

Forest Heath District Council

MINUTES of the **CABINET** held at the District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall on Tuesday 18 February 2014 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

J E Waters (Leader)	S J Edwards
N A Roman (Deputy Leader)	W Hirst
D W Bowman	R J Millar
Mrs R E Burt	

Councillors C Noble and T Simmons were also in attendance.

Also in attendance:

I Gallin, Chief Executive
P Heard, Legal Services Manager
T Hobby, Housing Options Manager
D Howes, Head of Policy, Communications and Customers
R Mann, Head of Resources and Performance
A Mayley, Head of Economic Development and Growth
K Points, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
M Smith, Place Shaping Manager
S Wood, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services
A Wilson, Director
T Wright, Business Regulation and Licensing Manager
S Turner, FHDC Cabinet Officer/Committee Administrator

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

895. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) Report No CAB14/132 – Draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016

Ms Sara Beckett, a local resident, wished to address the Cabinet in relation to Report No CAB14/132 (Draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016) and referred to page 7 of the Plan which contained statistical information on West Suffolk, which ranged in date from 2001 to 2013. Ms Beckett also referred to the report which stated that '*The strategic plan is a revision of the previous Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council Plans, taking account of the changed economic climate, sharing of services and other developments since 2012*', and, therefore, she considered that this statistical information should be more up-to-date to reflect this.

(b) Report No CAB14/139 – Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - Adoption

Ms Sara Beckett, a local resident, wished to address the Cabinet in relation to Report No CAB14/139 (Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – Adoption) and made the following comments on its content:

1. Page 14 – *'1.3 How we plan strategically across local boundaries'*

This paragraph stated that *'The government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the 'mutual benefit' of neighbouring Authorities'*. However, there was no mention of who these neighbouring authorities were.

2. Page 16 – *'Table 1: How we will engage with our communities – Website/Social Media'*

There was a minor typographical error within the second paragraph.

3. Page 18 – *'1.5 Supporting the Neighbourhood Planning process'*

This section stated that *'For more information on the Localism Act and/or Neighbourhood Planning, please contact the Local Plans Team.'* Ms Beckett explained that she had tried to contact the Local Plans Team but had been unable to find any contact information.

4. Page 22 – *'Article 4 Directions'*

This section did not satisfactorily explain what was meant by an Article 4 Direction. Ms Beckett also considered that the Officer contact information should be included within this Section.

5. Page 24 – *'2.3 How we will engage with our communities – Local advertisement'*

This paragraph stated that *'Members of the public are advised that they have 21 days from the date of the advert to submit their comments'*. Ms Beckett considered that this needed to be clarified as to whether this was actually 'working' or 'calendar' days.

6. Page 24 – *'2.3 How we will engage with our communities – Access to Planning Staff'*

The wording within this paragraph was ambiguous in relation as to whether Planning staff were able to express an opinion as to the likely outcome of an application.

Councillor Mrs R E Burt, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Transport, thanked Ms Beckett for her comments on this Statement and explained that the points raised would be further considered by Officers.

896. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 January 2014 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Leader.

897. **MINUTES OF JOINT COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER GROUPS**

The minutes of the following Joint Committees, Working Groups and other Groups were received:

West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel	16 January 2014
West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee	17 January 2014
West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group	20 January 2014
Local Plan Working Group	29 January 2014

Items the subject of formal report or proposition were as follows:-

898. **WEST SUFFOLK JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE PANEL – 16 JANUARY 2014 – MINUTE NUMBER 029 – NEW JOINT (WEST SUFFOLK) HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES: TRAVEL; MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY; ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND REDUNDANCY (REPORT NO JSP14/006)**

Members were requested to note the recommendations listed under this item, as it was to be considered by Cabinet later on the agenda under Report No CAB14/137.

899. **LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP – 29 JANUARY 2014 – MINUTE NUMBER 275 – JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI) – ADOPTION (REPORT NO LOP14/017)**

Members were required to note the recommendations listed under this item, as it was to be considered by Cabinet later on the agenda under Report No CAB14/139.

900. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved, duly seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the respective Joint Committees/Panels, Working Groups and other Groups be approved and that authority is hereby given for such action to be taken as necessary to give effect thereto.

