

27 October 2006

Ref: DL/Scrutiny/Nov06
Contact: Donna Levett
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To: The Members of the Scrutiny Committee of the North Hertfordshire District Council

(Councillors Martin Stears (Chairman); M. Paterson (Vice-Chairman); David Billing, John Bishop, S. Bloxham, P.C.W. Burt, Paul Clark, Melissa Davey, Jane Gray, David Kearns, H.M. Marshall, M.R.M. Muir, Elliot Needham and R.L. Shakespeare-Smith.)
[Substitutes: Councillors Sal Jarvis and Lorna Kercher]

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

to be held in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY**

on

TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2006

at

7.30 p.m.

**[Note: A Pre-Meeting For Members Of The Committee Will Take
Place At 7.00pm In Committee Room 3]**

Yours sincerely,



David Miley
Democratic Services Manager

AGENDA
PART I

ITEM	PAGE
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	-
2. MINUTES To take as read and approve as a true record the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 10 October 2006.	-
3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of the business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chairman will decide whether the item(s) raised will be considered.	-
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DIRECTIONS) To receive from Members of the Council any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda or any advice from a Member of this Committee concerning a party whip direction. Members should either declare a prejudicial or personal interest and are required to notify the Council of the nature of any interest declared. Members declaring a prejudicial interest should leave the room and not seek to influence the decision during that particular item of business.	-
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from members of the public. At the time of printing the agenda, no requests to speak had been received. Public participation requests received within the agreed time will be notified to Members as soon as practicable.	-
6. URGENT/GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS The Chairman to report on any urgent or general exception items which required his agreement. At the time of printing the agenda, the Chairman had not agreed any urgent or general exception items.	-
7. CALLED-IN ITEMS To consider any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of a decision. At the time of printing the agenda, no items of business had been called-in.	-
8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	-

ITEM	PAGE
<p>9. QUESTIONS To receive and respond to any questions either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting. At the time of printing the agenda, no questions had been received.</p>	-
<p>10. NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – THE DRAFT FORWARD PLAN: 1 DECEMBER 2006 – 31 MARCH 2007 <i>To note items on the Council's Forward Plan and to give consideration to any items set out in the Plan prior to a decision being made.</i></p>	1
<p>11. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/2007 REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER <i>To consider the issues that the Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.</i></p>	9
<p>12. PLAYScheme AND SPORTS PROGRAMME 2006/2007 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES <i>An appraisal of childrens services and youth activites in summer 2006.</i></p>	11
<p>13. PRESENTATION BY PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT & WASTE MANAGEMENT <i>To receive a presentation by Councillor Mrs L.A. Needham, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Waste Management.</i></p>	17
<p>14. ITEMS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FINANCE SUB-GROUP: 6 NOVEMBER 2006 <i>This Item will be tabled at the meeting.</i></p>	19

Future meetings of the Scrutiny Council have been scheduled to take place on:

Monday 11 December 2006
 9 January 2007
 20 February 2007
 20 March 2007

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TITLE OF REPORT: QUESTION

The following question has been submitted by Councillor David Billing:-

"North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership has stated that the absence of any costings for road safety proposals, from all five of our Area Committees, at the Joint Member Panel meeting on 16 October was due to the lack of a designated NHDC liaison officer following the departure of the former Chief Engineer. This has led to all five Area Committees' proposals being suspended, and the loss of possible Hertfordshire Highways discretionary funding for these at least for the remainder of this financial year.

What went wrong in NHDC that led to this outcome? What was the process for replacing the Chief Engineer, or for re-allocating his responsibilities and for ensuring that they were performed in effective and timely ways? Why did the responsible executive member not ensure that this process was working properly? What will he now do to retrieve the situation, if that is possible, or to ensure no repeat in similar problems? What other areas of work of the former Chief Engineer are not allocated sufficient staff time, commitment and proper communication, to ensure the public's right to effective services?"

A response to this question will be provided by the time of the meeting.

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

10

**TITLE OF REPORT: NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – THE DRAFT
FORWARD PLAN: 1 DECEMBER 2006 – 31 MARCH 2007**

To note items listed on the Council's Forward Plan and to give consideration to any items set out in the Plan prior to a decision being made.

