



Cabinet

11 February 2009

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 19 January 2009

On 19 January 2009 the Committee also held a discussion with representatives from the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and a separate report appears on this agenda.

(1) Presentation from Councillor Peter Stevens, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Street Scene

1.1 When setting the Scrutiny Improvement Plan for 2008/2010 the Committee requested periodic presentations from Portfolio Holders. At this meeting Members were pleased to welcome Councillor Peter Stevens to the meeting to give the third of these presentations on the Environment and Street Scene Portfolio.

1.2 Councillor Stevens, supported by the Waste and Street Scene Service's Strategy and Policy Manager, and the Environmental Management Officer, took Members through a presentation covering the two main areas of his Portfolio. An overview of the Waste and Street Scene Service was given, together with details of waste collection, recycling and cleansing performance, the Waste and Street Scene Partnership, and plans for the future. The sustainability side of the presentation detailed environmental performance and achievements, the CRed Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and its outcomes, and the new performance framework.

1.3 Members questioned Councillor Stevens on a number of areas including the provision and state of some bottle banks; battery recycling; the rate of plastic waste collection and the potential to release energy from plastic waste; and the possibility of using leaflets and roadshows to promote the uptake of carbon reduction pledges.

(2) Affordable Housing

2.1 At its meeting on 5 March 2008 the Committee considered an update report on the progress of its earlier recommendations to Cabinet, following its review of Affordable Housing in November 2005. Following receipt of that report Members had requested further updates on a regular basis regarding the progress of affordable housing schemes.

- 2.2 Since the earlier report significant changes had taken place in terms of legislation, economic conditions and process, and these were presented to Members. The update also covered capital funding, the key issues impacting on the requirement for affordable housing within the region and the Borough, and delivery of affordable housing in St Edmundsbury.
- 2.3 Members discussed the report, covering such issues as the cost of new schemes and the consequences of not meeting new build targets. A further update will be considered by the Committee in six months.

(3) Monitoring the Success Criteria of 2007/2008 Policy Based Budgeting Avoidable Bids which Received Funding

- 3.1 During 2006/2007 the Policy Development Committee held its fourth Policy Based Budgeting exercise, involving analysing all proposals for growth in the 2007/2008 budget (there being 4 avoidable and 4 unavoidable bids) with regard to such issues as risk, impact on the Council Tax and alignment with Corporate Priorities and Cabinet Commitments. Each bid was accompanied by success criteria indicating the benefits to service users should the bid be successful. When the final bids were submitted to Cabinet with the comments of the Committee, it was again agreed that these success criteria would be revisited one year after release of the budget, in order to investigate to what extent these had been met. The intention was that this investigation would form the final stage of the Policy Based Budgeting process, the post implementation review.
- 3.2 The Committee considered the 4 successful avoidable proposals from 2006/2007, which received new budgets in April 2007, and concluded that they had met the success criteria identified when the original proposals had been submitted.

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