

**ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 29 April 2009 at 5.00 pm  
in the Conference Chamber West: F1R09, West Suffolk House, Western Way,  
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, Ray and Stevens

BY INVITATION: Councillor Oliver, Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee, and Councillor Spicer, Vice-Chairman of the  
Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

**176. Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

**177. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**178. Declarations of Interests**

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

**179. Annual Report (Incorporating Cabinet Report 2008/2009 and  
Corporate Plan 2009/2010)**

*Forward Plan Reference: May 09/04 Cabinet Member: Cllrs John Griffiths  
and David Ray*

The Cabinet considered Report Z666 (previously circulated) which sought approval of the Annual Report which incorporated the Cabinet's Report for 2008/2009 and the Corporate Plan for 2009/2010.

The Report reviewed the achievements of 2008/2009 and detailed the Cabinet's Commitments and the Corporate Priorities for 2009/2010. At a joint meeting held on 22 April 2009, the Annual Report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny and the Policy Development Committees, as required by the Constitution. The document had been updated to take into account the comments received from the Committees.

Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, and Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Organisational Development drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that a number of appendices would be added to the Report as and when they became available; however, these omissions did not prevent formal approval being sought.

Councillor Griffiths wished to place on record his thanks to the Scrutiny Committees for their input into the completion of the document.

RESOLVED:-

That the Annual Report (incorporating Cabinet Report 2008/2009 and Corporate Plan 2009/2010) including the Cabinet's Commitments and the Corporate Priorities for 2009/2010, as detailed in Report Z666, be approved.

**180. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 22 April 2009**

***Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolio Holders***

The Cabinet considered Report Z667 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 April 2009:-

- (1) Presentation from Sara Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Community;
- (2) Cabinet Forward Plan: April to July 2009;
- (3) Work Programme;
- (4) Rural Action Plan Monitoring Report;
- (5) Update on the Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2008-2010; and
- (6) Councillor Call for Action.

Councillor Oliver, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In particular, he informed the Cabinet that the Committee had received a very informative presentation from Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Community. During 2008/2009, the Committee had found the presentations from Portfolio Holders invaluable and it looked forward to welcoming those Cabinet Members that had yet to undertake presentations to future meetings of the Committee.

In respect of the first annual monitoring of the actions detailed in the 2008/2011 Rural Action Plan, Councillor Oliver informed Members that a number of minor amendments had been made to the Plan which required formal Cabinet approval.

RESOLVED:-

The amendments to the Rural Action Plan, as detailed in Report Z64, be approved.

**181. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 27 April 2009**

***Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllrs Paul Farmer and David Ray***

The Cabinet considered Report Z668 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 27 April 2009:-

- (1) Key Performance Indicators: Fourth Quarter 2008/2009;
- (2) Council Improvement Plan;
- (3) Data Quality Policy: Annual Update;
- (4) Biannual Corporate Complaints and Compliments Digest;
- (5) Audit Commission: Presentation of Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2009;
- (6) Annual Internal Audit Report 2008/2009 and Outline Audit Plan 2009/2010; and
- (7) Corporate Risk Register: Quarterly Monitoring Report.

Councillor Spicer, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He reported that three recommendations had emanated from the meeting of the Committee. Approval was sought for the Council Improvement Plan and Data Quality Action Plan for 2009/2010. In addition, he stated that upon

consideration of the Corporate Risk Register, the Committee had expressed concern that, despite instigating ten actions to mitigate the risk connected with the potential shortage of affordable housing in the Borough, the residual risk remained at the maximum scoring level. The Committee had recognised that the current financial climate and downturn in the housing market had a significant effect on this risk, and therefore the actions the Council could take to mitigate it would be limited; however the Committee had wished to be assured that the Council had exhausted all possible avenues to reduce this risk. As a result of this discussion, the Committee had considered that the Cabinet should review the actions that the Council had currently planned to mitigate the potential shortage of affordable housing and that it should assess whether any further actions were required.

The Cabinet recognised the Committee's concerns regarding this issue and welcomed the submission of a detailed report for consideration at a future meeting.

Councillor Spicer informed the Cabinet that discussions had also been held during the meeting of the Committee regarding the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) that related to the processing of planning applications within a specified timescale. The Cabinet recognised that these concerns related to major planning applications and considered that overall the Planning Service offered a very high quality service. Whilst a number of improvements could be made to meet the requirements of the KPI, this did not reflect the generally good quality of the service.

RESOLVED:- That

**(a) Council Improvement Plan**

The 2009/2010 Council Improvement Plan, attached as Appendix B to Report Z659, be adopted.

**(b) Data Quality Action Plan**

The 2009/2010 Data Quality Action Plan, as detailed in Report Z660, be adopted.

**(c) Corporate Risk Register: Quarterly Monitoring Report**

- (1) the actions that the Council has currently planned to mitigate the shortage of affordable housing in the Borough, including an assessment of whether any further actions are required, be reviewed; and
- (2) a detailed report be submitted for the Cabinet's consideration in due course.