KEY DECISIONS

901. **REVENUES COLLECTION PERFORMANCE AND WRITE-OFFS (REPORT NO CAB14/131)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/01)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance presented this report which sought approval for the write-off of uncollectable amounts in respects of accounts for Council Tax, Business Rates and for a Housing Benefit overpayment. The specific reasons for recommending each write-off, was included within the exempt Appendix 1, 2 and 3.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt Appendix 1, 2 and 3 of Report No CAB14/131, be approved as follows:

1. Three accounts for Council Tax totalling £7,843.11 (exempt Appendix 1).
2. Three accounts for Business Rates totalling £15,547.27 (exempt Appendix 2).
3. One Housing Benefit overpayment totalling £3,235.29 (exempt Appendix 3).

NON KEY DECISIONS

902. **DRAFT WEST SUFFOLK STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2016 (REPORT NO CAB14/132)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/04)

The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance both presented this report which explained that a draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan had been prepared to cover the period 2014-2016.

This Plan was a revision of the previous Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council Plans, taking account of the changed economic climate, sharing of services and other developments since 2012. The Plan set out the vision and priorities for both Councils, as well as the high level projects and actions that would support the delivery of these priorities.

In January and February 2014, the draft document had also been considered by both St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees, who had met together for two informal joint sessions. At their first meeting on 22 January 2014, the Committees made a number of helpful suggestions about the documents, which resulted in a revised version of the document. These comments were primarily around how the priorities had been selected; the approach to families and communities in priority 2; and the relationship between the Council's "day to day" work and the priorities in the document. The changes to address these concerns had been incorporated in the draft attached at Appendix A to the report.

At their second meeting on 5 February 2014, the following further comments were made as follows:

1. The wording of the third priority, relating to housing, was discussed. On the one hand, some considered that the priority needed to be more specific and should be reworded as "*suitable homes that meet the needs of our communities*". On the other hand, others considered that the breadth of the current drafting, "*Homes for our communities*", was helpful and that the wording should remain as it was.

The Cabinet Member proposed for this wording change not to be accepted by the Cabinet as the existing wording '*Homes for our communities*' adequately reflected what was trying to be achieved by this priority.

2. On page 11 of the draft document, it was suggested that the wording "*maintain existing relationships with other parts of the public sector*" should be changed to "*strengthen existing relationships with other parts of the public sector*".

The Cabinet Member proposed for this wording change to be accepted by the Cabinet and for the document to be amended to reflect that both Councils wished to strengthen their partnerships with other organisations.

During the Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussions on 5 February 2014, Councillor Mr G Cox (St Edmundsbury Borough Council) also noted his concerns regarding some aspects of the document. These were raised with Officers after the meeting and included the following points:

3. The wording of point 3 under priority 1 (on page 10) appeared to overlook those with more practical or vocational skills. Councillor Mr G Cox, therefore, suggested that the word "*right*" be added before "*educational attainment*".

The Cabinet Member proposed for this wording change to not be accepted by the Cabinet as the need to provide practical and vocational skills was implicit in the document.

4. In paragraph 7 of page 11, it was suggested that the word "*will*" should be changed to "*may*" in the first sentence, in recognition of the fact that some councillors and staff had some of the new skills needed to work in the new ways outlined.

The Cabinet Member proposed for this small wording change to be accepted by the Cabinet.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016, as set out in Appendix A to Report No CAB14/132, be adopted, subject to the following

amendments:-

1. *'Homes for our communities'* be retained as the wording for the third priority relating to housing.
2. Page 11, paragraph 7: the wording *'All of these approaches **will** require councillors and staff alike to learn new skills and ways of working'* be amended to read: *'All of these approaches **may** require councillors and staff alike to learn new skills and ways of working'*.
3. Page 11, paragraph 7: the wording *'...**maintain** existing relationships with other parts of the public sector...'* be amended to read: *'...**strengthen** existing relationships with other parts of the public sector ...'*

903. **BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING: 2014/2015 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014-2016 (REPORT NO CAB14/133)** (Decisions Plan Reference: SEP12/07)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance presented this report which set out the details of the Council's proposed revenue and capital budget for 2014/2015 and the Cabinet was also required to consider the 2014/2015 budget for the Authority and to recommend to Council the level of Council Tax required to fund this budget.

