

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 OCTOBER 2009

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF TASK AND FINISH GROUP

9. REVIEW OF MARKETS IN EAST HERTS – INITIAL REPORT AND SCOPE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: all

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report summarises the first stages of this review and presents the scoping document for committee members to consider and agree.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR : COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>	
(A)	that the scoping document for the Review of Markets in East Herts attached to this report (as Essential Reference Paper 'B') be considered and agreed; and
(B)	that the Task and Finish Group be asked to report back to Community Scrutiny Committee on 27 April 2010.

1.0 Background

1.1 At their meeting on 21 July 2009, Community Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review of markets in East Herts.

1.2 This topic was one which had originally been suggested during the scrutiny evaluation and topic planning workshops held in January and February 2009. Of the topics which fell under the remit of Community Scrutiny Committee, this was the one which received the greatest support amongst members.

1.3 Members had suggested the issue of Markets in East Herts should be reviewed in the light of the economic environment. They were aware that East Herts as a Council could do nothing about the closure of national retailers such as Woolworths but, as the licensing authority, we did have some control over the markets in the District. Members thought it was important to ensure these were as viable and lively possible to keep the retail offer in our towns attractive to residents and visitors during these difficult times.

2.0 Report

2.1 Following the meeting on 21 July 2009, (political) group leaders were asked to nominated members to sit on the task and finish group. It was agreed that each of the five main towns should be represented alongside members with a 'farming' and a 'rural' interest.

2.2 The membership (and representation/interest) of the group:

- Cllr Hone (Chairman) - Hertford
- Cllr Ashley – farmers and farmers' markets
- Cllr N Clark – Sawbridgeworth
- Cllr Gilbert – Bishop's Stortford
- Cllr Poulton – rural and villages
- Cllr Shaw – Ware
- Cllr Warren – Buntingford

2.3 The group have met twice (on 21 and 30 September 2009) and have

- discussed the scope of the review
- identified its purpose and intended outcomes
- planned the market visits they are going to make themselves
- looked at the range of research/evidence they can draw on
- identified the expert witnesses they wish to hear from

2.4 The draft scope is attached here as Essential Reference Paper 'B' (Pages 9.5 - 9.8). Members are asked to consider and agree the document which will support and direct the work of the task and finish group.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within Essential Reference Paper 'A' (Page 9.4).

Background Papers

Notes of the task and finish group meetings: these are available on request by contacting the Scrutiny Officer by email on scrutiny@eastherts.gov.uk or by calling 01992 531612.

Contact Member: Cllr Dorothy Hone, Chairman: Task and Finish Group

Contact Officer: Will O'Neill: Head of Community and Cultural Services

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p>	<p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet two core objectives:</p> <p>Fit for purpose, services fit for you <i>Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.</i></p> <p>Leading the way, working together <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p> <p>In reviewing Markets in East Herts, this scrutiny review will also contribute to:</p> <p>Shaping now, shaping the future <i>Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities, ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Planned as set out in the scoping document</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The licensing role of the council will be discussed</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.</p>