

AGENDA ITEM 8(d)

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

10 MARCH 2009

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 16 February 2009.
4. At the above meeting the panel began work on a new scrutiny investigation. The new topic is an examination of the condition of empty shops and properties. Members considered an overview of the new topic, when relevant officers presented information in respect of the following areas:
 - the Council's general powers and responsibilities towards its own premises and also the position in respect of empty commercial/residential properties.
 - regeneration issues, including the Council's role and involvement.
 - environmental issues, including:

- risk assessment process for empty properties and eyesores.
- securing properties open for access.
- enforcement powers.

5. The panel's next meeting will approve terms of reference for the scrutiny investigation, prior to beginning evidence gathering on the new topic.

COUNCILLOR JEANETTE WALKER

CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

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