

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 8 (d)

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

21 OCTOBER 2014

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| <p style="text-align: center;">ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL - PROGRESS REPORT</p> |
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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.

BACKGROUND

2. Since the last report to OSB, and at the time of writing, the Environment Scrutiny Panel has met twice, on 8 September and 29 September 2014. Details of those meetings are shown below:

8 September 2014

3. The scrutiny panel's investigation in respect of the Maintenance of Open Spaces is ongoing. At its meeting on 8 September the panel received a presentation from the Head of Direct Services at Stockton Borough Council and the Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods at Hartlepool Borough Council on the approaches adopted by their respective local authorities in response to budget cuts in this area.

29 September 2014

4. On the morning of 29 September a site visit tour of the town was undertaken by the panel to consider some of the key issues/challenges facing the service in terms of the maintenance of open spaces.
5. In accordance with information previously provided to the panel, which had highlighted increases in complaints and one stop enquiries relating to the maintenance of open spaces, a copy of Environment's most recent performance report was considered by the panel. The report highlighted that there had been a considerable increase in service requests received in respect of issues relating to

the maintenance of open spaces through the service area's CRM system and one stop enquiries via Members Office.

6. A map highlighting the approach adopted in Middlesbrough in relation to the removal and reduction of bedding plants across the town was also on display at the meeting. It was advised that in removing flowerbed features efforts have been made to maintain gateway roundabouts to estates and town centres, the Cenotaph, Albert Park, Stewart Park, cemeteries and crematorium, as well as to principal town centre displays.

RECOMMENDATION

7. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the content of the report and the updated position.

COUNCILLOR PETER PURVIS

**CHAIR
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL**

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