

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 26 FEBRUARY 2013

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

WARD(S) AFFECTED: *none*

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To review and determine Environment Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:</u>	
(A)	the work programme shown in this report be agreed

1.0 Background

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the Environment Scrutiny work programme are set out in **Essential Reference Paper B**.

2.0 Report

2.1 An article explaining the role of scrutiny and inviting suggestions from residents was published in the spring 2012 'council tax' edition of LINK magazine. No new topics for scrutiny were received during the year from external sources. A new item for inclusion in spring 2013 is being drafted. Ideas for this draft from any member of the Committee can be given to the Scrutiny Officer.

2.2 There will be a workshop in April for all scrutiny members to evaluate the work of the scrutiny committees (and Health and Wellbeing Panel) during 2012/13 and to plan for the coming year. All topics proposed during this planning phase will be offered to the relevant scrutiny committee at their first meeting in the new civic year for consideration for the 2013/14 work programme.

- 2.3 At the time of writing this report, a decision on any changes to the council's recycling service is still to be made (at Executive on 6 March 2013). Depending on the scope of that decision, relevant update, progress and monitoring reports related to any planned implementation phase will be scheduled into the Environment Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2013/14.
- 2.4 Members are informed that 'Climate Week' is taking place from 4 to 10 March 2013. Although not a government organised initiative it is growing in popularity and is supported by an increasing number of businesses, local authorities, government departments and third sector organisations. It is used as a promotional tool, particularly amongst staff, to encourage local initiatives to highlight the need to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.5 In East Herts it is intended to promote a different issue each day during Climate Week on the staff intranet – eg: energy efficiency, car sharing, waste minimisation/recycling, local food and water efficiency issues.
- 2.6 Additionally, although just outside the official week, a major summit looking at 'Water Efficiency in Hertfordshire' is taking place on 14 March 2013 at the Fielder Centre in Hatfield which will bring together key stakeholders from across the county.
- 2.7 Hertfordshire has the highest per capita use of water in the UK and the need to reduce water consumption across the county is becoming of increasing importance, both in terms of improving low river flows as well as in reducing the large amount of energy (and hence carbon emissions) required to process and pump water to where it is required. The Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum is organising the event and East Herts, as an active member of the Forum, is joining with partners to help plan and facilitate future action in respect of water efficiency.
- 2.8 More general information is available on the Climate Week website <http://www.climateweek.com/>
- 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'**.

Background Papers: none

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