



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

A565

Cabinet **17 March 2010**

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 3 March 2010

At this meeting the Committee also held a Councillor Call for Action hearing, and a separate report appears on this Cabinet agenda.

- 1. Update Report on the Impact of the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership (WSLSP) and Community Strategy**
 - 1.1 Before consideration of this item, the Chairman advised the Committee that this would be the last meeting attended by David Wood, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Manager, before his retirement in April 2010, and Members thanked David for all his work in keeping the Committee updated on the work of the LSP.
 - 1.2 David updated the Committee on a number of issues, including progress on putting together the new Community Strategy, allocation of funds including Performance Reward Grant and Community Chest Funding, and updates on various projects being run by the Partnership including "Wos-up", the SOS bus and the Prolific Offenders Scheme.
 - 1.3 The Action Plan for 2010/2011 was now being prepared, and a full report would be brought with the LSP's Annual Report to the Committee in September 2010. David also gave an update on the work of each of the seven Action Groups run under the Partnership, and finally touched on the LSP self-evaluation which had been undertaken, the results of which would be brought to the September meeting.
- 2. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Submission by Councillor Trevor Beckwith: Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds On-Street Parking**
 - 2.1 Under the provisions of the Council's Constitution Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Protocol, Councillor Beckwith submitted the above CCfA to the Committee.
 - 2.2 The information provided to the Committee by Councillor Beckwith was that this CCfA concerned on-street parking in Skyliner Way obstructing through traffic, and commercial parking overspilling into residential streets. Councillor Beckwith provided a number of emails in support of his submission, with local residents and officers of the County and Borough Council, dating back to August 2009. The solution he would like to see would be additional off-street parking at the commercial premises, or alternatively a full-length layby along Skyliner Way.

- 2.3 The Council's officers had also provided background information to the Committee, stating that complaints had been received about this issue for a number of months, and it had been discussed regularly with the County Council and Police. Officers felt that the road was of sufficient width to accommodate parked cars and two way traffic flow, except when lorries were involved, but the problems identified were not felt to be significant enough to warrant intervention. Additionally, all nearby commercial premises met current parking standards.
- 2.4 However, development in the area meant that larger vehicles occasionally had problems passing the long line of parked cars, and for that reason plans were in place to create a gap in the parking, plus parking restrictions on the north side of the road to prevent the parking from simply moving there. Consultation had taken place on the proposal, and the responses were discussed with the Committee; the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party would be presented with the full details, and would make recommendations with regard to the proposal.
- 2.5 The Council's Head of Property Services and Engineering spoke to the Committee regarding the planning situation, and confirmed that each development which came forward was assessed with regard to parking standards, however, with unrestricted parking in Skyliner Way, even though parking was available at these premises, the road was still likely to be used.
- 2.6 Councillor Beckwith did not feel that the planned parking restrictions would address the problem, as the proposed passing place was not an adequate solution. Additionally, part of the road was not yet adopted, and he was concerned that similar restrictions on this part of the road would not be put in place until following adoption. He also disagreed that there was adequate space for two vehicles to pass on the road.
- 2.7 The Committee's responsibility at this point was to decide whether it wished to take this matter further, to a CCfA hearing. The main criteria supporting this decision were whether the Committee, in holding a hearing, had the potential to produce recommendations which could realistically be implemented and lead to improvements, and importantly, whether the responses received by the referring Councillor demonstrated that the matter was not being progressed. Members questioned Councillor Beckwith and the Council's officers on a number of issues.
- 2.8 After considering all the evidence, Members concluded that it was premature to take the issue forward to a full CCfA hearing at this stage, when work was planned and being consulted on. The Committee did, however, wish to receive an update report at a future meeting on progress with the planned works, followed by monitoring of the situation once the parking restrictions had been put in place. It would then have the option to take the matter further should no improvement be seen following the restrictions being put in place.

3. Update on Councillor Calls for Action: Stanton Grundle Flooding Remedial Action and Road Safety in Bell Meadow, Bury St Edmunds

- 3.1 At its meetings held on 8 July and 9 November 2009 respectively, the Committee considered the above Councillor Calls for Action. A full hearing was held on the first date, and an initial submission discussed on the second. On 3 March 2010 the Committee received updates on both of these issues.

- 3.2 With regard to the Stanton Grundle, since the last update, regular checks had been made of the Grundle and minor clearance of the screens undertaken as necessary. At the last meeting of the Committee it had been reported that a bid for funding had been made to the Environment Agency Surface Water Early Action Fund to undertake the necessary catchment studies. Successful councils would be informed in early March. A bid was also made for property level flood protection, and the announcement on the outcome of this bid was expected on 12 March.
- 3.3 Turning to Bell Meadow, the Council's Engineer reminded Members that officers had been requested to have further discussions with residents in Bell Meadow with a view to achieving a cessation of unauthorised parking on the verge and footways. A questionnaire had been circulated to the 26 properties concerned, and 19 had been returned. The majority of respondents felt that there was not a major problem with parking, although four respondents said that there was a problem, including parking on the bend and in front of their properties, and on the footway. On the basis of the comments received, officers felt that there was little reason to take action, except to write once more to residents thanking them for their responses and suggesting that they not park on the bend or on the footways.
- 3.4 Councillor Nettleton, who submitted the initial CCfA, disagreed with officers' analysis of the consultation responses, and felt that residents were more concerned about the parking on the bend and on footways, as well as traffic speeding along the road.
- 3.5 Whilst officers had completed the task they had been given following consideration of the CCfA submission, in consulting with residents, they agreed that if Members now felt that speeding was an issue along the road then some monitoring could take place, and the results brought to a future meeting.

4. Cabinet Forward Plan/Work Programme

- 4.1 The Committee examined the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period March to June 2010, but did not request any further involvement on this occasion.
- 4.2 Turning to its own Work Programme, the Committee carried out a short scoping exercise of the items expected at its next meeting.

Contacts:

David Lockwood, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, (01638-718002)
Stefan Oliver, Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, (01284-706172)
Adriana Stapleton, Scrutiny Manager, (01284-757613)