The Forward Plan is attached.

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

DRAFT Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 1 December 2006

The Forward Plan contains brief details of key decisions that the Council is likely to take over the next four-month period. You will also find details of contacts who can provide further information and hear your views.

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
The 2006 Review of the Corporate Plan 06/06	PARC	Council (via Cabinet)	14 Dec 2006	Councillors CMT Officers Portfolio Holder	meetings and workshops	Corporate Plan 2005-2015	TBA	Cllr F J Smith liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Implementation of the Gambling Act 07/06		Council (via Cabinet)	14 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers Licensing & Appeals Committee Community	Meetings Workshops	Report	TBA	Cllr Sarah Wren Andy.godman@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474293
Disability Equality Scheme 11/06		Council (via Cabinet)	14 Dec 2006	CMT Portfolio Holder Officers Community	Meetings Written Questionnaire	Code of Practice	TBA	Cllr F.J. Smith liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Waste Management Contract – Renegotiations & Policies 09/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Contractor Portfolio Holder	Meetings	Contracts & Policies	TBA	Cllr Lynda Needham Tony.clampton@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474304
Disposal of land adjacent to 27 Dark Lane, Sandon 09/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Baldock & District Committee	Meeting 25 September 2006	Estates Files	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Barrie.jones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474243
Area Governance and Costs of Democracy 08/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holders Area Committee Chairmen	Meetings Briefings	Previous Cabinet reports	Savings of £50k	Cllr Tricia Gibbs Patrick.candler@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474823

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Local Development Framework – Preferred Options for Core Strategy / Development Control Policies 08/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Local Groups, Cllrs, Relevant Statutory Organisations and other Herts Partners Member Working Party	Written Comments Meeting	In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement	N/A	Cllr Richard Thake Andy.beavan@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474317
The Community Meals Service in North Hertfordshire 09/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	CMT	meetings written	A Meals on Wheels Social Enterprise for Hertfordshire	TBA	Cllr Sarah Wren Lynn.saville@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474530
Hitchin Town Hall – Future plans 10/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Hitchin Area Committee 12.12.06	Meeting	Previous Cabinet reports	TBA	Cllr Tricia Gibbs Patrick.candler@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474823
Employment Study 10/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers	Meetings Briefings	Report	Within Existing budgets	Cllr Richard Thake Andy.beavan@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474317
Consent Street Trading 10/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers	Meeting	Previous Cabinet reports	TBA	Cllr Sarah Wren Giovanna.silverio@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474478
Draft Budget and Council Tax base 09/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	CMT	meetings written		N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297
Adoption of Building Control Policy 09/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holder	Meeting	Report to Cabinet	N/A	Cllr Richard Thake Ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 476370
Approval of Ivel Court redevelopment scheme 07/06		Cabinet	19 Dec 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers LAPC Community	Meetings Workshops	Previous Cabinet reports	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Barrie.jones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474243

