



Cabinet 1 December 2010

Recommendations from Rural Area Working Party: 18 November 2010 (Dec10/10)

*Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths Chairman of the Working Party:
Cllr Jim Thorndyke*

1. Village Hall to Village Hub Concept (Report B299)

RECOMMENDED:- That:-

- (1) *an event be hosted to promote Community Land Trusts and assist parishes to explore the Village Hall to Village Hub initiative further; and***
- (2) *in the first instance, however, all villages be circulated with information about the initiative and responses sought to ascertain the extent of overall interest.***

On 30 September 2010, the Working Party received a presentation on the concept of Village Hall to Village Hub. The concept suggested focusing on intensifying the use of the Village Hall to facilitate change that might facilitate, through the creation of a Community Land Trust, the provision of small pockets of affordable rural housing; the creation permanent intermediate housing; the provision of workspace; and/or community facilities. A premise of the concept is that some village playing fields that are adjacent to village halls are underused and could therefore be partly developed to provide a vibrant Village Hub with a development delivered by a Community Land Trust. In response to the presentation the Working Party requested a further report to:-

- (1) identify those villages where the initiative might be applied and in this regard Members were asked to advise officers of parishes in their wards which they felt were appropriate for consideration; and
- (2) examine in more detail the issues which would have to be confronted if the idea is to be utilised by individual parishes.

Report B299 examined in more detail the potential of the Village Hall to Village Hub Concept and the issues that need to be considered if parishes were to progress this initiative. Possible parishes where the initiative might be applied were also identified.

2. Replacement Local Plan – Policy RA2(b): Land off Crown Lane, Ixworth. Approval of Masterplan (Report B300). Also to be considered by the Sustainable Working Party on 23 November 2010 (Report B300)

RECOMMENDED:-

That, subject to the approval of full Council, the Masterplan for the development of land off Crown Lane, Ixworth as contained in Appendix B of Report B300 be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance.

Land at Crown Lane, Ixworth had been allocated for development in the Replacement Local Plan. The Local Plan stated that development could not proceed until a Masterplan had been adopted for the site and this was to be informed by a Concept Statement.

A draft Masterplan had subsequently prepared by consultants on behalf of the proposed developer in respect of the land at Crown Lane, Ixworth. Public consultation took place in July and August 2010 and the Masterplan had been amended in the light of the comments received. The Council's approval of the Masterplan as planning guidance was now being sought.

The Masterplan and the proposals within it, had been prepared in accordance with the adopted Replacement Borough Local Plan and the protocol for preparing Masterplans.

In discussing the Masterplan there was a divergence of views whether or not an access to the development should be indicated from the A143 By-Pass. Some Members were concerned that there was a necessity for such an access so as to relieve traffic along Crown Lane and to avoid the proposed estate being isolated from the main village. Other Members were of the opinion that such an access would be of insufficient capacity to cope with additional traffic and that it would create a 'rat run' which would be detrimental to residential amenity. Officers advised that provision had been included for an access for emergency vehicles to be created from the A143 to Crown Lane. This could be opened up further to provide a general access at a future date if future circumstances warranted it.

3. Options for Off-Street Borough Car Park Charges 2011/2012 (Report B301)

RECOMMENDED:-

(The recommendations emanating from Report B301 in connection with the review of car parking charges, will be included in a composite report for consideration by the Cabinet on 19 January 2011, together with the recommendations emanating from the Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds Area Working Parties in respect of this issue.)

4. St Edmundsbury's Rural Youth Work Programme (Report B302)

RECOMMENDED:-

That investigation be carried out at the earliest opportunity into the joint commissioning of Rural Youth Work with Forest Heath District Council.

The Report provided the Working Party with an update about the various activities, events and projects which have been delivered for young people over the past twelve months which formed part of the Rural Youth Work Programme. It also provided an evaluation of the rural youth work project, 'WOS UP' which was now in its third year. The views of Members were sought on the form of the Work Programme for 2011.

In discussing the report Members acknowledged difficulties of the situation that details of the divestment of Suffolk County Council's Youth Services were not yet known and, therefore, there was a difficulty in setting the programme in advance of receiving this information. Reference was also made to the logistical issues of delivering youth services in the rural area. It was agreed to invite a representative from Supporting Contemporary Adolescence (SCA), the partnership organisation delivering the 'WOS-UP' project, to the next meeting on 13 January 2011 to discuss these issues.

5. Review of the final year of the 2008/2011 Rural Action Plan and proposals for future extension (Report B303)

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) the progress made towards the 2008 to 2011 Rural Action Plan be noted;***
- (2) the Rural Action Plan be extended for a further three years to the end of March 2014, with funding from: the underspend from previous years; Local Authority Business Growth Incentive funding; and Economic Development section codes as set out in Paragraph 7.2 of Report B303;***
- (3) the work programme for developing the new Rural Action Plan 2011 to 2014 be noted;***
- (4) the continuation of some projects from the 2008 to 2011 plan (denoted by a 'yes' in paragraph 2.4 of this report) be noted, and these projects be approved for inclusion in the 2011 to 2014 Rural Action Plan; and***
- (5) delegated authority be given to the Rural Area Working Party to carry out consultation on the draft Rural Action Plan once it has been collated, and to prepare and recommend a new plan to Cabinet.***

The Rural Action Plan (RAP), covering the period from March 2008 to March 2011, was approved on 5 March 2008 (Report Y606 refers).

In addition to regular monitoring by officers throughout the year, it was agreed that the development of the Rural Action Plan would be monitored on an annual basis by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In November 2009 the responsibility for monitoring of the Rural Action Plan came under the remit of the newly formed Rural Area Working Party. Report B303 formed the third and final monitoring report on the 2008 to 2011 Rural Action Plan.

Approval for the future extension of the Rural Action Plan was being sought. The Rural Area Working Party Funding sub-group had expressed a view that the Rural Action Plan be continued beyond March 2011 (Report B235 to the Working Party on 30 September 2010).

During the discussion the view was promoted that there should be greater joint working with partners and other organisations involved in similar projects e.g. Natural England and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, to ensure the fullest use of resources and to avoid duplication.