

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 21 January 2009 at 5.00 pm
in the Council Chamber, Borough Offices, Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds**

PRESENT: Councillor J H M Griffiths (Leader of the Council) (in the Chair)
Councillors Aitkens, Mrs Alexander, Clements, Farmer,
Mrs Mildmay-White and Ray

BY INVITATION: Councillor Mrs Charlesworth, Assistant Portfolio Holder for
Environment and Street Scene; Councillor Rout, Chairman of the
Sustainable Development Panel; Councillors Cox and Nettleton

117. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Stevens.

118. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

119. Declarations of Interests

Members' declarations of interests are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

120. Grant Panel: 16 December 2008

Forward Plan Reference: Jan09/05 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Paul Farmer and Sara Mildmay-White

The Cabinet considered Report Z477 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Grant Panel held on 16 December 2008.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Community, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. She stated that the core grant funding awarded by the Borough Council to the two Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CABx) in St Edmundsbury had been subject to review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee had made a number of recommendations to the Grant Panel that funding be increased for each Bureau in 2009/2010 to amounts closer to the figures they had requested in their core funding applications (Appendix A to Report Z440 referred). Following a detailed discussion at the meeting of the Grant Panel, the Panel had recommended that a grant of £100,000 core funding be awarded to the Bury St Edmunds Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and a grant of £116,000 be awarded to the Haverhill and District CAB for 2009/2010 only, and that funding for future years be subject to a detailed review. This equated to an increase from 2008/2009 of £10,000 for the Bury St Edmunds CAB and £16,000 for the Haverhill CAB.

Subsequent to the meeting of the Grant Panel, Suffolk County Council (SCC) had announced an increase in core funding for all CABx in Suffolk for 2009/2010. Therefore, £5,500 additional funding would be awarded from SCC to Bury St Edmunds CAB and £6,500 to the Bureau located in Haverhill. In addition, central Government had allocated £10 million nationally to CABx which could be accessed on a funding bid basis.

It was understood that the two CABx located in St Edmundsbury would submit bids; however, the outcomes of these bids would not be known until March 2009.

In light of this new information received, Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White tabled three recommendations to replace those proposed by the Grant Panel, which were:-

- '(1) Grants to the CABx in St Edmundsbury be increased, for 2009/2010 only, on the basis of match funding the grant increase from Suffolk County Council, resulting in a total grant of £95,500 to the Bury St Edmunds CAB and £106,500 to the Haverhill CAB;*
- (2) the Corporate Director for Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community, be authorised to carry out a mid-year review of the grants with the CABx and adjust them accordingly; and*
- (3) the funding for 2010/2011 be subject to a detailed review.'*

The Cabinet considered the revised recommendations in detail and was pleased to note that SCC would be providing additional funding, with the possibility of the CABx accessing further funding from central Government. It considered that the increase proposed by the Borough Council to both CABx should be supported; however, it was emphasised that its grant was substantial in comparison to grants provided by other borough/district councils in Suffolk. Therefore, it was imperative that the funding awarded by the Borough Council should be kept under close review and adjusted accordingly, if appropriate.

RESOLVED:- That,

(1) Applications for Project Funding: 2008/2009

(a) Recreation, Village Halls and Play Scheme Grants

(1) West Anglia Suffolk and Haverhill (WASH) Sailability

A grant of £8,400 be awarded to West Anglia Suffolk and Haverhill (WASH) Sailability towards the cost of creating sailing facilities for the disabled at Lackford Lakes.

(b) Art Grants

(1) Eastern Angles

A grant of £500 be awarded to Eastern Angles towards supporting the costs of their performances and workshops within the Borough;

(2) Bury St Edmunds Ecumenical Centre Trust (BECT)

a grant of £450 be awarded to the Bury St Edmunds Ecumenical Centre Trust towards the cost of the new screens/room dividers at St John's Centre in Bury St Edmunds; and

(3) Suffolk Art Link

a grant of £500 be awarded to Suffolk Artlink towards funding weekly music sessions at the Albany Centre, Bury St Edmunds.

(2) Application for Project Funding 2009/2010: St John's School Centre Trust

Subject to the budget setting process, a grant of £15,000 be approved from the unallocated budget in the Capital Programme for 2009/2010.

(3) Application for Core Funding 2009/2010: Citizens' Advice Bureaux in St Edmundsbury

Subject to the budget setting process:-

- (1) grants to the Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CABx) in St Edmundsbury be increased, for 2009/2010 only, on the basis of match funding the grant increase received from Suffolk County Council, resulting in a total grant of £95,500 to Bury St Edmunds Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and £106,500 to Haverhill and District CAB;
- (2) the Corporate Director for Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community, be authorised to carry out a mid-year review of the grants with the CABx and adjust them accordingly; and
- (3) the funding for 2010/2011 be subject to a detailed review.