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Markets - Policy for Future Management Arrangements 10/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	16 Jan 2007	Portfolio Holder for Leisure Finance officers	Meetings	Policies	TBA	Cllr Ian Knighton Steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474211
Enforcement polices for the Housing & Environmental Health Service 10/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	16 Jan 2007	Portfolio Holder Representative forums Chamber of Commerce	Written comments Discussion with forums	NHDC Enforcement Policy Enforcement Concordat	Nil	Cllr Sarah Wren Andy.godman@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474293
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 10/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	16 Jan 2007	Portfolio Holder Officers	Meetings Briefings	Report	Within Existing budgets	Cllr Richard Thake Andy.beavan@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474317
Revised Community Strategy for North Herts 11/05	PARC	Council (via Cabinet)	18 Jan 2007	LSP partners/stakeholders residents visioning groups COMPACT	meetings press release website public event	community strategy draft	TBA	Cllr Tricia Gibbs liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Agree Letchworth Town Centre Strategy 10/06		Council (via Cabinet)	18 Jan 2007	Letchworth Area Committee Key Organisations & Stakeholders Key Landowners	Meetings and workshop	Report Summary of Stakeholder Workshops	TBA	Cllr Richard Thake Louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474359
Budget & Council Tax level set 11/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Council (via Cabinet)	8 Feb 2007	CMT	meetings written		N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297
Best Value Performance Plan Summary 2007/08 11/06	PARC	Council (Via Cabinet)	8 Feb 2007		meetings written	BVPP Summary 2007/08	N/A	Cllr Andrew Young sarah.white@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474659
Third Quarter Revenue Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 11/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	27 Feb 2007	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Third Quarter Capital Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 11/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	27 Feb 2007	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
New/Revised Housing Strategy 08/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	27 Feb 2007					Cllr Sarah Wren Alan.davey@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 476362
Stevenage Area Action Plan – Issues and Options Public Consultation 12/06		Cabinet	27 Feb 2007	Officers	Written comments / meetings	In accordance with Statement of Community Involvement	N/A	Cllr Richard Thake John.ironside@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474626
London Luton Airport Phase1 Planning Application 04/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	27 Mar 2007		Written Comments	Phase 1 Planning Application	TBA	Cllr Richard Thake Mark.wilson@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474359

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

PENDING ITEMS

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Best Value Performance Plan 2007/08 02/07	PARC	Council (Via Cabinet)	May 2007		meetings written	BVPP 2007/08	N/A	Cllr Andrew Young ola.alabi@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474659
Final Quarter Revenue Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 11/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	May 2007	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
Final Quarter Capital Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 11/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	May 2007	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
Annual Review of Financial Regulations & Contract Procurement Rules 2007/08	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	June 2007	Governance Officer Group	meetings	Audit files	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone barriejones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474243
Annual Statement of Accounts 2006/07 11.06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	June 2007	Officers	meetings	Closure papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
Financial Management Strategy 2007/08	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	July 2007	Officers	meetings	General Ledger and Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297

**TITLE OF REPORT: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/2007
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER****1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report gives details about the topics that the Scrutiny Committee plans to scrutinise and gives an update on the work of the Task and Finish Groups.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

7 Nov 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waste & Environment Portfolio Holder ▪ Waste Management Contract – Renegotiations & Policies ▪ Summer Playscheme User Satisfaction Survey Results (to include the performance of the voluntary sector providers of children’s services and the success of the provision of activities for 11-14 year olds). <i>As requested at 21.03.06 meeting.</i> ▪ Sports Development Strategy – report on the performance of the new concessionary rates available for users of the Council's Easter Sports Programme for Children. <i>As requested at 21.03.06 meeting.</i>
11 Dec 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing & Environmental Health Portfolio Holder ▪ Residential Parking – report on displacement effects, pay and display, consultations, non-residential CPZ users (outstanding issues from the Task & Finish Group) ▪ Cabinet response to Residential Parking Task & Finish Group recommendations (to be combined as one report with the one above) ▪ Cabinet response to Markets Task & Finish Group recommendations ▪ Community Safety Task & Finish Group – Scope ▪ Local Development Framework – Preferred Options for Core Strategy / Development Control Policies ▪ Area Governance and Cost of Democracy
9 Jan 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leisure & E-Government Portfolio Holder ▪ Markets – Policy for Future Management Arrangements ▪ Green Spaces Strategy ▪ London Luton Airport Phase 1 – Planning Application ▪ Enforcement Policies for the Housing & Environmental Health Service

20 Feb 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Engagement Portfolio Holder ▪ Chairman's Review ▪ New/Revised Housing Strategy (<i>requested at the meeting on 19 June</i>)
20 March 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Report

4. SUB GROUPS

4.1 Affordable Housing Task & Finish Group

This Group will be meeting on 16 November, where they will undertake a site visit to the William Ransom site in Hitchin and will be meeting with the Business Development Director of Bellway Homes, who are the developers for this site.

4.2 Partnership Working With Parishes Task & Finish Group

This group met on 24 October and met with an officer from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and Members from Mid Beds District Council who are involved with their parishes, to gain best practice and learn any valuable lessons.