The Cabinet Member had great pleasure in recommending to the Cabinet and the Council, a 0% increase on council tax for 2014/2015. Should the Cabinet and the Council decide to set a 0% increase on council tax, then the Council would have frozen council tax for the last four years.

The Cabinet Member also explained that in January and February 2014, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had also been considered by both St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees, who had met together for two informal joint sessions. Two points were raised which related to wording within the draft MTFS document as follows:

1. On page 8 of the draft MTFS document, it was suggested that the wording around West Suffolk's ageing population should be amended to demonstrate that whilst older people may need support, they still made an important contribution to their local community. It was suggested that the final sentence of paragraph 5 should therefore begin with *"Some older people...."* Rather than *"Others...."*.

The Cabinet Member proposed for this wording change to be accepted by the Cabinet.

2. The wording in the final paragraph on page 8 should be revised to show that West Suffolk's ambition was for our schoolchildren to aim higher than county or national averages in their educational attainment. It was, therefore, proposed by Officers that the final words *"to bring it in line with county or national averages"* be deleted.

The Cabinet Member proposed for this wording change to be accepted by the Cabinet.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That:-

1. The net revenue budget for 2014/2015 attached at Attachment A, together with the shared services and local savings proposals (detailed at Attachment B to Report No CAB14/133) be approved.
2. The revised capital programme, detailed at paragraphs 4.23- 4.28 and attached at Attachment D, Appendix 2 to Report No CAB14/133, be approved.
3. A general fund balance of £2m be maintained as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of Report No CAB14/133.
4. The Fees and Charges, as set out in Attachment E to Report No CAB14/133, be approved and the statutory notices be placed where required.
5. The Head of Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Governance and Performance, be given delegated authority to agree those Fees and Charges for 2014/2015 that relate to sensitive, commercial or otherwise, services such as trade refuse and housing.
6. Having taken into account the conclusions of the Head of Resources and Performance's report on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of budget estimates (Attachment C to Report No CAB14/133), including the Scenario Planning and Sensitivity Analysis (Attachment D, Appendix 5 to Report No CAB14/133) and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) attached (Attachment D to Report No CAB14/133) and all the other information contained in this report, Cabinet recommends a 0% increase in council tax for 2014/2015.
7. The Head of Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Governance and Performance, be authorised to transfer any surplus on the 2013/2014 revenue budget to the General Fund and to vire funds between existing Earmarked Reserves (as set out at Appendix 3 to Report No CAB14/133) as deemed appropriate throughout the year.
8. Relief be awarded to all businesses that fall within Government's criteria equally and the Head of Resources and Performance be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Governance and Performance, to determine the final guidelines for the operation of the relief following publication of the final scheme by Government.

9. The West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-2016, Attachment D to Report No CAB14/133 and all appendices, including the Prudential Indicators for the period 2013/2014 to 2017/2018 and the use of the CFR method for calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision for supported capital expenditure be approved, subject to the following amendments to the MTFS (Attachment D) itself:
- (a) Page 9, paragraph 5: the final sentence be amended to begin with '*Some older people...*', rather than '*Others...*'.
 - (b) Page 9, final paragraph: the words '*...to bring it in line with county or national averages*' be deleted from the final sentence.

904. **ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY STATEMENTS 2014/2015 AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT CODE OF PRACTICE (REPORT NO CAB14/134)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/07)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance presented this report which explained that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management required that, prior to the start of the financial year, the Council formally approved an Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy which set out its treasury management policy and strategy statements for the forthcoming year.

CIPFA also recommended that all Councils adopt a Treasury Management Code of Practice based on the treasury management practices published by CIPFA and guidance issued in their Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Therefore, the purpose of this report was to seek approval for:

- the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statements 2014/2015 (including treasury related Prudential Indicators)
- the adoption of the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That:-

1. The Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statements 2014/2015 (as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of Report No CAB14/134) be approved.
2. The Treasury Management Code of Practice (as set out in Appendix 3 and 4 of Report No CAB14/134) be approved.

905. **STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLANS FOR THE NEW ANGLIA LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP AND GREATER CAMBRIDGE/GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (REPORT NO CAB14/135)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/06)

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism presented this report which explained that following Lord Heseltine's '*No Stone Unturned*' review, the Government had confirmed its commitment to negotiating a Growth Deal with every Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Through these Deals, the 39 LEPs could seek freedoms, flexibilities and influence over resources from Government and a share of the new Local Growth Fund (LGF) to spend on the delivery of their priorities.