(4) Application for Core Funding 2009/2010: Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

Subject to the budget setting process, a grant of £75,000 core funding to the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds for 2009/2010 be approved.

(5) Application for Core Funding 2009/2010: Victory Sports Ground (Bury St Edmunds) Limited

Subject to the budget setting process, a grant of £45,000 be awarded to the Victory Ground (Bury St Edmunds) Limited for the 2009/2010 financial year.

121. Boundary Committee Review of Suffolk: Update

Forward Plan Reference: Jan09/02 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths

The Cabinet received and noted an update from Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, on the latest position regarding the review of Local Government in Suffolk being undertaken by the Boundary Committee and the Council's work to promote East and West Suffolk unitary authorities, alongside the Committee's own North Haven Unitary proposal.

Since the last meeting of the Cabinet on 21 January 2009, East Devon District Council had requested a judicial review. Although the Judge had dismissed the request for being premature he had made a number of comments about the process, which gave weight to the argument that the process was flawed as the Boundary Committee had not given proper consideration to the case for a unitary authority for West Suffolk.

The Borough Council, Forest Heath District Council and Waveney District Council had briefed their local Members of Parliament (MPs) on concerns regarding the process. Suffolk Coastal District Council, whilst favouring alternative boundaries for three unitary authorities, had joined with the other three councils in expressing concern regarding the

apparent flawed nature of the process and the lack of consideration for East and West Suffolk authorities.

The Cabinet noted that every effort was being taken to engage local residents, community organisations, parish councils, businesses, Members and staff. All were being encouraged to make their views known directly to the Secretary of State in respect of their favoured unitary option and expressing any concerns they may have regarding the process followed by the Boundary Committee. In addition, Chrissie Harrod, the manager of Cornhill Walk in Bury St Edmunds had organised an e-petition on the 'Downing Street' website which had asked signatories to support the three separate unitary authorities on the basis that a West Suffolk authority better promoted local prosperity and well-being.

The Chief Executive wished to place on record his thanks to Suffolk MPs, Sir Michael Lord, David Ruffley, Richard Spring and Tim Yeo for attending the joint meeting of the Borough Council, Forest Heath and Waveney District Councils regarding this issue.

122. Adoption of Footway/Cyclepath: Beetons Way to Spring Lane, Bury St Edmunds

Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report Z478 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a section of footway/cyclepath between Beetons Way and Spring Lane, Bury St Edmunds to be dedicated as public highway and adopted as maintainable at the public expense.

The footway/cyclepath between Beetons Way and Spring Lane, Bury St Edmunds was built as a joint initiative between the Borough Council, Suffolk County Council and a private developer. It had been agreed by the Highway Authority that this route should be adopted as public highway maintainable at the public expense. Attached as Appendix A to the Report was a plan that illustrated the route. It showed that the section of path between points B and C was owned by the Borough Council, and the section between C and D was leased to this authority by Suffolk County Council (SCC). The lease included provision to allow the adoption of the path and using the powers contained within the Highways Agency Agreement with SCC, the Borough Council was able to adopt the route as maintainable at the public expense.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:-

That, the section of footway/cyclepath between points B and D, as detailed in Appendix A to Report Z478 be dedicated as public highway and adopted as maintainable at the public expense.

123. Sustainable Development Panel: 13 January 2009

Forward Plan Reference: Jan09/04 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Terry Clements and Peter Stevens

The Cabinet considered Report Z479 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations from the meeting of the Sustainable Development Panel held on 13 January 2009.

Councillor Rout, Chairman of the Sustainable Development Panel, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He also stated that on 27 January 2009, potential developers would be making presentations on the strategic sites which they

were putting forward for inclusion in the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework, and all Members were invited to attend.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, expressed his support for the recommendations. He was pleased to report that approximately 1,000 responses had been received to the initial Local Development Framework consultation. In respect of the Suffolk County Council consultation on the option of siting a waste treatment facility at Shepherd's Grove Industrial Estate in Stanton/Hepworth, a number of issues were raised which would require further investigation should this option remain under consideration by the County Council. These included the potential effect of the facility on the local environment and road infrastructure.

Councillor Griffiths wished to place on record his recognition of the commendable work of the officers involved with the progression of the Local Development Framework and congratulated them on the successful response to the initial public consultation.

RESOLVED:-

(1) St Edmundsbury Local Development Framework: Progress Update and Project Management Report

That, the contents of Report Z462 be noted and the final draft Core Strategy Programme be approved.