4.3 Community Safety Task & Finish Group

This group will be holding its first meeting on 30 November, where they will appoint a Chairman and develop the Scope.

4.4 Finance Sub-Group

This ongoing Sub-Group met on 12 October and looked at the Service and Financial Planning – Savings & Growth 2007/2008 & 2011/2012 report. The group requested further information on certain items within the report, which will be provided at the Member budget workshops.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Members are asked to note the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2006/2007.

6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to plan and carry out its workload efficiently and effectively.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

7.1 Grace Crawford (Scrutiny Officer)
 Tel. 01462 474612
 E-Mail: grace.crawford@north-herts.gov.uk

TITLE OF REPORT: PLAYScheme AND SPORTS PROGRAMME 2006/2007
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 To advise the Committee on the following:

- Feedback from customers following the 2006 NHDC summer playschemes.
- An appraisal of children's services delivered by the voluntary sector during summer 2006.
- An evaluation of the provision of youth activities (for 11 – 14 year olds) during summer 2006
- The success of new sports course concessionary rates introduced for all holiday courses during 2006.

2. FORWARD PLAN

2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Officers presented two reports to this committee at its meeting on 21 March 2006, one relating to the adoption of a Sports Strategy and the other to changes in the way NHDC delivered playschemes. This Committee requested supplementary reports in the autumn of 2006 updating it on issues detailed in section 1 of this report.

4. FEEDBACK ON KEY ISSUES**4.1 Customer Evaluation of NHDC Playschemes 2006**

4.1.1 Officers are still evaluating feedback from this years' customer survey, but some initial comparisons with last year are as follows:

Item	2005	2006
% of children attending schemes who either 'Loved it' or 'Quite Liked it'	97	98.8
% of parents who felt the service provided was 'Very Good' or 'Good'	92.7	90.3
% of people who would attend playschemes if organised in Easter and half term holidays.	90.9	87.1

Year	Total places available	Total places taken	% take-up
2005	13360	9743	72.9
2006	6480	5398	83.3

- 4.1.2 The performance target for 2006 for ‘% take – up’ was 84% which equates to 5443 attendances.
- 4.1.3 Officers conclude that the 2006 playschemes have maintained a consistently high level of service and customer satisfaction, despite major changes to the way that the services have been delivered.
- 4.1.4 Although the total number of places has decreased, the total number of sites in the district covered has increased from 9 to 12, ensuring that the services are more accessible to local children. It should also be noted that the percentage of children paying concessionary rates to access the schemes has increased from 39% (2005) to 47% in 2006.
- 4.1.5 The number of complaints and comments about the reduction in overall playscheme places available has not been significant. Only one formal complaint has been received although 20 parents and carers have made comments noting the reduction in their evaluations of the schemes.
- 4.1.6 NHDC delivered an enhanced ‘Out 2 Play’ Service in 2006, which attracted the following numbers:

Year	Total places taken
2005	697
2006	647

- 4.1.7 The take-up figures for 2006 were affected by adverse weather conditions compared to the previous year, making year on year comparisons difficult. Feedback from children and parents who accessed these schemes has been excellent.
- 4.1.8 Due to the nature of these schemes, there is no maximum limit to the number of children who can attend each site.

4.2 Provision of Children’s Services by the Voluntary sector during Summer 2006

- 4.2.1 Officers have consulted with the Children’s Information Service (CIS) and local partners to collate information on voluntary sector activities during the summer period. Members should note that this information is not exact as many volunteer providers provide very localised services that may not need to be registered with a statutory organisation. For example many places of worship run playschemes for less than a week, which do not have to be OFSTED accredited. Officers, therefore, may not be aware that this provision exists.
- 4.2.2 NHDC offers local play providers the opportunity to advertise with the NHDC summer brochure. The number of groups that have taken advantage of this service both this
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year and last year is 17. However a number of providers that used this service in 2006 have not done so before, whilst some of the providers who used the service in 2005 have not provided services in 2006 due to essential building works.

