

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

24 April 2007

Report of the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

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 Since I last reported to Council, the Scrutiny Committee has held a further three formal meetings. It has continued to focus 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:
- Mobile Phone Masts
 - Christmas Lighting Grants
 - Neighbour Disputes
 - Joint reviews with Kent County Council on Tackling Obesity and Gypsy and Traveller Sites.
- 1.3 The review of mobile phone masts, undertaken jointly with operators, recommended that the Borough Council should work more closely with providers to improve the siting and design of masts locally and it also called on the Government to publish up to date information on health risks to reassure the public. The review of Christmas Lighting Grants has resulted in a revised grant system being put in place, allowing more local centres to benefit and simplifying application procedures in order to reduce the costs of administration. It also confirmed the Borough Council's lead role in the provision of Christmas Lights in Tonbridge. With regard to neighbour disputes, the review found that partnership working between agencies on such matters was operating effectively. The Committee chose to make no specific recommendations for change on this

occasion but Members did feel that the review had provided a useful learning experience and of value to ward Members when faced with such issues locally.

- 1.4 In addition to the above, the final report of a joint KCC review on Tackling Obesity was received, a review in which the Borough Council was one of three Kent district who made a contribution. The results of the County Council's review of Gypsy and Traveller Sites was also reported for information.
- 1.5 I will be contacting members of the Council in early May seeking suggestions for topics that they might feel appropriate for review by my Committee. I hope that all Members will take the opportunity to participate and suggest issues of concern to them. At our next Scrutiny Committee in June, I hope to report on a programme of new reviews for coming year.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive