



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# B562

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20 April 2011

### Annual Report of the Cabinet 2010/11 and Corporate Plan 2011/12

#### SUMMARY

The Constitution requires that the Committee receive reports from the Leader or representative(s) of Cabinet either prior to the commencement of each financial year or at its first meeting after each Annual Council Meeting on 'the state of the Borough', the Cabinet's priorities and its performance in the previous year.

The Leader will attend the meeting to discuss the Cabinet's draft Annual Report for 2010/11 with members. The report reviews the work of the Cabinet during 2010/11. Unlike previous years, the Annual Report does not set out the commitments and key activities for the next year as this will be the responsibility of the new administration following the Borough Council elections on 5 May 2011. Similarly, there are sections of the Corporate Plan which cannot be updated until after the elections. These sections are highlighted throughout the report.

#### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are invited to discuss the Cabinet's Annual Report for 2010/11 with the Leader of the Council.

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St Edmundsbury Borough Council

# **Cabinet Annual Report 2010/11**

## **and Corporate Plan 2011/12**

**Available in alternative formats**

Last updated 11 April 2011

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If you have any questions about the Plan, please contact the Policy Unit

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## Foreword

The past year has been financially challenging for St Edmundsbury, as it has for many people living and working in our borough. That we have delivered so much - from finishing major projects such as the Apex in Bury St Edmunds and the Queen Street improvements in Haverhill, to supporting many important rural activities - while at the same time making savings of £1.6 million, is a tribute to the skills, dedication and hard work of our councillors and staff.

This report sets out the promises we made last year and the progress we have made on each one. I am delighted that it demonstrates just how much has been achieved for our residents and businesses in 2010/11.

Over the past year we have helped local businesses to create jobs, increased the attractiveness of our towns so more people spend their money in the local economy instead of further afield, and provided first class cultural and leisure facilities and other services which all help the quality of life for people throughout the borough.

Usually this report would look forward, setting out our commitments for the future, but with borough council (as well as town and parish) elections on 5 May it would seem appropriate to leave that for the new administration to consider. Newly elected councillors will face many challenges ahead – the budget for 2011/12 is another £1.5 million less at a time when inflation is increasing – but at St Edmundsbury we have managed our finances for the long term, so they will be better placed than many.

It has been a tough but good year for St Edmundsbury and, while I'm sure there are more tough years to come, I am confident that future annual reports will continue to demonstrate how the Borough Council continues to improve the quality of life for the people we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Griffiths', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council

# Section one: Annual Report 2010/2011

## Review of 2010/2011 Cabinet commitments

### 1. Continue to improve efficiency and value for money

#### Key activities for 2010/11

- sustainable and affordable council tax;
  - promote and maintain a strong improvement culture that facilitates staff identifying and implementing efficiencies and innovation;
  - promote appropriate integration, wider partnership working, including shared services with Forest Heath District Council as the preferred partner and related efficiencies; and
  - continue to develop staff and councillors.
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#### Why was this a priority for 2010/11?

We have worked hard over a number of years to secure efficiencies and ensure that we provide value for money in everything we do. However, despite our past successes, we knew that this year would be harder than ever and anticipated that the local government financial settlement would be tough. That was why it was so important for us to retain our focus on efficiency and explore every opportunity to identify savings.

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#### Progress in 2010/11

##### **sustainable and affordable council tax**

Setting the budget for the year ahead has been a challenging process due to public sector funding cuts and the resulting pressures which this has placed on us. The proposed budget for 2011/12 is £12.141m, compared to £13.690m in 2010/11. Over the next two years we will see a 30.1% cut in grant from central government.

In order to respond to the very significant government grant cut, we have had to make huge savings. Efficiency savings and increased income of £1.9m have been identified as part of the 2011/12 budget. This builds on the £7m worth of savings we have delivered since 2005/06. We have taken up the government's offer to subsidise all councils which freeze council tax. We have frozen the level of council tax for two out of the last three years.

##### **promote and maintain a strong improvement culture that facilitates staff identifying and implementing efficiencies and innovation**

Our high performance and continued success in achieving efficiencies has been due to the skills and innovative outlook of our staff and councillors. Over the years we have fostered a culture which encourages staff to identify new ways of working and delivering excellence. This is underpinned by our Performance Development Review process which focuses on performance against a set of competences. Indeed, one of the competences focuses purely on 'achieving results'.

We have continued to build on our successful Leadership Programme and cascade the learning throughout the authority by offering 'bite size' training for staff, including innovative and creative learning techniques. We also work with other councils across Suffolk to share learning,

development and coaching opportunities. This enables us to share the costs of training, reduce duplication and achieve value for money.

### **promote appropriate integration, wider partnership working, including shared services with Forest Heath District Council as the preferred partner and related efficiencies**

With our colleagues at Forest Heath District Council we have embarked on an ambitious programme of shared services which involves exploring and developing business cases for the future delivery of services across both councils. This year we have focused on services such as ICT, Communications, Property and Policy. Our Shared Services Steering Group oversees this work and is tasked with ensuring that the business cases are robust and identify savings and/or service improvements.

In addition to the programme of shared services, we have continued to build on the joint Waste Management Partnership with Forest Heath which has been in operation since 2008. Throughout the year, the partnership has implemented its action plan and achieved significant progress. Importantly, the partnership successfully redesigned the waste collection round. This project was completed on time, with little disruption to customers and within budget. Importantly, the reorganisation achieved savings of £100,000 for both St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath in respect of wages and fuel. With years of growth in the Borough, we have also been able to avoid the significant cost of providing an extra vehicle and crew (£120,000 per year) through re-balancing resources.



From April 2011, our revenues and benefits service will be delivered in conjunction with Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP). Over the past few months, we have worked hard to restructure this service to ensure that we make savings whilst maintaining, and indeed improving, the service to our customers. All St Edmundsbury employees were successful in obtaining posts in the structure, following a robust selection process based on assessment of skills, performance, attendance and employment records. This is an outstanding result for us and reflects the effective management and employment practices that have taken place. Work continues to support team development and the redeployment of staff to Breckland House, Thetford. This large restructuring exercise (involving over 150 people, four councils and three employers) has been challenging but has provided key learning for future restructuring and development of shared services.

### **continue to develop staff and councillors**

**councillors:** An extensive Member Development Programme was offered during 2010/11, with Councillors attending sessions on a diverse range of topics, which they identified as a priority, following completion of a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) questionnaire at the beginning of the year. These training sessions included presentation skills, handling challenging situations, and partnership working. Individual Councillors attended conferences on important national issues including the "Big Society", housing and rural issues.

Also during 2010/11 we had a re-assessment of the Member Development Charter. The assessment report was largely positive. However, the assessors were not able to re-confirm Charter status and made three recommendations including finding opportunities to involve more Councillors in the training programme, and linking training more closely to corporate and national priorities. The assessors are confident that actions to be put in place following the Borough Council elections will enable us to re-achieve Charter status before the end of 2011.

**staff:** Interim arrangements have been in place to share the Learning and Development Service across both St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath. A range of learning opportunities are offered to staff, with a focus on interventions to support the delivery of the Shared Services programme. Basic skills continue to be offered to all employees. A new programme has recently started for numeracy. We continue to support workforce development through the positive promotion of Adult Learner Week. In 2010 we were delighted to win the East of England Local Government Association's (EELGA) Award for Workforce Development. Our focus on adult learning has also resulted in our work being identified as best practice by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE).

