

Report of the Chairman on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

This report gives an overview of the issues considered at the 28 March 2017 meeting.

1. Welfare reform and Universal Credit update

- 1.1 The Committee noted an update report which explained how Spelthorne Borough Council was addressing the challenges relating to: the introduction of Universal Credit; the application of the Benefits Cap; the under occupancy charge; and the administration of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and the effects they were having on Spelthorne claimants.
- 1.2 The Committee noted that the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) affected very few Spelthorne residents at the present time but that the Housing team offered support and advice as needed. Once the migration of existing working age Housing Benefit claims to UC was underway, the Council would be able to provide more specific advice to each family.

2. Review of Parking

- 2.1 The Committee noted actions taken by officers to address residents' concerns about parking in Ashford town centre and agreed to include a review of parking in Ashford in six months' time on the Committee's work programme.
- 2.2 The Committee discussed the cost of repairing or rebuilding Ashford multi-storey car park, alternative options for providing car parking in the town centre and the viability of using the existing car park for an airport parking business. The Committee also noted that ward councillors had secured a compromise with the owners of the private car park behind Ashford Antiques that the car park wardens would provide change for the ticket machines if needed, and erect signs to this effect.
- 2.3 The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mooney, commended Michelle Arnold for raising this key issue for the Ashford community and the Committee joined in thanking her for raising the profile of this matter.

3. Financial reports

- 3.1 The Committee noted two financial reports setting out the current spend position for both revenue and capital to the end of December 2016.

4. Updates from Task Groups

- 4.1 The Committee noted updates from the Task Groups for Communications and Parks which had both concluded their work.

5. Committee Work Programme 2017-2018

- 5.1 The Committee suggested topics to be considered for inclusion in the work programme for the next municipal year.

Councillor Colin Davis

Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

27 April 2017