

AGENDA ITEM 12(d)

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

16 DECEMBER 2008

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

- PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) with an update on the work of the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the updated position.

BACKGROUND

3. Since the last update report to OSB, the Environment Scrutiny Panel has met once, on 21 November 2008.
4. At that meeting, the panel continued to gather information in respect of its ongoing investigation of countryside matters. Further information was considered in relation to the role and involvement of "Friends Groups." In particular, the panel heard details of possible grant funding opportunities and how the Council can assist in supporting the submission of funding bids.
5. Following the scrutiny panel's earlier discussions in respect of the Newham Grange Leisure Farm, information was also submitted in respect of the business plan which is being developed concerning the farmhouse on the site. This included

details of proposed developments and facilities and the associated Environmental Sustainability Audit and Risk Assessment.

6. At the 21 November meeting the panel was also provided with an update in respect of the Erimus Housing grounds maintenance contract. Members heard that regular meetings have been arranged with both Erimus and Vale Contracts and that good progress has been made in resolving the issues which have been identified.
7. On 27 November 2008, arrangements were made for the scrutiny panel to visit various allotments sites. This was in respect of the ongoing review of Countryside Matters and for Members to see improvements which have been made to date.

COUNCILLOR JEANETTE WALKER

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