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## **2. Shape the future development of the Borough and wider area**

### **Key activities for 2010/11**

- through the policy framework balance growth with the need to retain and preserve the character of the area;
- promote the area as a tourism, shopping and leisure destination; and
- maximise investment in the Borough including through the Homes and Communities Agency single conversation.

### **Haverhill**

- masterplan implementation (now Vision 2031) and impact management;
- maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the town centre developments; and
- promotion of Haverhill as a centre of business and manufacturing excellence.

### **Bury St Edmunds**

- masterplan implementation (now Vision 2031) and impact management; and
- maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the town centre developments, including the opening of The Apex.

### **Rural services**

- continue to implement and review the Rural Action Plan and develop a masterplan for the rural area (now Vision 2031).

### **Clean and green**

- appropriate actions to mitigate for and adapt to climate change;
- promote sustainable and carbon neutral development;
- maintain high levels of cleanliness and waste diversion in partnership with Forest Heath District Council; and
- promote community safety by tackling environmental nuisance.

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### **Why was this a priority in 2010/11?**

The quality of life of those living, working and visiting the area remains important to us. Throughout the year we remained committed to enhancing our environment as well as protecting what we already enjoy. This commitment sets out the specific requirements of the different parts of the borough, Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds and the rural areas, as well as focusing on the wider issues which impact us all, such as climate change. We are keenly aware that the actions we take today, affect the longer term, so some of our work this year has focused on developing masterplans for the borough, which are known as Vision 2031.

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### **Progress in 2010/11**

**through the policy framework balance growth with the need to retain and preserve the character of the area**

The Borough's Core Strategy was adopted in December 2010. This Strategy sets out the long term vision and provides a blueprint for managing growth over the next 20 years, including broad locations for growth in our two towns. The Core Strategy benefited from an extensive, three-year public consultation and testing process which included contributions from local people and organisations, and a rigorous public inspection by an independent government inspector.



## **promote the area as a tourism, shopping and leisure destination**

Our Tourist Information Service has quite rightly been recognised for the excellent service it provides and this year at the Tourism in Suffolk ceremony it won three awards. The awards were for Best Tourist Information Centre and Best Large Event/Festival for the Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre, and our Tourism Officer was presented with an Outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of her personal contribution to tourism in the area.

The Tourist Information Centre remained busy throughout the year with over 150,000 visitors through its doors and generated approximately £60,000 worth of sales at the shop. The Christmas Fayre continues to be one of the Borough's most popular events with over 80,000 people attending over the three days.

Car parking is an important element in supporting the economic viability of the borough. Last year there were approximately 1.65 million parking events which was an increase of 4.3% on the previous year.



## **maximise investment in the Borough including through the Homes and Communities Agency single conversation**

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the national body that allocates capital funding for affordable housing. It introduced a new process called the 'Single Conversation' with local authorities and their partners which resulted in the development of Local Investment Plans (LIPs). The LIP identifies the capital investment required in the borough for the next five years and is used to assess the funding the HCA will provide.

We successfully completed the first LIP in Suffolk and, in conjunction with the HCA, carried out a masterclass for other councils in Suffolk to share our good practice identified by the HCA. The LIP successfully enabled our partners to receive 100% of the funding requested from the HCA for affordable housing in 2010/11.

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## **Haverhill**

### **masterplan implementation and impact management (Vision 2031)**

Haverhill Vision 2031 is a new strategic long-term vision covering every aspect of life in the town including housing, shops, business, open spaces, schools, transport, health, social services, leisure, and planning for new neighbourhoods such as the one at North-East Haverhill. Whilst the masterplan for Haverhill has yet to be implemented, work has begun on its development. The consultation for the Haverhill Vision 2031 was launched on 1 February 2011 at Haverhill Arts Centre and this was followed by a series of drop-in events. The vision document will be drafted over the summer.

### **maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the town centre developments**

A wide range of activities have been undertaken throughout the year to maximise all that Haverhill has to offer. We are delighted with the installation of the Queen Street gates, which resulted from a public art project with local schools. The new plaza outside the Leisure Centre has been transformed into an open space that is used for entertainments and events. A local company, The

Design Office, has produced a new collection of images of events and recent developments in the town. The images are available on-line for partners to use to promote Haverhill.

In terms of the retail offer in town, several new shops have opened in Haverhill in the past year and as at March 2011, the vacancy rate was 5.3%, which is very healthy. Haverhill Tandoori and USA Chicken have benefitted from new shop fronts, which we have grant-aided through the Queen Street shop-front grant scheme. A shopper survey has been carried out to see how the retail offer of Haverhill can be further improved.



We are delighted with the opening of the new Haverhill Community Football Association's 'New Croft' building at Chalkstone. This new facility offers five pitches, a stadium, social facilities and car parking and is a great addition to the town.

Looking to the future, a development brief has been adopted for Gurteens, an important town centre site. It provides guidance to potential developers and promotes mixed use of the site, including residential, retail, office, leisure, light industrial and community use.

### **promotion of Haverhill as a centre of business and manufacturing excellence**

We have a vibrant and thriving business and manufacturing sector in Haverhill. To support businesses further, a new MENTA Business and Training Centre in Haverhill was opened by Matthew Hancock MP in July 2010. It offers training and meeting rooms as well as units for small businesses to rent. The refurbishment and equipping of the building was supported by the Borough Council, the East of England Development Agency and Suffolk County Council.

A concept statement for Haverhill Research Park was approved. Carisbrooke Investments is developing the site which lies at the entrance to the town from the road from Cambridge. The masterplan for the area was recently approved.

Along with the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce we jointly organised a 'Hard-working Haverhill' meeting to look at the town's economic future. The event was hosted by Genzyme, a leading Haverhill business and incorporated our annual business ratepayers' consultation meeting.

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## **Bury St Edmunds**

### **masterplan implementation and impact management (Vision 2031)**

Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 is a new strategic long-term vision covering every aspect of life in the town including housing, shops, business, open spaces, schools, transport, health, social services, leisure, and planning for new neighbourhoods. Whilst the masterplan for Bury St Edmunds has yet to be implemented, work has begun on its development. The consultation for the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 was launched on 2 February 2011 at the Apex and this was followed by a series of drop-in events. The vision document will be drafted over the summer.

**maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits of the town centre developments, including the opening of The Apex.**

arc celebrated its second year of trading in March 2011. All 62 apartments have been sold and all but six of the shop units let. Charter Square has staged more than 100 events over the past two years. Footfall has greatly increased in the town centre as a result of the new development. arc gained a 'Gold Award' for the best small in-town retail development in the UK from BCSC, the national retail property body, in December 2010. Bury St Edmunds has risen to 145th largest retail centre in the UK. Being listed in the top 150 retail destinations makes the town more attractive to national retailers.

Whilst some shops have closed, several new shops and businesses have opened in the town centre in past year. As at March 2011, the vacancy rate was 5.9%, which is very healthy, and agents report good interest in vacant properties. Engineering works in the past year to improve the town have included landscaping of Station Hill, the opening of a new 30 space car park at School Yard and the resurfacing of St Andrew's Street South. New signs have been erected to help visitors and shoppers find their way to the town centre from all the main arrival points, such as the railway station, bus station and main car parks.