The Government had asked LEPs to set out their Growth Deal in a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) that brought together all the resources at their disposal so that each LEP had one plan driving its approach to investing in local priorities. It was only through the LGF (via the LEPs) that local authorities would be able to access Government funding towards these priorities.

The Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough LEP (GCGP) (attached as Exempt Appendix A) and the New Anglia LEP (NALEP) (attached as Appendix B) had submitted their first draft SEPs to Government in December 2013. Both LEPs were keen to stress that these documents were just initial drafts. It was acknowledged that there were improvements to be made, taking into consideration comments from stakeholders, before the final submission in March 2014.

Officers had already received feedback from Members and these comments (plus any further comments) would be submitted, along with Officer comments, to the GCGP and the NALEP during February 2014.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That:-

1. The content of the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership's draft Strategic Economic Plan, as contained in Exempt Appendix A to Report No CAB14/135, be noted.
2. The content of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's draft Strategic Economic Plan, as contained in Appendix B to Report No CAB14/135, be noted.
3. Comments on the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership's draft Strategic Economic Plan (as contained in Exempt Appendix A to Report No CAB14/135) and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's draft Strategic Economic Plan (as contained in Appendix B to Report No CAB14/135), be submitted to the Head of Economic Development and Growth by 23 February 2014, to enable a coordinated West Suffolk response.

4. The Head of Economic Development and Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Tourism, be given delegated authority to approve the final versions of the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plans.

906. **WEST SUFFOLK SIX POINT PLAN FOR JOBS AND GROWTH (REPORT NO CAB14/136)** (Decisions Plan Reference: JAN14/03)

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism presented this report which explained that following consultation with stakeholders during the production of the Forest Heath District Council Strategic Plan and the St Edmundsbury Borough Council Corporate Plan, it was agreed that a key focus for West Suffolk was economic growth.

To deliver on this key focus, the Economic Development and Growth (EDG) Team had the following targets: to engage with at least 100 businesses; help create at least 120 new jobs; and help create at least 10 new businesses here in West Suffolk over the next two years. In addition to these targets, the Team would provide support to the majority of existing businesses in West Suffolk.

The EDG team had produced a plan of action, entitled 'West Suffolk Six Point Plan for Jobs and Growth', which set out what the West Suffolk Councils would do to meet these targets and the priority of economic growth. This draft Plan was attached as Appendix A to the report for the consideration of the Cabinet.

With the vote being unanimous,

RESOLVED:

That the West Suffolk Six Point Plan for Jobs and Growth, as set out in Appendix A to Report No CAB14/136, be approved.

907. **NEW JOINT (WEST SUFFOLK) HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES: TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURE; MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY POLICY AND PROCEDURE; ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND REDUNDANCY POLICY AND PROCEDURE (REPORT NO CAB14/137)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/15)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance presented this report which explained that the Human Resources Service was currently working through the HR Policies that were in place at Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, in order to produce and agree new joint policies for West Suffolk.

This report proposed three new joint policies, these being: the Travel Policy, the Organisation Change and Redundancy Policy, and the Maternity and Paternity Leave and Pay Policy. All of these policies had been reviewed in accordance with current employment legislation and associated ACAS Codes of Practice.

These new joint Policies had also been considered by the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel on 16 January 2014, where amendments were

recommended to the Travel Policy and Procedure and the Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy and Procedure as set out below:

(a) Travel Policy and Procedure

2.5 Mileage incurred as a result of an employee's workbase being changed
Page 5 – paragraph 5. be amended to include:

"Where employees are requested by their line manager to work additional days, excess mileage will be paid".

(b) Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy and Procedure

11. Entitlement to redundancy payments

Pages 8 and 9 – paragraphs 11.1 and 11.3 – The word 'your' be deleted from these paragraphs, to be amended to read:

11.1 The calculation of redundancy payment is based on age, length of continuous local government service, and actual pay.