(2) Suffolk County Council Waste Core Strategy, Issues and Options Part 2 – Strategic Sites

That, with specific reference to the proposed strategic waste treatment facility at the Shepherd's Grove Industrial Estate in Stanton/Hepworth, the contents of Report Z463 form the basis of the Borough Council's comments on the Suffolk County Council Waste Core Strategy: Strategic Sites: Consultation, subject to the following additional views:-

- (a) should the Shepherd's Grove site be preferred for a strategic site, any allocation should limit the site to one residual waste treatment facility and the Waste Core Strategy should require that, before any development is granted, a concept statement should be prepared for the development of the whole of the Shepherd's Grove allocation that also reflects the local plan allocation for this site, to be funded by the County Council;
- (b) the Borough Council notes that the accompanying consultants' report for Shepherd's Grove only examined suitability of the northern end of the site identified in the consultation document. The County Council will need to be satisfied that the evidence is sufficiently robust to support the construction of a residual waste treatment facility on this site should it be a preferred option; and
- (c) any allocation for a residual waste treatment facility at Shepherd's Grove must provide off-site improvements including a roundabout and new link road to the A143, as required by Policy RA3 of the Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan.

**124. West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee:
16 January 2009**

Forward Plan Reference: Jan09/06 Cabinet Member: Cllr Peter Stevens

The Cabinet received and noted Report Z480 (previously circulated) which presented the decisions of the West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee emanating from its meeting on 16 January 2009.

In the absence of Councillor Stevens, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Street Scene, Councillor Farmer, a Member of the Joint Committee drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He stated that the continued cleansing of the A11 and A14 trunk roads, which included the removal of litter from the highway boundaries, had been noticeable and had shown a tremendous improvement to the aesthetic appeal of the roads.

Councillor Farmer continued by reporting that the recycling market in the UK had been subject to considerable strain during the latter part of 2008. The Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) were part of a partnership across Suffolk for the collection of recyclable material known as the Suffolk Recycling Consortium (SRC). In response to media reports that some local authorities had ceased the collection of certain materials, SRC's contractor, Viridor Waste Management, had confirmed that whilst demand had reduced significantly, material continued to be recycled and stock piling had not been necessary. Whilst there was no current financial impact to either the Borough Council or FHDC, if the current economic climate and global demand for recyclable material did not improve this may impact on budgets for 2010/2011.

The Cabinet also noted that the proposed launch of the 'No Excuses' campaign had been supported by Members of the Joint Committee. The campaign concentrated on identifying and dispelling the common excuses people used to justify their actions for dropping litter or fly-tipping.

125. Gypsy and Traveller Site at Kelly's Meadows, Depden

Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr Sara Mildmay-White

The Cabinet considered Report Z481 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a scheme to develop an extension to the existing Gypsy and Traveller Site at Kelly's Meadows, Depden to help meet the regionally assessed need for pitches for Gypsies and Travellers within St Edmundsbury.

The Government required councils to make provision for the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their areas, and as a result of a regional needs assessment, the requirement for St Edmundsbury Borough Council was to provide between 15 and 20 pitches. A sub-group had been established, to identify appropriate locations for the provision of these pitches within the Borough, and to enable accessibility of available central Government funding to meet the development costs of providing these pitches. The group had identified the site at Kelly's Meadows, Depden as suitable, which would facilitate a small extension to an existing Gypsy and Traveller site. The proposal to extend the site to accommodate six pitches in total would improve the facilities on the site for the existing residents and provide good facilities for the small number of additional family members who would use the site. There would be a total of six families who would reside on the permanent site, which would not be a 'transit' site for other travelling families to use.

Attached as Appendix A to the Report was an indicative proposal of how the site might develop. However, the final boundaries and layout would not be decided until planning issues had been resolved.

The Government had made funding available for the development of new sites, which could be accessed through meeting specific criteria and engaging in a bidding

process. On 18 December 2008, the officers received telephone confirmation that a bid for £737,000 to develop the site at Depden had been successful; however written confirmation of the exact conditions of the grant was still awaited from the Government office. The funding was a capital grant to fund 100% of the cost of the site's development, therefore no capital costs would be incurred for Council Tax payers of St Edmundsbury. Once developed, the operating costs of the site would be met by the tenants, therefore no ongoing revenue costs would be incurred by the Borough Council for its management or maintenance. The scheme was dependent upon the granting of planning consent and the receipt of the Government grant, and therefore the Cabinet considered this should be reiterated in the proposed recommendations.