Business meetings held this year have included 'Bury St Edmunds...Bucking the Trend', the Bury St Edmunds business ratepayers' consultation meeting in January 2011, and the Business 2 Business exhibition in October 2010, jointly organised by us, the Chamber of Commerce and the Bury Free Press. About fifty businesses had stands and there were five seminars on the topics of apprenticeships, Olympic opportunities, green business, broadband and innovation.

The Apex opened in October with a three-month 'sound check season' and instantly established a reputation as a superb concert hall with acoustics that rival the best in Europe. Comments such as: "That this astonishing music venue has been built at all, let alone here in Bury, is a testament to those visionaries in St Edmundsbury Borough Council who fought tirelessly for its very existence, the imagination of the acousticians and architects who designed it, and the skill of the builders in bringing it to reality" (Wolsey orchestra) join the many comments from audiences and performers who have been 'wowed' by their experience. It's a brilliant facility, already highly valued by schools, for young musicians and has seen a wide range of music staged – many of them sell-out concerts. There have been other events as well, ranging from dinner dances and balls to a chess congress and to the BurySOUND competition. Business conferences and other commercial events are now being targeted. As well as being a significant cultural investment, the Apex helps to boost the local economy as well, especially the night time economy, with visitors and residents spending their money in Bury St Edmunds, supporting jobs and local prosperity.



Graham Portlock camerawork@cooptel.net

We have supported the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) in Bury St Edmunds entitled Bid4Bury. Businesses within a defined area of the town centre voted in favour of Bid4Bury in December 2009 and the company became operational in April 2010. The Bid4Bury Business Plan has six strands including improving safety and security; marketing and promoting the town centre; events to bring in the crowds; festive lights and associated events; environmental improvements; and collective and individual business support. In its first year it has established town centre rangers; increased the Christmas lights and floral displays in the town; and helped to organise many events and activities such as Christmas events, Armed Forces Day, the Flower and

Continental Market, the St John's Street fair and Suffolk Motor Sports Day. We make a financial contribution towards Bid4Bury and have two representatives on the Board of Directors who have played an active part in delivering the business plan this year.

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## Rural Services

### **continue to implement and review the rural action plan and develop a masterplan for the rural area**

The three year Rural Action Plan for 2008 to 2011 has now been successfully completed. It is worth reviewing some of the activities undertaken over these three years. For example, over the period eight village halls have benefitted from new laptops with wireless internet connection for all the community to use. More than 50 visits have taken place to our most remote rural settlements by the Rural Coffee Caravan Information Project. 53 village halls have been included in the new website ([www.suffolkvillagehalls.co.uk](http://www.suffolkvillagehalls.co.uk)) aimed at promoting and increasing the use of village halls. The new 'Suffolk Links – Three Towns' demand responsive transport, which is available in some villages, has benefited from financial support. Hundon Community Café was established and received the start-up grant and advice package – this will now be used as an exemplar for other community cafes. Tours for visitors have been established in Clare, Ixworth and Stanton. The 'Wos Up' rural outreach youth project has been delivered in nine villages. Village welcome pack templates have been produced to support villages in promoting their local facilities, businesses, etc.

A new Rural Action for April 2011 to March 2014 has now been approved, following public consultation. This will be monitored throughout the year by staff and on an annual basis by Members of the Rural Area Working Party.

As with both Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds, we have begun work on the development of a Rural Vision 2031. This is intended to provide a long-term vision covering every aspect of life in rural areas. The consultation for the Rural Vision 2031 was launched in March 2011 and is being followed by a series of drop-in events in villages throughout the borough.



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## Clean and green

### **appropriate actions to mitigate for and adapt to climate change**

Throughout the year we continued to demonstrate our commitment to reducing operational energy demand and carbon emissions and improve environmental performance. Some of the highlights include:

- completion of the construction of the Apex which incorporates ground source heat pump technology to heat and cool the building;
- committing capital to invest in renewable energy generation following a comprehensive review of our property portfolio;

- installing solar thermal hot water heating at accommodation in Hardwick Heath;
- carrying out infra-red imaging surveys of Bury Leisure Centre and Council offices in Haverhill to identify further energy efficiency improvements;
- securing support to establish, as the lead partner of four Suffolk local councils working with regional advisors, the Suffolk Supply Chain Network aimed at supporting local suppliers to improve their resource efficiency through advice and access to grants thereby improving our supply chain;
- leading a comprehensive review of council procurement practice across Suffolk to establish how progress has been made to embed sustainability in our sourcing of goods and services; and
- securing funding to run a Defra-sponsored sustainable procurement training programme for council specialists in and beyond Suffolk to improve procurement policy and practice.

We have also continued our work to reduce energy and carbon emissions in the community including:

- continuing to run the Greener Homes Do-It-Yourself grant scheme in Stanton and Bury St Edmunds, resulting in grants being awarded to over 150 households to assist with insulation, draught proofing and water saving;
- launching in March 2011, the Business Carbon Cutters Grant which offers up to £1,000 funding to small and medium sized businesses across West Suffolk with funding from West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership;
- offering discounted thermal imaging surveys to help local businesses identify improvement measures; and
- continuing to run a Home Renewable Energy grant for space and water heating from low carbon and renewable energy sources.

This year we won recognition for our innovative fleet management. The Fleet Heroes Awards, run by the Energy Savings Trust and supported by the Guardian Newspaper and the CBI, recognise innovation in the sustainable management of vehicle fleets. We won the prestigious Motorvate Member of the Year Award and also carried off a runners-up award for the Business Mileage Management category. These awards recognise our efforts and the range of initiatives we have introduced all of which aimed for a 10% reduction in mileage by April 2010.



In December 2010, one of our public car parks became the first in Suffolk to offer charging points for electric vehicles, allowing electric car drivers to park and plug in. In a further move to reduce carbon emissions, we will soon open a dedicated car park for low emission cars.

### **promote sustainable and carbon neutral development**

The adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy provides an important milestone in reinforcing our approach towards minimising the impact of climate change. The policies in the Core Strategy in themselves were the subject of a rigorous Sustainability Appraisal and the document sets out our requirements for sustainable development, including the need to protect and enhance natural resources, managing energy and CO2 emissions, efficient use of water, flood prevention, waste management, and minimising the need to travel.

House builders are required to comply with the national Code for Sustainable Homes and we have also adopted the national "Building for Life" standard, a national benchmark for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. We have also commenced investigation of the re-use of heat and power from existing generating sources in Bury St Edmunds that might be suitable for use in new development.

### **maintain high levels of cleanliness and waste diversion in partnership with Forest Heath District Council**

We successfully trialed a scheme to compost street sweepings which resulted in 526 tonnes of material being diverted from landfill. Between June and October 2010 the trial collected the equivalent of 51 full bin lorry loads of material. The scheme is now fully operational in partnership with Forest Heath District Council. The sweepings are predominately soil and organic material, with the small amount of litter being separated out and recycled.

In November 2010 we began an initiative to recycle waste from Bury St Edmunds market. We anticipate that 120 tonnes of waste each year will be diverted from landfill and the savings in landfill tax and income from recycled materials will be used to promote the market.

In addition, we also work with communities promoting sustainable waste management practices in the household through the correct use of our refuse, recycling and composting collection system. We held several events throughout the year where we promoted these practices as well as offering targeted advice to communities in order to reduce bin store issues and potential environmental problems.

### **promote community safety by tackling environmental nuisance**

We undertake continual monitoring and clearance of fly tipping and graffiti incidents and littering hotspots. Tackling these issues within the community both promotes safety but also engages with our communities as, for example, we promote and support community litter picks. We also continue to support BBC Radio Suffolk's 'don't be a tosser' campaign.

