 March 2006	Andrew Hunkin
	National Performance Indicator Comparisons	21 March 2006	Andrew Hunkin
	Internal Audit Work Programme 2006/07	21 March 2006	Barry Hunter
Active Citizenship (Corporate Plan)	Voting by post in local elections	To be determined.	Ray Amesbury

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