

AGENDA ITEM: 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

10th AUGUST 2010

WINTER MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To present to the Overview and Scrutiny Board an outline of the purpose of this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Members of the Board are recommended to receive detail on the issue of Winter Maintenance. Addressing the policies and provisions applied locally.
3. The panel is recommended to determine how they intend to pursue the issue of scrutinising the subject of Winter Maintenance. Which services, partners or organisations they may wish to receive evidence from and also to agree the Boards Terms of Reference.

BACKGROUND

4. As a result of technical and scientific advances we are significantly better today at predicting weather than we ever have been. Equally, we are far better equipped to respond to adverse weather conditions with the latest equipment. However, the prolonged exposure to severe weather during the last winter did cause disruption to services and created hardship to the general public locally.

5. Whilst the press illustrate concerns over health and Safety, the potential increases in compensation claims and the closure of schools. Local Councillors raised their concerns regarding the mobility of people in Middlesbrough and their safety as they travel both in vehicles and by foot. Consequently, Members presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board that they would want Scrutiny to examine how the Council prepares for such occurrences and how it undertakes its response.
6. The Board agreed to undertake a Scrutiny into winter maintenance during 2010 and once the Annual Meeting was held and the Chairs who form the Board were confirmed OSB authorised the Scrutiny to be undertaken. The Board had indicated that it would aim to provide its findings to the Councils Executive during the Autumn of 2010

TERMS of REFERENCE

7. The Board is required to determine their Terms of Reference. These will encapsulate the intentions of the Board in scrutinising this topic. Based on information submitted by Members previously, The following provides a basic outline for the Board to discuss following the information presented by the service at this meeting.
 - To examine the Councils planning/policies in respect of vulnerable people.
 - To assess the Councils policies for the maintenance of side roads/pavements.
 - To look at other agencies, which work across other local authority boundaries and is the Council satisfied with the standard provided.
 - To assess the placement of Grit Bins in neighbourhoods.

LINES of ENQUIRY

8. The Overview and Scrutiny Board determined at their meeting in January 2010 that the Board would commence a scrutiny during 2010 into winter maintenance. Consequently, the Board is advised to identify its lines of enquiry. This would identify the organisations, services or people it would wish to receive evidence from.
9. As one of the key areas within the Boards Terms of Reference is to examine the planning and policies associated with winter maintenance. This will include looking at difficulties encountered in the winter of 2009/10 and options for improvement. Consequently, the Board has indicated that it would wish to commence its Scrutiny with the Environment Service to gain an understanding of the present provisions, costs, options etc presently associated with Winter Maintenance.

10. Therefore the Director of Environment has been invited to attend this meeting to set the scene and inform Members of the issues associated with Winter Maintenance as indicated in paragraph 9 above.

- The Environment Service

Following information being presented to the Board by the Environment Service at this meeting the following organisations are listed to assist the panel when determining the lines of enquiry. The boards direction is sought in this respect.

- The highways agency
- Other Local Authorities
- Town Centre Management
- Age Concern
- Probation Service

BACKGROUND PAPERS

11. No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

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