### 3. Reduce crime and disorder

#### Key activities for 2010/11

- implement the Community Safety Partnership action plan;
- spread awareness of multi-agency work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- ensure our regulatory services are robust.

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#### Why was this a priority in 2010/11?

We know that feeling safe influences how people feel about living somewhere and impacts on the quality of life. Whilst St Edmundsbury is one of the safest places to live, we cannot be complacent and we remain committed to doing all we can to reduce crime and disorder, with the support of colleagues in other agencies.

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#### Progress in 2010/11

##### implement the Community Safety Partnership action plan

The West Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) has been working in seven priority areas as identified by a strategic assessment. These are:

- Creating a safer night time economy
- Protecting young people
- Working in priority neighborhoods
- Helping vulnerable families
- Tackling drug use
- Protecting property
- Improving road safety



A number of initiatives have been commissioned to help deliver these priorities, including family intensive support, mediation, road safety awareness raising, anti-social behaviour diversionary projects, raising awareness and support for domestic abuse and substance misuse, housing and support for prolific offenders and a SOS bus. Both overall crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidences are showing a downward trend (down by 6.5% for all ASB incidences in the 10 months to February 2011. At the same time, confidence in the Police and local councils working together, to reduce anti social behaviour is increasing. The latest survey to record confidence data took place in September 2010 when confidence stood at 54.6% and Suffolk ranked eighth out of all forces nationally. This shows very significant improvement from the low in June 2009 when confidence was 45.4% and Suffolk ranked 37<sup>th</sup> nationally.

##### spread awareness of multi-agency work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour teams have been established this year in each district council areas across Suffolk. Since October 2010, St Edmundsbury's multi agency team has met each Monday to discuss and problem solve high risk, repeat or vulnerable victims. Partners involved are Environmental Health, Housing Options, Adult Social Care, Havebury Housing, Hate Crime Service and Police. The aim of the multi-agency team is to reduce end to end time for tackling cases and improve outcomes for victims. The team results will be reviewed after six months.

Staff have also been working to improve the sharing of anti-social behaviour data which is collected by the council, using a IT mapping tool. We continue to work within the Safer Neighborhood Teams, by providing representation at public meetings by Councillors and at tasking meetings from staff. The Community Safety Officer has been involved in the shaping of the new public led tasking process and has a high level of involvement in its continued development. This involves the public attending quarterly meetings with their Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) to discuss and set the priorities for the coming quarter. A maximum of three priorities per SNT area are set and then the officer tasking group, which meets monthly, works to address the issues raised, using a problem solving process.

The mobile youth resource On the Spot has been established in Haverhill. The project is a multi-agency led project with the aim of reducing youth anti-social behavior with a focus on the peak times for example Friday evenings. We are involved in this resource alongside agencies such as the Suffolk Police, Suffolk Youth and Connexions Service and Haverhill Town Council.

We have worked closely with the police in all aspects of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), including supporting 'shopwatch'. This has been a successful partnership and in 2010 resulted in 693 arrests and 262 cautions in the Borough.

### **ensure our regulatory services are robust**

We reviewed our corporate Enforcement Policy this year, to include amongst other matters, our obligations under the Regulators Compliance Code. The Policy defines the principles we will follow when taking enforcement/regulatory decisions to ensure that those decisions are consistent, fair and proportionate to the circumstances.

When appropriate we have worked with other regulatory agencies to achieve satisfactory outcomes. This year a joint enforcement approach was taken between the Health and Safety Executive and the Environmental Health Officers after forty three migrant workers were found to be working in unsafe premises and housed in unsatisfactory accommodation. We made a Prohibition Order prohibiting the use of offices as a dwelling; the owners of the premises found more suitable accommodation for the workers soon after.

Our Licensing Team has successfully taken a joint enforcement/regulation approach with the police and other partners on several operations during the year. One example was the joint operation with the police and the Security Industry Authority (SIA) in October 2010. The aim of the operation was to check compliance of door staff working at the various venues in Bury St Edmunds. In Bury St Edmunds every premise that employs door staff was checked, and an excellent result of 100% compliance was achieved. 29 people at nine different premises were checked and the whole operation was positively received by door staff and management.

Regulation is not just about enforcement however, and in 2010 we successfully introduced a 'Scores on the Doors' scheme for our food premises. Since its inception, we have inspected and rated 435 premises which now have a rating of between 0 and 5 'stars'. This has been a successful scheme in that some premises have improved from a '1 star rating' at their initial inspection to a '4 star rating' at their subsequent inspection.

In 2010 the Environmental Health and Licensing teams undertook a self assessment and peer review to see whether improvements to the service could be made, and an action plan for improvement was developed. The process and the resulting action plan were reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also. The process included input from the Portfolio Holder and also the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.



## 4. Provide a strong voice for West Suffolk

### Key activities for 2010/11

- further develop the Council's community leadership role and approaches to community engagement and consultation;
- work in partnership to deliver responsibilities for equalities, children and young people and older people;
- protect and promote the needs of residents and businesses in West Suffolk with partners;
- promote citizenship and community cohesion, including:
  - participation in elections and representative activities;
  - engagement with young people;
  - engaging under-represented groups; and
  - utilizing our arts, heritage and leisure infrastructure to its full potential.



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### Why was this a priority in 2010/11?

We retained this commitment over a number of years because we feel it is important to encourage and support our communities to engage with, and influence, the decision making process. We want to ensure that everyone feels able to contribute to decisions and that opportunities for participation, in whatever form that might be, are open to all. We know that some people find it easier to become involved than others. This is why we have retained our focus on engaging under-represented groups. We also recognise that we have specific legal requirements to ensure that we promote equality and eliminate harassment and discrimination. Some of the work outlined below illustrates some of practical steps we take to meet these legal requirements.

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### Progress in 2010/11

#### **further develop the council's community leadership role and new approaches to community engagement and consultation**

Ward walks were conducted in three wards, and the results shared with other councillors via a workshop facilitated by IDeA peers. These ward walks provide an opportunity for councillors to reflect on their knowledge of their wards and how they engage with local residents.

We have been engaging with a variety of communities to enable them to have greater control of local facilities. For example we have worked for over a year with the Southgate Community Partnership which is taking on the ownership of the Southgate Community Centre. Along with responsibility for all aspects of running and maintaining the centre they now have the flexibility to run and develop the centre in the way the local community wants. In Haverhill we have consulted with residents on the Clements estate about how they wanted the old school site developed. A group of local residents is now working with officers to develop allotments, a community garden and some open space, including a play area.

#### **work in partnership to deliver responsibilities for equalities, children and young people and older people**

We recognise that using bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless young people is not acceptable and have therefore been funding two schemes called Nightstop and Supported

Lodgings. Both schemes are managed by the YMCA and offer support as well as accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17 in crisis. Nightstop is a short term scheme for up to seven days, where emergency accommodation is necessary for a young person who is homeless, and the accommodation is in a family home where the support comes from the hosts. Accommodation is offered on a short term basis until Children's Services have had an opportunity to work with the young person and try to resolve their immediate housing crisis, by finding them longer term accommodation or working with the family so the young person can return home. Supported Lodgings is a similar supported scheme, but is for longer term, and offers the young person more stability and family support from the hosts. Nationally these schemes are recognised as good practice and the outcomes for homeless 16 and 17 year olds are more favourable.