11.3 Entitlement can be calculated at INSERT LINK on the Councils' intranet.

The Cabinet were requested to consider these proposed amendments and the adoption of these new joint Policies.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the following Policies be adopted by both Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council:-

1. Travel Policy and Procedure, subject to the following amendment:

2.5 Mileage incurred as a result of an employee's workbase being changed

Page 5 – paragraph 5. be amended to include:

"Where employees are requested by their line manager to work additional days, excess mileage will be paid".

2. Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy and Procedure, subject to the following amendment:

11. Entitlement to redundancy payments

Pages 8 and 9 – paragraphs 11.1 and 11.3 – The word 'your' be deleted from these paragraphs, to be amended to read:

11.1 The calculation of redundancy payment is based on age, length of continuous local government service, and actual pay.

11.3 Entitlement can be calculated at *INSERT LINK* on the Councils' intranet.

3. Maternity and Paternity Leave and Pay Policy and Procedure.

908. **POLICY TO DISCHARGE HOMELESSNESS DUTIES THROUGH THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR (REPORT NO CAB14/138)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/10)

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Transport presented this report which explained that the Localism Act 2011 gave Local Authorities the power to discharge their duty to secure accommodation for homeless applicants by way of arrangements with the Private Rented Sector, without the agreement of the applicant and providing it was a "suitable" offer. Currently the Council was restricted to discharging its duties in to Social Housing. The ability to discharge in to the Private Rented Sector would:

- Provide the Council with more options to house homeless households.
- Reduce pressure on Social Housing.
- Reduce pressure on Temporary Accommodation.

The proposed Policy (as set out in Appendix A) also set out how Forest Heath District Council would apply the legislation.

This Policy had also been considered by the St Edmundsbury Borough Council Cabinet at its meeting on 11 February 2014, where the following amendments were proposed to Section 7.1 of the Policy:

"7. Re-Application Following Loss of Accommodation

7.1 *Under section 195A Housing Act 1996, should the applicant approach the Council as homeless within a period of two years following acceptance of the private rented sector offer under s.193(7AA) Housing Act 1996, the Council will, in accordance with the Legislation:*

- *Treat the applicant as being homeless from the date of expiry of the Notice Requiring Possession. The landlord therefore will not be required to apply to court to regain possession. The Council will confirm the validity of the notice.*
- *Consider the household to have priority need as it will be retained from the date of the acceptance of a duty under 193(2) irrespective of any change in circumstances or household composition that may affect this.*
- *Satisfy itself that the Applicant is still eligible for assistance (eg: has correct immigration status) and,*
- *Did not become homeless intentionally from their last settled accommodation (eg: was not evicted for rent arrears)."*

The Cabinet were requested to consider the adoption of this Policy, including the amendments as proposed by the St Edmundsbury Borough Council Cabinet.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Policy to Discharge Homelessness Duties through the Private Rented Sector, as contained in Appendix A to Report No CAB14/138, be adopted, subject to Section 7.1 of the Policy being replaced with the following text:-

7. Re-Application Following Loss of Accommodation

7.1 Under section 195A Housing Act 1996, should the applicant approach the Council as homeless within a period of two years following acceptance of the private rented sector offer under s.193(7AA) Housing Act 1996, the Council will, in accordance with the Legislation:

- Treat the applicant as being homeless from the date of expiry of the Notice Requiring Possession. The landlord therefore will not be required to apply to court to regain possession. The Council will confirm the validity of the notice.*
- Consider the household to have priority need as it will be retained from the date of the acceptance of a duty under 193(2) irrespective of any change in circumstances or household composition that may affect this.*
- Satisfy itself that the Applicant is still eligible for assistance (eg: has correct immigration status) and,*
- Did not become homeless intentionally from their last settled accommodation (eg: was not evicted for rent arrears)*

909. **JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI) – ADOPTION (REPORT NO CAB14/139)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/13)

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Transport presented this report which explained that the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act required local planning authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which was a strategy for involving the community in the local plan and planning application processes. Given the approach to a shared planning service for Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, it was considered appropriate to have a joint SCI that set out a consistent 'engagement' strategy for application across both authorities.

The SCI had been the subject of a four week public consultation from 15 October 2013 to 12 November 2013. Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council Officers had considered all of the responses made during this period of consultation (as set out in Appendix B), and made consequential amendments to the document in light of these and prior to

seeking formal adoption of the SCI (as set out in Appendix A). Some further amendments were made by Officers, post consultation and, these were identified at Appendix C. Further amendments were also made following the Forest Heath District Council Local Plan Working Group on 29 January 2014 and the St Edmundsbury Borough Council Sustainable Development Working Party on 4 February 2014 and these are set out within Appendix D.