The Cabinet noted that the planning issues associated with the site were extensive and that surveys and other documentation would be required for the preparation of a planning application and therefore, it had been proposed that a planning consultant should be engaged to carry out this work. In addition, investigations had been undertaken into using a planning mediation service, which would offer an independent service to work with the community and the Borough Council to deal with issues raised as the planning application progressed. The costs of these services were estimated at not more than a total of £25,000; however, it may be possible to meet these costs from the grant funding. As the capital grant would not be available until planning permission had been granted, the Borough Council would, in any event, need to cover these costs initially, and they could be met from the Affordable Housing capital allocation. The Council would be required to purchase the land to be developed at agricultural value from the resident Gypsy family who currently owned the site, and the family would repay this cost on a monthly basis as part of the conditions of the lease. The purchase cost would be met from the Government capital grant.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Community, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. She emphasised that the employment of a planning consultant and a planning mediation service was justified to ensure that the proposed scheme progressed satisfactorily. It was important that the Council ensured the processes being followed were open and transparent. The employment of these services would ensure interested parties were kept informed of the process and potential concerns addressed. The scheme was subject to planning permission, therefore further opportunity would be available to those interested parties to make their views known.

The Cabinet recognised that it had a statutory duty to provide for the needs of the Gypsies and Travellers in St Edmundsbury and considered that the mediation service was tremendously important to mitigate any potential concerns.

RESOLVED:- That

- (1) the Council proceeds with the scheme to develop an extension to the Gypsy and Traveller site at Kelly's Meadows, Depden as detailed in Report Z481;
- (2) the appointment of a suitable planning consultant and planning mediation service to assist with the planning application process be approved;
- (3) subject to (2) above, the cost of these services should they be required, be approved up to a maximum of £25,000 and be met from the Affordable Housing capital budget allocation;
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Community and Economy and Asset Management to:-

- (a) enter into a contract to acquire land necessary for the development of the Kelly's Meadows site at agricultural value; and
- (b) enter into a lease with the occupiers in respect of this land;
- (5) the land purchase and capital development costs be met from the Government grant for this purpose; and
- (6) it be noted that the scheme is dependent upon the granting of planning consent and receipt of the Government grant.

126. Haverhill Area Working Party: 15 January 2009

Forward Plan Reference: Jan09/01 Cabinet Member: Cllr Nigel Aitkens

(Councillor Clements declared a personal interest as a Borough Council nominated representative on the Abbeycroft Leisure Trust Management Board and remained in the meeting for the consideration of the item.)

The Cabinet considered Report Z482 (amended) (tabled at the meeting) which contained the recommendations from the meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party held on 15 January 2009.

Councillor Aitkens, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Haverhill, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He reported that an amendment to Report Z482 was required to the first recommendation, 'Z466: Public Art in Queen Street, Haverhill'. He recommended that it be amended to read 'that the terms of reference for a task-and-finish group to oversee the commissioning of public art work in Queen Street, Haverhill, as detailed in Section 2 of Report Z466, as amended, be approved.'

Councillor Cox commented on the recommendations, with particular reference to his support for the new indoor children's play area proposed for the Haverhill Leisure Centre as part of the overall refurbishment scheme. However, in view of the present economic climate, he expressed concern regarding the proposed incorporation of public art in Queen Street and also queried the analysis of responses to the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme consultation. The officers provided comprehensive responses to Councillor Cox's concerns, which were duly noted by the Cabinet.

Councillor Aitkens stated that in order to support and stimulate the economy in Haverhill, enhancement and improvement works to the town had been undertaken to attract visitors and future investment. Where possible, local contractors had been and would be employed, with materials for the enhancements being sourced locally or at the very least, manufactured in the UK. Particular reference was drawn to the incorporation of the bespoke furniture range in Haverhill town centre.

RESOLVED:-

(a) Public Art in Queen Street, Haverhill

That the terms of reference for a task-and-finish group to oversee the commissioning of public art work in Queen Street, Haverhill, as detailed in Section 2 of Report Z466, as amended, be approved.

(b) Haverhill Town Centre: Addition to Bespoke Furniture Range

That provision of the additional information signs be funded from the existing Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill Public Realm Fund.

(c) Queen Street Enhancement Scheme: Analysis of Responses to the Public Consultation and Request for Authority to Process

- (1) the concept design for the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme, Haverhill, previously approved for consultation be agreed for working up to a final engineering design and for its implementation;
- (2) British Telecom be requested to undertake an assessment of its existing telecommunications equipment covers located in Queen Street; and
- (3) subject to the outcomes of (2) above, delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Engineering Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Haverhill Area Working Party, to make minor amendments to the design and undertake the necessary works within approved budgets.

(d) Haverhill Leisure Centre Refurbishment

- (1) the proposed alterations to the first floor of Haverhill Leisure Centre, including the provision of play areas and the formation of party rooms, be approved; and
- (2)(1) above be incorporated within the current Haverhill Leisure Centre Refurbishment Scheme and within the existing budget allocation for the building.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm

**J H M GRIFFITHS
CHAIRMAN**