The Head of Environmental Health and Housing is the Chair of a county wide multi-agency group focusing on young people's homelessness and has secured £80,000 from the government to support both the Nightstop and Supported Lodgings schemes across Suffolk for a further year whilst mainstream funding is sought.

Oxlip House, at Moreton Hall, a new innovative scheme developed for frail elderly people was officially opened in November 2010. Working in partnership with the Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA) and The Order of St John Care Trust, £3,315,000 of funding was received from the



Homes and Communities Agency to build this very sheltered (extra care) development. Oxlip House offers a new way of supporting people to live independently for as long as possible.

In the past year the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership (WSLSP) has funded a number of projects which reach out to children and young people. Several pre-school groups have received funding for a variety of equipment. For older children the YMCA Training has been funded to run a project which encourages young people to plan and use public transport with confidence, in order to expand the area within which they are willing to seek work. The Out and About charity, which provides volunteers to take out disabled young people, has received funding to recruit seven young male volunteers. These male volunteers will support disabled boys so that the boys feel they are like anyone else going out with a friend, not marked out by being accompanied by someone who is obviously a carer.

Older people have also benefited from WSLSP funding. For example the Bury St Edmunds Volunteer Centre has established an innovative telephone befriending scheme for isolated elderly and vulnerable people, and the council has encouraged its staff to volunteer for the service.

**promote citizenship and community cohesion, including:**

- **participation in elections and representative activities**

We have been involved in the East of England Local Government Association "Be A Councillor" campaign to encourage people to consider standing for election. Two workshops for candidates were held, with the youngest candidate attending being 18 years old.

Officers continued to work closely with communities to get their views and encourage them to become involved, for example officers attended the Clements Primary School Christmas Fayre to consult local people about the future use of the school site.

We created a new webpage to provide information for people who were interested in standing as a councillor at the Borough elections in May. The webpage included information about who could stand as a councillor, nominations, job descriptions and so on. It also provided information about the huge range of activities carried out by the council.

- **engagement with young people**

We have continued to engage with young people well. We are now looking to develop more youth led projects that see young people become more empowered to raise funds and deliver projects for other young people on a local basis. A recent example has been the success of the Bury Skate Park Committee which secured a large grant to improve the skate park facility in Bury St Edmunds.



We organised a number of events for Local Democracy Week in 2010. The purpose of these events was to engage with a large number of young people and to provide opportunities for dialogue about youth engagement with the democratic process. Making the most of the proximity of West Suffolk House to West Suffolk College we have hosted events for college students. The aim of the events is for students to understand more about the work of councils and to experience an office environment. We also use these events to engage with young people about issues, such as Vision 2031.

- **engaging under-represented groups**

The West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership has continued to support a wide range of projects aimed at engaging under-represented groups. For example ISCRE have been funded to deliver an intergenerational project looking at the experience of black and minority ethnic groups in the west of the county. MIND is delivering a project to educate those whose work brings them in to contact with people with personality disorders to allow them to better engage this group and understand their needs.

- **utilising our arts, heritage and leisure infrastructure to its full potential**

St Edmundsbury has a strong cultural offer with participation at our facilities increasing over the years. The latest Active People Survey shows an increase in the number of people being active within our communities.

The borough continues to win 'In Bloom' awards and three of our parks have attained Green Flags. Our community support the upkeep and protection of our green space as the popularity of 'Friends Groups' increases; this helps to maintain the beauty of the area and gives local a people a chance to be involved in the look and feel of an area.

Our heritage sites also have 'Friends Groups' and recently both West Stow and Moyses Hall have achieved full museum accreditation. The accreditation scheme is administered by the Museums Libraries and Archives Council which sets nationally agreed standards for all museums in the UK. The awards for West Stow and Moyses Hall



indicate that they meet the high standards required in terms of how they are run, how they look after their collections and the services they provide for visitors. The award allows access to museum funding that is only for accredited museums and is an excellent achievement that recognises the hard work of its volunteers and staff.

Following the opening of the Apex, St Edmundsbury now has a world class entertainment venue which has received plaudits from performers and audiences alike; with many of the acts sold out the facility is becoming a very popular part of the community. The Apex is supporting art, which it hopes to display in public areas, in partnership with others, including Smiths Row Art Gallery.

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## 5. Promoting the local economy

### Key activities for 2010/11

- provide support for advice around debt, fuel poverty and housing;
  - encourage the further development of actions to help the local economy come out of recession;
  - encourage take-up of benefits and small business rates relief;
  - where requested, pay small and medium suppliers within 20 days;
  - continue to implement the council's economic development strategy including re-investing LABGI funds; and
  - support the delivery of the Suffolk Business Park.
- 

### Why was this a priority for 2010/11?

We changed the emphasis of this commitment in 2010/11 from 'responding effectively to the recession' to 'promoting the local economy'. This was so that we could focus all our actions on building and sustaining the local economy. We are supported by colleagues, including those in the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership, which also maintained its focus on promoting economic prosperity. The range of activities we undertook throughout the year, some of which are highlighted below, illustrate the practical steps we can take, in partnership with others, to encourage growth throughout the borough.

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### Progress in 2010/11

#### **provide support for housing around debt, fuel poverty and housing**

We achieved top quartile performance for homelessness preventions and regularly prevent in the region of 40% of cases we deal with from becoming homeless. We have also helped two families under the Mortgage Rescue Scheme from becoming homeless.

We have introduced a new innovative Private Sector Leasing Scheme for vulnerable homeless applicants with a social enterprise, Housing Action, who will provide at least 75 homes under the scheme within five years.

We were successful in attracting additional funding of £320,000 over a two year period for targeting vulnerable people in the private sector to improve the condition of their homes to a 'decent homes standard'. This has helped 82 people receive funding to make improvements to date which included carrying out major repairs, removing hazards and improving the thermal efficiency of their homes to make them cheaper to heat, thereby reducing fuel poverty.

The WSLSP has provided substantial funding for both money advice and to address fuel poverty. Almost £53,000 has been provided to the Citizens Advice Bureau across West Suffolk to develop Cashflow, an on-line debt advice system. In Haverhill the REACH community project has received modest funding to help it provide money advice via the Christians Against Poverty (CAP) money advice programme. The WSLSP has also continued to roll out funding for small-scale grants to people over 60 for loft insulation if they fall outside the parameters to free insulation under the national scheme.

## **encourage the further development of actions to help the local economy come out of recession**

The economy of St Edmundsbury continues to perform well. Along with Forest Heath District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, we were involved in a pilot study examining the economic resilience of the area and how councils can improve resilience and ability to withstand economic shocks. The study was undertaken by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). In addition, a Jobcentre Plus bus has been visiting both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill to provide an advice service to local people on job vacancies, employment services for employers and business start-up advice and support.

Our markets in Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds play an important role in our economy. A review of the market provision in both towns was undertaken with the aim of supporting and securing the long term viability of both markets. As a result of the recommendations, a Markets Forum has been created.



The West Suffolk and Babergh East Apprenticeship Scheme continued to go from strength to strength. Only three months into the delivery of a pilot scheme, 32 new apprenticeships were created. Buoyed by this success, the scheme was expanded in 2010/11 thanks to funding from the West Suffolk LSP, Babergh East LSP, Transforming Suffolk and the European Social Fund. The purpose of this funding was to create 90 more apprenticeships, with 70 of these being in the West Suffolk area. At least half of these new apprentices will have not been in education, employment or training (NEET) beforehand.

