

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

26 September 2006

Report of the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee

Part 1- Public

Matters For Decision

1 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL REPORT

To report on the activities of the Scrutiny Committee over the past year.

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution requires an annual report to be submitted to Council on the activities of the Scrutiny Committee over the past year.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee has held five formal meetings over this period and a number of individual review group meetings have also been held. It has focussed its work on issues with direct relevance to local communities, including issues where external agencies are involved in the delivery of services. Over the past year, we have dealt with the following key issues:
 - Water Supply and Conservation
 - Mobile Phone Masts
 - Dentistry (undertaken jointly with Maidstone BC)
 - Christmas Lighting Grants
- 1.3 For the first three of these reviews, recommendations have been endorsed following consideration by the Cabinet. The review of Christmas Lighting Grants is currently ongoing and the conclusions of the review will be reported in October. Our work over the past year has involved gathering evidence from a considerable number of expert witnesses and this has enabled us to formulate clear recommendations for change related to the issues under consideration.
- 1.4 We have focused our work this year on high profile issues facing the local community and sought to highlight key issues to Government and other agencies. For example, the review of dentistry provision coincided with a period of significant change to local services where the continued provision of NHS dentistry was seriously under threat. In addition, community concerns about the on-going drought situation facing the Borough and fears about the proliferation of mobile phone masts have all been addressed.

- 1.5 In addition to the above, the Borough Council has also contributed to a countywide review of the problems of obesity and how this could be better tackled via partnership working. This has been led by the County Council and the review has resulted in some positive recommendations to tackle the identified issues.
- 1.6 The untimely death of Cllr Geraldine Bowden, who served as the Committee's Vice-Chairman since its inception in January 2002, was a sad loss to us this year.
- 1.7 **RECOMMENDATION**
- 1.8 That the annual report on the activities of the Scrutiny Committee BE NOTED.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive