

AGENDA

NOTE: In the case of non-members, this agenda is for information only

- Committee** - **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 2**
- Date & Time** - WEDNESDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2008 AT 10.00 AM
- Venue** - THE BOWLS ROOM, WATTON SPORTS CENTRE

Members of the Committee requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting. If the information requested is available, this will be provided, and reported to Committee.

Panel 2 Members:

Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris (Chairman)	Mr M.J. Griffin
Mr C.R. Jordan	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mrs J. Ball	Mrs L.H. Monument (Vice-Chairman)
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mr D.G. Mortimer
Councillor Claire Bowes	Mrs P. Quadling

PERSONS ATTENDING THE MEETING ARE REQUESTED TO TURN OFF MOBILE TELEPHONES

Member Services
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham Norfolk, NR19 1EE

Date: Friday, 22 August 2008

PART A

ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
1. <u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2008.	1 - 9
2. <u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
3. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u> To note the Chairman proposes to accept any item as urgent business, pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972.	
4. <u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u> Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Members' Code of Conduct requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest.	
5. <u>NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING</u> To note the names of any non-Members wishing to address the meeting.	
6. <u>EMPTY DWELLINGS POLICY</u> To receive a report on the Council's Empty Dwellings Policy.	10 - 18
7. <u>BRECKLAND VOICE - REVIEW OF DISTRIBUTION</u> To receive a report on the Review of Distribution and associated costs.	19 - 26
8. <u>WORK PROGRAMME</u> To consider the work programme.	27
9. <u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> To note that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, 16 October at 10.00 a.m. in the Norfolk Room.	

PROTOCOL

The Working Style of the Policy Development & Review Panels

This document sets out the roles of Members and Officers, and the general principles to be adopted by the Policy Development & Review Panels (PD&RP) overseeing the Panel's mode of operation.

Member Leadership

Members of the Panel will undertake scrutiny topics as directed by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission (O&SC) and will recognise that best practice identifies scrutiny as a Member-led activity. The Panel will expect Cabinet members, to take responsibility for answering their questions about topics which primarily relate to the Council's activities.

A Constructive Atmosphere

Meetings of the Panel will be constructive and not judgmental. Panel recognises and accepts that effective scrutiny is best achieved through challenging and constructive enquiry. People giving evidence at Panel should be given due respect and not made to feel under attack.

Independence

Members of the PD&RP will not be subject to whipping arrangements by the party groups.

Respect and Trust

Meetings will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

Consensus

Members of the Panel will work together and, while recognising political allegiances, will attempt to achieve consensus and agreed recommendations. There will be recognition that the Panel has a primary duty to scrutinise on behalf of the community.

Openness and Transparency

The PD&RP's business will be open and transparent, except where there are sound reasons for protecting confidentiality. The minutes of the Panel's meetings will explain the discussion and debate so that they can be understood by an outside reader.

Impartial and Independent Officer Advice

Officers who advise and support the Panel will give impartial and independent advice, as officers support all members of the Council.

Regular Review

There will be regular reviews of how the scrutiny process is working, and a willingness to change if it is not working effectively.

Programming and Planning

The Panel will have a programme of work assigned by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission. The Panel will be able to suggest additional topics for review through the O&SC for approval in the work programme. Before each topic is commenced, the O&SC will agree the scope of the exercise, what information they will need initially, and which members, officers and external witnesses they wish to see.

Managing Time

The Panel will aim to conclude the business of each meeting in reasonable time. The order of business will be arranged as far as possible to minimise the demands on the time of witnesses. Where possible, members should give advance notice of specific questions being provided at the time of the meeting to save items being deferred.