The WSLSP has allowed over £40,000 to West Suffolk College for the provision of short training programmes, skills for life development and skills interventions for business organisations in West Suffolk. The WSLSP has also funded a Carbon Cutters scheme which will provide grants to help Small and Medium Enterprises to cut their carbon emissions.

## **encourage take-up of benefits and small business rates relief**

Following changes announced in the June 2010 budget, we contacted all ratepayers to assess whether they could further benefit from small business rates relief.

## **where requested, pay small and medium suppliers within 20 days**

Further publicity about our offer to pay small and medium size within 20 days was undertaken during the year, through Community Spirit.

## **continue to develop the council's economic development strategy including re-investing LABGI funds**

In 2010, the government invited bids from areas to form Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Along with Forest Heath District Council we have joined two of these: a Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough LEP and a New Anglian LEP covering Suffolk and Norfolk. The structure and functions of these are currently being developed.

In addition to the West Suffolk and Babergh East Apprenticeship Scheme outlined above, LABGI funding is being used to support apprentices in a partnership with West Suffolk College. The

scheme provides financial support to employers to help them take on and retain apprentices. 43 apprentices have been supported so far. In addition, LABGI funding is also being used to pay for new business park signs. Ten signs were installed in 2010 and five more in 2011.

### **Support the delivery of the Suffolk Business Park**

A 68 hectare extension to Suffolk Business Park, extending from Moreton Hall to Rougham, is planned. The masterplan was approved in June 2010. Churchmanor is bringing the development forward with a key issue being the funding for a new road.

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## 6. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and their legacy for the Borough

### Key activities for 2010/11

- use the Olympics to inspire the community to increase activity and play more sport in the run up to and during the games, and also as a legacy;
  - to ensure the most is made culturally and economically of the Rwandan Team coming to St Edmundsbury for their pre-games training camp, and to create lasting links between the Borough and the country.
- 

### Why was this a priority for 2010/11?

This commitment was new for 2010/11 recognising that hosting of the Olympics is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Our commitment is focused on increasing participation in sports and activities in the build up to the games and to ensure that there is a lasting legacy. With the success of attracting Rwanda to the Borough it is now important that lasting links are formed with the country.

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### Progress in 2010/11

#### **use the Olympics to inspire the community to increase activity and play more sport in the run up to and during the games, and also as a legacy**

We have been working with Abbeycroft Leisure to use the Olympics as a catalyst to increase participation and for people to be more active in the Borough. The results of the latest Active People's Survey have supported the approach as there has been a sustained increase in participation in sport and physical activity, with the highest increase in Suffolk.

The Suffolk Youth Games were opened by the High Commissioner from the Rwandan Embassy and the Games are used to motivate young people to be more involved in sport. The Youth Games attracts hundreds of children and young people to take part in many different sports and gives them the chance to take part in competitive events.

We were delighted to host the start of stage seven of the Tour of Britain. Many hundreds of people attended the event which was led off by community groups. The event also had a significant economic impact on the area; an impact assessment carried out by Tour organisers found that expenditure associated with this stage of the Tour was nearly £1million.



To further our links with Rwanda a 'Sport for Rwanda' initiative was launched to raise money for schools in the country. In order to harness the popularity of cycling and support the fund raising a venture to 'Cycle to Rwanda' has been organised; this will be a team of three riders cycling all the way to Rwanda to raise £80,000 which will be used to help over 100,000 children get the chance to play sport in schools.



**to ensure the most is made culturally and economically of the Rwandan Team coming to St Edmundsbury for their pre-games training camp, and to create lasting links between the Borough and the country**

To ensure the most is made of opportunities of being a host town, a Steering Group has been established and is comprised of representatives from different parts of the community, such as businesses, schools and charities. The Group has identified a number of themes that will be developed such as education, culture, business and tourism. The Rwandan embassy has been fully engaged with the Steering Group and has supported a number of Borough events.



As part of the ongoing relationship with Rwanda, St Edmundsbury hosted a visit of the Rwandan Local Government Minister, the Rt Hon Mr James Musoni. Included in his visit was a tour of The Apex which will accommodate the first UK Rwandan Convention. This Convention will provide the Borough an opportunity to showcase the area and our facilities.

Cultural links are as important as the sporting ones and understanding the history of another nation is very useful for the education of others. Indeed, the stories behind the Rwandan craftware are fascinating and the sale of these items is being used to improve the country's economy. Rwandan arts and craft were sold at the Christmas Fayre and were very popular.

Schools have used the Rwandan relationship to engage in a number of activities with some schools having their own events such as "Rwanda Week" or fund raising for the Sport for Rwanda initiative.

## Cabinet Commitments for 2011/2012

These will be developed following the Borough Council elections on 5 May 2011.

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## Section two: Corporate Plan 2011/2012

This section of the report will be subject to review following the Borough Council elections on 5 May 2011.

### Introduction

Our work is driven by not only local priorities, as expressed by our Cabinet Commitments described in section one of this document, but by many other factors, such as our statutory duties and financial responsibilities. These elements are all drawn together into our framework for delivering and improving services.

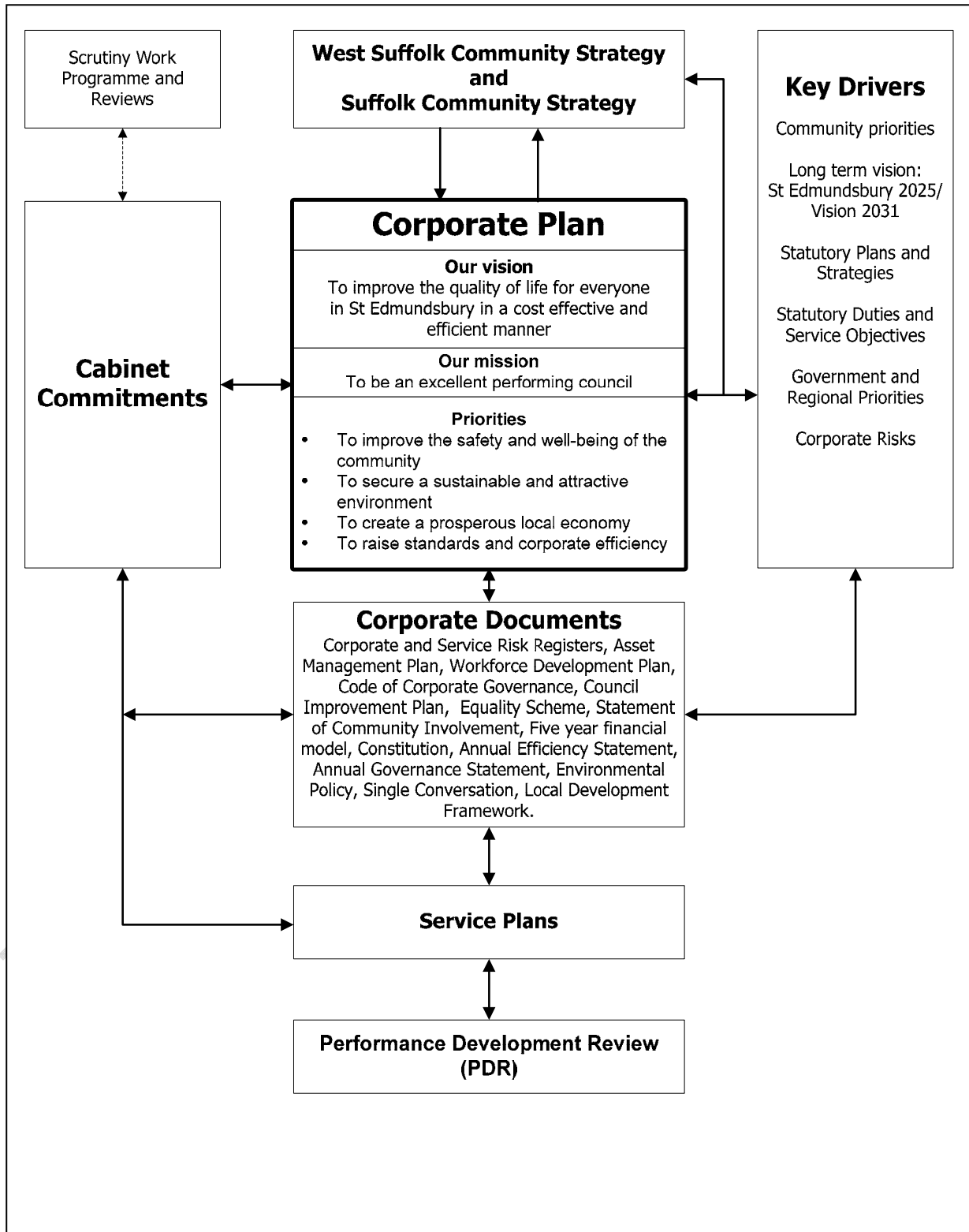
The purpose of this Corporate Plan is to show how every member of staff helps to deliver our priorities. To do this we link **all** of the activities of *every* employee to the council's priorities; creating an understandable link from the Community Strategy through to the annual action plan in each individual's Performance Development Review.