The Cabinet were being requested to adopt the Joint Statement of Community Involvement and to consider the amendments as proposed by the Local Plan Working Group and the Sustainable Development Working Party.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) be adopted (to include the amendments as proposed by the Forest Heath District Council Local Plan Working Group and the St Edmundsbury Borough Council Sustainable Development Working Party).

910. **GUIDANCE POLICY ON CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS (REPORT NO CAB14/140)** (Decisions Plan Reference: FEB14/16)

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste presented this report which explained that the introduction and adoption of a policy on criminal convictions would provide guidance on the criteria taken into account by the Council when determining whether or not an applicant or an existing licence holder was a fit and proper person to hold a hackney carriage and/or private hire driver or operator licence.

This Policy had also been considered by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 20 January 2014, where it was recommended that the Policy be adopted, subject to paragraph 19,1 being amended to read:-

"18 Overseas residents

*18.1 If a private hire operator applicant has spent six continuous months or more overseas the licensing authority **will require sight of** evidence of a criminal records check from the country/countries covering the period."*

The Cabinet were requested to consider the adoption of this Policy (as attached as Appendix 1 to this report), including the amendment as proposed by the Licensing Committee.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Criminal Convictions Policy be adopted, subject to the following amendment to paragraph 18.1:

18 Overseas residents

18.1 *If a private hire operator has spent six continuous months or more overseas the licensing authority **will require sight of** evidence of a criminal record check from the country/countries covering the period.*

911. **REVIEW OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CABINET'S WORKING GROUP, JOINT COMMITTEES/PANELS, STEERING GROUPS AND WORKING PARTY FOLLOWING THE DISTRICT COUNCIL BY-ELECTION FOR THE MARKET WARD (REPORT NO CAB14/141)** (Decisions Plan Reference: CAB14/141)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Governance and Performance presented this report which requested the Cabinet to review the membership of its Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels, Steering Groups and Working Party, following the District Council By-Election for the Market Ward which took place on 19 December 2013, in which Councillor J M Bloodworth was elected as a Conservative Member.

In particular, the Conservative Group needed to confirm its two vacancies on the West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group (as set out in paragraph 4.4 (h)).

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the membership of the Cabinet's Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels, Steering Groups and Working Party be agreed for the remainder of 2013/2014 as follows:-

- (a) Local Plan Working Group
Mrs R E Burt (Chairman)
R J Millar (Vice Chairman)
W J Bishop
W Hirst
R D S Hood
M J Jefferys
Mrs C F J Lynch
W E Sadler
T Simmons
- (b) Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee
S J Edwards (Chairman)
R J Millar
N A Roman (Substitute)
J E Waters (Substitute)
- (c) Joint Development Management Policies Committee
Mrs R E Burt
D W Bowman
W Hirst
R J Millar (Substitute)
J E Waters (Substitute)

- (d) West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee
N A Roman (Vice Chairman)
S J Edwards
D W Bowman (Substitute)
J E Waters (Substitute)
- (e) West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel
D W Bowman
Mrs R E Burt
A Drummond
N A Roman
A J Wheble (Substitute)
- (f) West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel
Mrs R E Burt
A Drummond
T Simmons
J W McGhee (Substitute)
- (g) West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel
G Jaggard (Chairman)
S J Edwards
T Simmons
W Hirst (Substitute)
M J Jefferys (Substitute)
- (h) West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group
 - (i) D W Bowman (Vice Chairman)
C J Barker
W J Bishop
R Dicker
R D S Hood
T J Huggan
 - (ii) The Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader, to appoint the two substitute Forest Heath District Council Members to this Group, in accordance with the political balance rules (two Conservative Members).
- (i) Joint Diversity Working Party
G Jaggard
R J Millar

912. **REVIEW OF THE DECISIONS PLAN (REPORT NO CAB14/142)**

The Cabinet was asked to review the Decisions Plan for the period February 2014 to May 2014.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Decisions Plan for the period February 2014 to May 2014, attached as an Appendix to Report No CAB14/142, be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.48 pm.