**182. Boundary Committee Review of Suffolk: Update**

*Forward Plan Reference: May09/01 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths*

The Cabinet received and noted an oral update on the latest position in respect of the Local Government Review.

Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, informed the Cabinet that following the disappointment expressed at the last meeting of the Cabinet on 25 March 2009, in respect of the Boundary Committee not taking the opportunity during its new period of consultation to investigate the option of adopting East and West Suffolk authorities, relatively little had changed. The Council had specifically asked why the option for East and West Suffolk authorities alongside an 'enlarged Ipswich' was not deemed to meet the five criteria specified by the Boundary Committee. The Committee had stated that no options other than the two that were the subject of consultation met the criteria, but

had declined to elaborate on what basis that decision had been reached. Councillor Griffiths continued that this reluctance to be open and transparent regarding the process was extremely frustrating, and unfortunately, meant that the possibility of instigating a legal challenge, if appropriate, remained.

Councillor Griffiths then stated that, in the meantime, the Council would be preparing a response to the latest round of consultation which illustrated that East and West Suffolk authorities did make good business sense and the continued local support for this option. Opportunities would also be exploited at the Parish Conference on 30 April 2009 to urge delegates to submit their own responses to the Boundary Committee by the deadline of 14 May 2009.

**183. Response to Consultation: 'The end of an EERA; What Future for Regional Local Government Arrangements in the East of England'**  
*Forward Plan Reference: May09/05 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths*

The Cabinet considered Report Z669 (previously circulated) which sought the authorisation for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to respond to the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) consultation on the future for regional local government arrangements.

Attached as Appendix A to Report Z669 was the consultation document produced by EERA in respect of its future role in the governance of the region and the support required by local authorities. The suggested response from the Borough Council to the consultation was attached as Appendix B.

Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, with particular reference to question three of the consultation document which addressed the issue of local authority representation on the statutorily prescribed Leaders' Board, as detailed in Annexe A of the consultation document. The suggested response from the Borough Council had indicated that in order to achieve effective governance arrangements, it was considered that the proposed model could be improved if the remaining two tier areas in the region were represented by three Councillors instead of the suggested two, namely the Leader of the County Council and two District Council Leaders. This would improve the situation democratically and detailed reasons for this proposal were contained in Appendix B.

The Cabinet made no amendments to the suggested response and was satisfied that authorisation should be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to submit a final formal consultation response to EERA by the deadline of 8 May 2009 on the basis of the suggestions detailed in Appendix B to Report Z669.

RESOLVED:-

That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to respond to the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) consultation on the future of regional local Government arrangements by the deadline of 8 May 2009 on the basis set out in Appendix B to Report Z669.

*(Councillor Spicer left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)*

**184. Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party: 20 April 2009**

***Forward Plan Reference: May09/03 Cabinet Member: Cllr Sara Mildmay-White***

The Cabinet considered Report Z670 (previously circulated) containing the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party held on 20 April 2009.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Chairman of the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

A detailed discussion was held in respect of the Borough Council's contribution to the marketing campaign for Bury St Edmunds. It was emphasised that the Borough Council was only making a contribution towards the marketing campaign from its Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) allocation and was not funding the entire marketing campaign.

RESOLVED:- That

**(a) Marketing Campaign for Bury St Edmunds**

The Borough Council's contribution to the joint marketing campaign for Bury St Edmunds, funded from the contribution of £20,000 from the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive, (LABGI) be endorsed.

**(b) Town Centre Parking Review**

With the exception of the proposed loading ban waiting restriction in respect of High Baxter Street, which matter is the subject of further discussion with Marks and Spencer Plc, and the addition of a proposed double yellow line waiting restriction in relation to Eastlea Road/Bedingfield Way, the actions in respect of on-street parking, detailed in agenda item 10, be approved.

**185. Haverhill Area Working Party: 23 April 2009**

***Forward Plan Reference: May09/03 Cabinet Member: Cllr Nigel Aitkens***

The Cabinet considered Report Z671 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party held on 23 April 2009.

Councillor Aitkens, the Portfolio Holder responsible for Haverhill, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet with particular reference to the Queen Street Shop Front Grant Scheme which had received positive reports in the local press. He added that immediately prior to the meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party, a tour of the Haverhill Leisure Centre had been undertaken to view progress on the current refurbishment works. Members that attended the tour had been impressed with progress and looked forward to its scheduled re-opening in July 2009.



***RECOMMENDED:- That***

**(a) Queen Street Shopfront Design Guide**

***Subject to the approval of full Council, the Queen Street Shopfront Design Guide, as detailed in Appendix A to Report Z654, be approved for adoption as Planning Guidance.***

RESOLVED:- That

**(b) Haverhill Town Centre Addition to Bespoke Street Furniture Range: Information Signs/Display Boards**

- (1) Option 2 of the proposed bespoke information signs/display boards, as illustrated in Appendix A to Report Z655, be approved;
- (2) the information signs/display boards be incorporated into the Queen Street refurbishment works and other locations in Haverhill Town Centre, as appropriate.

The meeting concluded at 5.35 pm

**CHAIRMAN**