By creating this link, we are able to show how we bring our priorities to life in terms of services and projects. Similarly, we can show how our plans and priorities fit within the wider local, regional and national picture and can be affected by other factors, not least the performance of our services and our commitment to the local taxpayer.

The key objectives of our corporate planning and performance framework are to ensure:

- a culture of achievement;
- that priorities influence, and flow from, the West Suffolk Community Strategy and the Suffolk Community Strategy;
- performance against our targets is monitored effectively;
- short, medium and long term priorities are agreed and regularly reviewed;
- objectives and activities in service plans are consistent with corporate priorities;
- performance against key performance indicators (KPIs) is monitored and reported regularly, and action is taken to correct any shortfall in performance; and
- resources needed to achieve targets are identified and allocated.

Diagram 1 shows how the various elements of the framework fit together.



**Diagram 1 – The corporate planning and performance framework**

An explanation of each of the elements of the corporate planning and performance framework is contained in the following pages.

## About our corporate planning and performance framework

### What we aim to achieve

At the heart of our Corporate Plan is a set of key components that explain our guiding principles and our ambitions for the borough and for the council itself. These components are:

**Our vision** for the borough, is: to improve the quality of life for everyone in St Edmundsbury in a cost effective and efficient manner.

**Our mission** is: to be an excellent performing council.

**Our values** explain what excellence means for us. We want to be a council which:

- is focused on the needs of all those who use our services;
- provides value for money;
- manages resources, information and data effectively;
- works in partnership;
- strives for improvement;
- values and invests in staff and councillors;
- celebrates success;
- is committed to promoting equality and diversity; and
- is accountable and accessible.

The challenge is to turn our vision and mission into benefits that people see and feel. To establish a clear sense of direction and focus we have four **priorities** which are to:

1. raise standards and corporate efficiency;
2. improve the safety and well being of the community;
3. secure a sustainable and attractive environment; and
4. create a prosperous local economy.

These priorities reflect the character of the borough, statistical information and, crucially, the views of our community.

### A shared vision

We cannot deliver all the priorities for St Edmundsbury on our own and need to work in partnership. We are involved in a large number of partnerships.

The overarching partnership in Suffolk is the Suffolk Strategic Partnership (SSP) which includes a range of partners. The SSP is responsible for delivering the Suffolk Community Strategy which identifies a broad range of county-wide issues.

The West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership (WSLSP) is a key partnership for St Edmundsbury, bringing together public, voluntary and private sector partners. Our LSP covers more than one district council (St Edmundsbury, Forest Heath and the western part of Babergh). The partnership has a community leadership role and is responsible for developing the West Suffolk Community Strategy.

## **Cabinet Commitments**

With the support of all councillors, and the involvement of scrutiny committees, the Cabinet has identified a series of cross-cutting commitments. These commitments contribute to the achievement of our four priorities. More information about Cabinet Commitments can be found in section one of this document.

## **Key drivers**

Our work is influenced not only by the partnerships listed above, but also by a number of other local, regional and national drivers. These are explored below.

### ***Our long term vision***

The short term vision for the borough over the next 5-10 years has been established in a variety of council and partner documents such as the Community Strategy for West Suffolk and draft Replacement Local Plan (to 2016). However, we also need an established long term vision. In 2005 we undertook a major project called Vision 2025. The project resulted in a document which sets our vision for the borough for the next 20 years. The vision was developed with key partners and the wider community.

We are now taking the opportunity to draw together the aspirations of the community which have been previously identified in the Vision 2025, Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework (LDF) process.

The constituent parts of the LDF are the spatial representation of the community strategy and identify the 'where' in the aspirations for the place that is St Edmundsbury. The next stages in the process will see development of twenty year masterplans for both towns and the rural area, known as Vision 2031. These documents will set out the community, public, private and third sector's vision for St Edmundsbury for the period to 2031 and will replace St Edmundsbury 2025 and the current Local Plan.

### ***Legal duties***

The majority of our powers and functions stem from legislation. These statutory services make a huge contribution to the quality of life of everyone in the borough. In addition, we have a number of statutory duties which we consider when carrying out all of our work. The most significant duties include the duty to:

- promote equality and eliminate discrimination;
- involve the public in the design and delivery of services;
- safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people; and
- have due regard to the likely effect that our actions may have on the reduction of crime and disorder.

### ***Government and regional priorities***

As is shown by our contribution to the LSP, we are keenly aware that we form part of a wider public service which needs to take coordinated action to meet regional and national priorities. These priorities are a key driver for our own Corporate Plan and can be seen reflected in our four priorities, service plans and our policy framework.

## ***Corporate and service risks***

Our work, resources and priorities are also driven by the risks facing our local community and our services. Risk involves opportunities as well as threats. At a corporate level, these risks are captured in a Corporate Risk Register which is updated quarterly and monitored by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. At a service level, the risks are reflected in Service Risk Registers which cross-reference with service plans.

## **Scrutiny work programmes**

Our scrutiny committees help the Cabinet review, interpret and implement our priorities. The scrutiny work programmes, while independent, are therefore closely linked to the Cabinet's commitments. The Annual Scrutiny Report sets out achievements and explains the future work programme.

## **Corporate documents**

We have a range of corporate documents which influence our work as outlined in diagram one. Some of these are documents we are legally obliged to produce. Details of our plans and policies are available on our website.

Many of the key drivers for the Corporate Plan are related to our improvement agenda; improving performance, managing resources more efficiently and raising standards. This agenda is captured in the Council Improvement Plan but we also use a number of other tools to ensure that we are improving standards and efficiency.

