



Cabinet 20 July 2011

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 July 2011

1. Cabinet Forward Plan

- 1.1 The Committee considered the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period July to October 2011.
- 1.2 A question was raised regarding item 11 on the Forward Plan, '*St Olaves Shopping Precinct*', and the Committee was advised on the consultation which had already taken place on this issue, and the decision subsequently taken to dispose of the asset. It was agreed that a more thorough briefing note on the background to this decision would be provided to the new Member for this Ward.

2. Appointments to Task and Finish Groups and Suffolk Joint Scrutiny Committees

- 2.1 The Committee considered its requirements for 2011/2012 and made the following appointments:-

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| Cultural Strategy Working Group | Councillors Oliver, Buckle and Mrs Rushbrook |
| Leisure Facilities Asset Management Review (including Playgrounds in St Edmundsbury) | Councillors Thorndyke, Mrs Rushbrook, Marks, Beckwith, Spicer and F J Warby |
| Diversity Group | Councillors Mrs P A Warby, Mrs D Whittaker and Redhead |

- 2.2 In making these appointments, Members were advised that the Members currently working on the review of playgrounds in St Edmundsbury would be asked to review the report on the Leisure Facilities Asset Management Review before it is brought to the Committee in October 2011. Members were also advised that discussion was underway regarding a joint Diversity Group with Forest Heath District Council, and that this may result in a change of Membership numbers from this Council.
- 2.3 The Committee noted that Councillors Thorndyke and Oliver had been appointed at the Annual Meeting of Council on 19 May 2011, as the Borough Council's nominated representative and substitute respectively on the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel for 2011/2012, and that Councillors Thorndyke and French were appointed as Member and substitute Member of the Joint Scrutiny of Flooding and Flood Risk Working Party for 2011/2012.

- 2.4 Finally, Members were made aware of Suffolk County Council's reinstatement of its Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This would again be a body which included a representative from each of the County's districts and boroughs. As Councillor Beckwith had been this Council's representative for several years, and was keen to continue, the Committee **RECOMMENDS that full Council be asked to confirm the appointment of Councillor Beckwith as the Borough Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2011/2012.**

3. 2011/2012 Work Programme

Adoption of Work Programme

- 3.1 Prior to the Borough Council elections, and following a consultation exercise, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recommended a work programme for the first six months of 2011/2012, to allow the newly appointed Overview and Scrutiny Committee to get used to the way scrutiny worked, following which it would set the remainder of the work programme itself.
- 3.2 This draft work programme, which was set out in Appendix A to Report C49, was adopted by the Committee.

Planning the second half of the Work Programme

- 3.3 Ordinarily, a second consultation exercise with officers and Members would now commence to set the second half of the work programme. However, a discussion took place on an alternative way of working, whereby the Committee would have a 'rolling' work programme, with suggestions for scrutiny being considered at each meeting, for potential addition to the work programme subject to the vote of the Committee, and reporting back to the Committee in 2 to 3 meetings' time. It was considered that this way of working would make the work programme more responsive to changing priorities, and Members agreed that this would be the most appropriate method for setting the remainder of the work programme.
- 3.4 On the suggestion of the Chairman, and following discussion, Members also agreed that the most effective scrutiny carried out in recent years had been undertaken in 'Task and Finish' Groups, which ensured Member input at each stage of a review, with Members reporting recommendations to the Committee rather than officers. The Committee therefore agreed that, where practical, the majority of its reviews would take place in such Task and Finish Groups.

Suggestions for Scrutiny

- 3.5 Following the agreement to have a rolling work programme for the remainder of 2011/2012, five suggestions for scrutiny reviews were discussed by the Committee. These appeared as Appendices B to F on Report C49, and all five were added to the work programme. Discussion took place on the terms of reference for these reviews, some of which the Committee felt would need to change, and the first meeting of each Task and Finish Group would therefore need to clarify the Terms of Reference of each review. Brief details of these reviews are as follows:-

3.5.1

| Title of review | Brief description | Members appointed | Timescales |
|--|--|--|--|
| Litter collection and litter bin distribution in the Borough (Appendix B to Report C49) | Frequency of emptying; locations; sizes; reducing litter dropped | Councillors Buckle, French, P Hopfensperger, Nettleton, Thorndyke and Mrs Warby | To report back in November 2011 |
| Conservation Area Policy (Appendix C to Report C49) | Application of the policy before and after Article 4 directions; restoration of alterations; awareness raising | Councillors P Hopfensperger, Houlder, Marks, Nettleton, Rout and F J Warby | To report back in November 2011 |
| Universal coverage of Broadband in St Edmundsbury (Appendix D to Report C49) | Amended scope – an investigation into broadband and infrastructure availability across the Borough; identify where the problems are; minimum standards | Councillors French, Mrs Rushbrook, Springett (pending advice on potential prejudicial interest, in which case he will be replaced by Councillor Buckle) and Thorndyke. | To commence at the end of 2011, following the results of the second BDUK bid |
| Commitment to and expectations of the new Health Agenda (Appendix E to Report C49) | The health and wellbeing powers and responsibilities of the Council under expected legislation; minimise health inequalities | Councillors Beckwith, Ms Byrne and Mrs P A Warby | To commence following the introduction of the Act, which will clarify the Council's responsibilities |
| Review of blue badge holder parking (Appendix F to Report C49) | Investigate whether blue badge holders should pay for parking in the Council's off-street car parks | Councillors Houlder, Rout and Springett | To report back in October 2011 |

4. Leisure Facilities Asset Management Plan

- 4.1 The Committee considered Report C51, which set the scene for a major piece of Asset Management Plan (AMP) work to be carried out over the Summer to advise specifically on the leisure facilities stock, identify revenue and capital requirements and introduce options for consideration including community asset transfer, disposal or retention. The Committee had been asked by the Cabinet to scrutinise this report before it is presented to Cabinet in October 2011.
- 4.2 The report explained the process which would be followed to develop a new AMP for leisure facilities in the Borough, and the Committee was asked to give a steer to the Cabinet and officers at the outset of the review.

4.3 Part of this review was the review of playgrounds in St Edmundsbury which was being run by the Committee. It was agreed that the final report on the Leisure Facilities AMP would be scrutinised by that Task and Finish Group before being brought to the Committee's meeting on 12 October 2011.

5. Quarter 1 Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications

5.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 requires that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis. In June 2010 it was agreed that this requirement should be fulfilled by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.2 The Monitoring Officer advised that no authorisations for Directed Surveillance were given in Quarter 1 of 2011/2012. One authorisation for access to communications data (mobile phone account) was granted via the National Anti-Fraud Network.

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