- 4.2.3 The CIS has provided the following information on the total number of OFSTED registered summer play activity places in North Herts:

	2005	2006	% increase
Number of places available	6669	7693	15

- 4.2.4 Unfortunately the CIS does not keep records of the percentage uptake of places available. However the NHDC Children's Services team is currently looking at ways of measuring this figure (both for registered and non-registered schemes) to ensure improved records of local voluntary sector provision for the future.

4.3 Evaluation of Youth Activities During Summer 2006

- 4.3.1 A 'Youthoria' programme of summer activities organised by HCC Youth Services was distributed, via schools and youth centres, to 11-19 year olds in the district. This programme was supported by NHDC officers and given £2,000 in NHDC financial support from the youth development budget.

- 4.3.2 A total of 55 different activities were provided for this age group ranging from Arts and crafts in local venues, through outdoor pool parties, to day trips further afield. Some examples of the day trips were: 'Go Ape' in Thetford Forest; Alton Towers and the London Eye.

- 4.3.3 HCC are currently compiling exact attendance data, which officers will orally report at this Committee. Youth workers involved with the events themselves have reported that the young people enjoyed all opportunities and that youth workers would like to deliver a similar service in future years.

4.4 Sports Course Concessionary Rates

- 4.4.1 Concessionary rates have been introduced for the first time this year on sports courses at a rate of 75% of the normal course cost. 7% (46 individuals) of children booking onto courses during the summer took advantage of these rates. Of these children 61% (28 individuals) were first time users of sports courses.

- 4.4.2 Feedback from the summer sports course user survey is still being analysed, and the number of replies from people who have used concession rates is too small to ensure reliable statistical comparisons with non concession users. However feedback is positive with some evidence to suggest that concession rates do make sports courses more accessible to those on low incomes.

- 4.4.3 The inception of concession rates for sports course during 2006 has been a pilot project. Officers have concluded that that this service does improve access, but greater reductions will be necessary in future to further improve take-up of sports courses from children from low income backgrounds.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications pertinent to this report but Members might wish to be reminded that the Council has a wide general power to provide staff and facilities for recreational purposes under section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Playscheme service has an annual budget of £104,000. To date the service is projecting an overspend of £12,700. Factors which have contributed to this have been:
- The increase in the number of users paying concession rates has reduced income.
 - Additional resources have been spent on publicity to ensure small rural locations and new urban sites are appropriately publicised.
 - Mandatory additional staff training has increased training days by two, resulting in additional salary demands.
- 6.2 Herts County Council has informed the District Council that from next financial year it will no longer be subsidising NHDC's hire of school facilities for the playschemes. In 2006 the value of these subsidies was £7,623. Officers are currently challenging this decision.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 During 2006, the playscheme programme was overseen by a temporary Play Officer whose main role is to develop an accredited playscheme training programme.
- 7.2 The development of concession rate policies for sports courses, the availability of 'Out 2 Play' schemes and a wider range of playscheme venues has ensured that NHDC activities for children and young people are increasingly accessible.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 Data and qualitative comments in this report have been extrapolated from customers via the playscheme survey and from children and carers accessing the Out 2 play schemes.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Committee notes the feedback given on the issues highlighted above.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 10.1 Tim Stephen, Community Development Manager
Tel. 01462 474386
E-Mail: tim.stephen@north-herts.gov.uk

- 10.2 Rachel Ansbro (Acting Children's Services Development Manager)
Tel. 01462 474838
E-Mail: rachel.ansbro@north-herts.gov.uk
- 10.3 Anita Thomas (Accountant for Financial and Regulatory Services)
Tel. 01462 474566
E-Mail: Anita.thomas@north-herts.gov.uk
- 10.4 Kim Sawyer (Corporate Legal Manager)
Tel. 01462 474561
E-Mail: Kim.sawyer@north-herts.gov.uk

PRESENTATION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT & WASTE MANAGEMENT

PRESENTATION BY COUNCILLOR MRS LYNDA NEEDHAM, THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT & WASTE MANAGEMENT

This Item will take the format of an oral presentation

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PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

AGENDA ITEM No.

14

TITLE OF REPORT: ITEMS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FINANCE SUB-GROUP - 6 NOVEMBER 2006

This report will be tabled at the meeting.

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