## **Service plans**

Information about how services will deliver our statutory duties and priorities is included in service plans. These plans provide basic resource information, such as number of staff and financial status, and show how each service contributes to our priorities. More importantly they set out the key issues for the future and reflect the risks facing each service and the council and how services are working with their colleagues at Forest Heath District Council. Service plans are also a vital tool in delivering the Workforce Development Plan for staff, showing existing delivery plans and also allowing teams to identify future staffing issues. Information relating to our statutory duties is also included.

The service planning and budget setting processes have been aligned so that service plans reflect the council's agreed budget. This will help focus on our priorities and ensure that they can be delivered within available resources.

## **Performance Development Review**

A key part of our performance management framework is the Performance Development Review (PDR) process for all staff resulting in action plans and performance development plans which are reviewed twice a year. Through this process, staff demonstrate how their work links to the achievement of our priorities. The process also allows each team to produce a learning and development plan for its staff.

## Resourcing and delivering our priorities

Our annual budget is the financial process which underlies the delivery of our commitments, objectives and services. The budget takes into account the cost of delivering these services together with the revenue implications of our capital investments asset disposals programmes.

External economic pressures have put new and changing demands our revenue budget. Our net expenditure budget for 2011/2012 is £12.1m, compared to the 2010/11 budget of £13.6m. This is as a direct result of the public sector funding cuts. By 2012/13, we will have seen a 30.1% cut in government grant, a reduction of £2.5m over these two years. The continuing historic low interest rates have added to our financial pressure.

Mindful of the difficult financial climate, we started planning for the public expenditure cuts at the beginning of 2010, and have been able to deliver efficiency savings and increased income of £1.9m for 2011/12, with no significant impact on frontline services. This also enabled us to deliver another Council Tax freeze for 2011/12.

We are coming to the end of a major capital programme which has seen extensive investments in Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and the rural areas of the Borough. Approved capital expenditure plans for 2011/12 total £2.45m. An essential part of the funding arrangements for the capital programme is the disposal of surplus assets. Our asset disposals programme has been severely affected by the recession.

### The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

Our latest approved MTFS is attached at Appendix B (to be added). It provides a strategic overview of our financial standing over a rolling five year period. It is used as a tool to project the future demands on our finances and identify the level of recurring savings that need to be achieved if we are to maintain the current level of council tax and realise all of the assumptions built into the model.

It will be noted from the model that, between 2012/2013 and 2014/2015, there is a projected gap between expenditure and income in the region of £4.6m of which £2.4m needs to be achieved in 2012/13.

### Assumptions within the model

The model includes a number of key assumptions, listed below. Failing to deliver any of these assumptions has an immediate impact on the bottom line of the model for that year, and future years. The key assumptions in the attached plan are:

- 3% growth in general income streams and non-payroll expenditure for 2012/13 to 2014/15
- 1% growth in payroll expenditure for 2012/13, rising to 3% from 2013/14
- further substantial reductions in government funding, with grants being cut by 14.1% in 2012/13 with annual cuts of 10% for 2013/14 and 2014/15
- further increases in energy costs, increasing by 26% in 2012/13 and 5% per annum from 2013/14
- continue pressure on income from investments, with projected annual interest returns of 1.7% for 2012/13, rising to 3.1% from 2013/14
- provision for new revenue proposals (i.e. growth) and the impact of previous year's savings (DR-IVE)
- revenue effects of the capital programme expenditure, and income from the asset disposal programme



- other cashflow activity affecting the level of interest achieved on our investments
- estimated collection fund surplus and inclusion of the revenue support grant

The model is a constantly changing, and its users should be mindful of this fact. There are many elements that can affect the overall bottom line (both favourably and unfavourably) and these elements change on a regular basis. The model is always updated prior to being used for substantive pieces of financial analysis, and is updated and reviewed internally by the corporate management team every month.

Clearly 2012/13 and beyond will be extremely challenging years in terms of the need to achieve further efficiency savings. In order to respond to the very significant government grant cuts, we will have to continue to make substantial savings. We have an excellent track record of achieving year on year budget savings, having delivered £8.9m in savings since 2005/2006. An important element of this work is the formal partnership arrangement between ourselves and Forest Heath District Council which is seeking to achieve efficiencies through the joint delivery of key council services.

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# Corporate priorities – links to Cabinet Commitments and West Suffolk Community Strategy

The following sections illustrate how our work is driven by our four priorities. For each of the priorities we will show the key drivers and how we intend to meet the specific challenges facing our borough.

<b>1. Raising corporate standards and efficiency</b>	
<b>Our short-term focus</b>	
<b>Cabinet Commitments</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Key activities for 2011/12</b>
To be inserted post election	
<b>Council Improvement Plan 2011/12</b>	
To be inserted post election if an Improvement Plan is required.	

<b>2. Improving the safety and well being of the community</b>	
<b>Our short-term focus</b>	
<b>Cabinet Commitments</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Key activities for 2011/12</b>
To be added post election	
<b>Our shared vision for West Suffolk</b>	
<b>West Suffolk Community Strategy</b>	
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Priority Outcomes</b>
Maximise the potential of all children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications – giving young people a voice</li> <li>• Aspirations, skills and young entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Addressing the causes of childhood obesity</li> </ul>
Develop and maintain a safe, strong and sustainable community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing the night-time economy</li> <li>• Tackling the causes of violence against the person</li> <li>• Tackling the causes/addressing the impact of anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Tackling isolation</li> <li>• Fostering community spirit/helping communities to help themselves</li> <li>• Addressing the challenges and making the most of the opportunities presented by the ageing population</li> </ul>
Create and support healthier communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Early interventions to promote mental health</li> <li>• Projects to help people suffering from post traumatic stress</li> </ul>

<b>3. Securing a sustainable and attractive environment</b>	
<b>Our short-term focus</b>	
<b>Cabinet Commitments</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Key Activities for 2011/12</b>
To be added post election	
<b>Our shared vision for West Suffolk</b>	
<b>West Suffolk Community Strategy</b>	
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Priority Outcomes</b>
Support work to address environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging organizations to become more sustainable</li> <li>• Projects which deliver the WSLSP's Climate Change Action Plan</li> <li>• Fuel poverty/affordable warmth</li> <li>• Local initiatives to deal with extremes of weather</li> <li>• Green and sustainable transport initiatives</li> </ul>
Develop and maintain a safe, strong and sustainable community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling the causes/addressing the impact of anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Tackling isolation</li> <li>• Fostering community spirit/helping communities to help themselves</li> </ul>

<b>4. Creating a prosperous local economy</b>	
<b>Our short-term focus</b>	
<b>Cabinet Commitments</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Key activities for 2011/12</b>
To be added post election	
<b>Our shared vision for West Suffolk</b>	
<b>West Suffolk Community Strategy</b>	
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Priority Outcomes</b>
Develop a prosperous and sustainable economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprenticeships/support for NEETs</li> <li>• Business start-ups</li> <li>• Upskilling</li> <li>• Support for local businesses and social enterprises</li> </ul>
Maximise the potential of all children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications – giving young people a voice</li> <li>• Aspirations, skills and young entrepreneurship</li> </ul>

# Corporate Plan Appendices

A. Unaudited Summary Statement of Accounts  
2009/10 - Available from July 2011

B. Five-Year Financial Model (Medium term  
financial strategy) to be added

C. Performance of NIs in 2010/11 Available from June  
2011

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