



Cabinet **23 November 2011**

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 16 November 2011

1. Cabinet Forward Plan

- 1.1 The Committee considered the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period November 2011 to February 2012, but did not request any further information or involvement in any of the expected decisions on this occasion.

2. 2011/2012 Work Programme: Update

- 2.1 The Committee reviewed the current position of its work programme for 2011/2012 and noted the items which were expected at the next meeting of the Committee on 11 January 2012.

- 2.2 One Task and Finish Group had brought its recommendations to this meeting of the Committee. Further Groups were ongoing, and others in the pipeline, as follows:-

(a) Review of Blue Badge Holder Parking

The recommendations from this Task and Finish Group can be found on a separate report on this Cabinet agenda (Report C225. Agenda item 9).

(b) Licensing, planning and enforcement of street signage

A "suggestion for scrutiny" form to commence this review was appended to the agenda, following a request at the previous meeting. Councillors French, P Hopfensperger, Marks and Nettleton were appointed to the Task and Finish Group, plus Councillor Mrs Stamp following a request from the Licensing and Regulatory Committee. The Development Control Committee will be asked to nominate a Member to this Task and Finish Group at its meeting on 1 December 2011.

(c) Universal coverage of Broadband in St Edmundsbury

The work of this Group is due to commence before the end of the year.

(d) Litter collection and litter/dog bin distribution and Conservation Area Policy

The work of these Groups is continuing into the New Year.

(e) Commitment to and expectations of the new Health Agenda.

The Group will commence work in the New Year.

2.3 In addition, Councillor Mrs Levack had submitted two "suggestion for scrutiny" forms to the Committee:

(a) Review of the continuing success of the Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre

(i) Councillor Mrs Levack requested a Task and Finish Group be set up to, firstly, observe this year's event, and then to work with officers on the future direction of the Fayre. The aim of the review would be to ensure that the Fayre continues to benefit the town and visitors.

(ii) The review was accepted by the Committee, and Councillors , Buckle, P Hopfensperger, Mrs Levack, Rout and Mrs P Warby were appointed to the Task and Finish Group. After the meeting a sixth Member, Councillor Springett, was nominated by the Chairman.

(b) The variable quality of paving in Bury St Edmunds Town Centre

(i) Again, a Task and Finish Group was requested by Councillor Mrs Levack to investigate how the situation came about that some of the paving in the town is cracked and appears inappropriate for the area, to ensure that in future the specification of paving in the town centre is appropriate for the expected use of any area, and to look at the possibility of repairing any damaged paving.

(ii) This review was also accepted by the Committee, and Councillors French, Mrs Levack, Oliver, Simner, Thorndyke and F Warby were appointed to the Task and Finish Group.

**3. Interim report from Task and Finish Group:
Litter collection and litter/dog bin distribution in the Borough**

3.1 The above Task and Finish Group has met twice. Its Members have been given an overview of cleansing in St Edmundsbury, as well as the scope and progress of the Joint Cleansing Review with Forest Heath District Council. Routing software was being used to re-design cleansing routes, and the next task was to address litter and dog bin issues. The Task and Finish Group wanted to concentrate on this area of work, in line with the suggested scope of its investigation.

3.2 A number of issues regarding dog and litter bins have been discussed by the Group, together with a number of possible solutions to address these issues. Some of these solutions were operational in nature and would be implemented forthwith. Others may require policy revisions, which would need to be approved by the West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee.

3.3 The Task and Finish Group will meet again early in 2012 to progress operational changes and review any emerging policy changes.

**4. Interim report from the Task and Finish Group:
Article 4 Directions**

- 4.1 This Task and Finish Group is resurveying/updating the existing Article 4 Directions within the Bury St Edmunds Town Centre and Victoria Street Conservation Areas, and introducing ways of promoting them to owners and residents to raise their awareness of the Article 4 Directions.
- 4.2 Members are considering whether the Council should continue with the selective method of making Directions, or to change to a blanket approach covering a whole conservation area. A survey of all properties within the two Conservation Areas not currently covered by an Article 4 Direction has been undertaken, and this information will be used to assess the potential increase in planning applications which could result if the protection was extended.
- 4.3 Letters and information leaflets have been sent to owners/occupiers, window companies have been reminded of the requirements of Article 4 Directions, and local estate agents, lettings agents and solicitors reminded to make owners, prospective purchasers and tenants aware of Article 4 Directions.
- 4.4 The next steps for the Task and Finish Group will be to arrange drop-in sessions for owners/occupiers in the Conservation Areas, assessment of the implications of microgeneration permitted development rights within Conservation Areas, and review of the boundaries of the Town Centre and Victoria Street Conservation Areas.

Contacts:

David Nettleton, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, (01284-702212)
Ian Houlder, Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, (01284-810074)
Adriana Stapleton, Scrutiny Manager, (01284-757613)

W:\Democratic WP Services\Committee\Reports\Cabinet\2011\11.11.23\C221 Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 16 November 2011.doc