

**ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 28 March 2012 at 5.00 pm  
in the Conference Chamber West (F1R09), West Suffolk House, Western Way,  
Bury St Edmunds**

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs S J Mildmay-White (Deputy Leader of the Council)  
(in the Chair)  
Councillors Clements, Everitt, Mrs Gower and Ray

BY INVITATION: Councillors Nettleton (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee), Thorndyke (Chairman of the Central Safety and  
Rural Area Working Parties) and Cox

**95. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Griffiths and Stevens.

*(At this point, the Chairman read out the protocol for speaking at meetings of the Cabinet, as contained in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution, to remind all those present at the meeting of the procedure to be followed should non-Members of the Cabinet wish to speak during Cabinet meetings.)*

**96. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 1 February and 15 February 2012 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

**97. Declarations of Interests**

Members' declarations of interests are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

**98. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 29 February 2012**  
***Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolio Holders***

The Cabinet received and noted Report C411 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 February 2012:-

- (1) Update on the impact of the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership;
- (2) Corporate Plan 2012-2016;
- (3) Tenancy Strategy;
- (4) Article 4 Direction Task and Finish Group – Progress Report;
- (5) Footways in St Edmundsbury;
- (6) Cabinet Forward Plan – March to June 2012; and
- (7) Work Programme – Update.

Councillor Nettleton, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

## **99. Corporate Plan 2012-2016**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/10 Cabinet Members: All Portfolio Holders***

The Cabinet considered Report C412 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the Corporate Plan 2012-2016.

The Council had adopted its first Corporate Plan in 2003. Whilst the Plan had been subject to an annual review, the same four corporate priorities had remained in place. Following the Borough Council's elections in May 2011, it was identified that a review of the Corporate Plan and its priorities was necessary due to a number of factors, not least because of the Council's more limited budget, increased focus on localism and the ending of the major capital programme.

Work had been undertaken to develop a new Corporate Plan and as part of the consultation exercise, a draft had been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 February 2012 and its suggestions had been incorporated into the draft. Following adoption of the Corporate Plan 2012-2016, it would be subject to an annual review, which would report on progress made against the priorities, commitments and actions with amendments to the Plan being proposed as necessary. This progress would be measured against 'trackers' detailed in the Action Plan, which was attached as Appendix A to the Corporate Plan.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that extensive consultation had been undertaken to produce and develop the Corporate Plan and how it integrated with Vision 2031.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, proposed an amendment to the third bullet point contained under Priority 1 (a), on page 9 and also where referenced in Appendix A to the Plan so that it read, *'work with private landlords to offer affordable accommodation and provide more homes for homeless families'*.



### ***RECOMMENDED:- That***

- (1) *the Corporate Plan 2012-2016, as contained in Appendix A to Report C412, as amended with the following, be adopted:-***

***the third bullet point under Priority 1(a) on page 9 and also where referenced in Appendix A to the Plan, be amended to read, 'work with private landlords to offer affordable accommodation and provide more homes for homeless families'; and***

- (2) *the Policy, Performance and Customer Service Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, be authorised to make any minor typographic, factual, spelling and grammatical changes to the Plan, as required.***

## **100. Tenancy Strategy**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/08 Cabinet Member: Cllr Anne Gower***

*(Councillor Cox declared a personal interest as a tenant of the Havebury Housing Partnership and remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.)*

The Cabinet considered Report C413 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the Tenancy Strategy.

The Localism Act 2011 required, as part of the social housing tenure reforms, that all local authorities prepared and published a Tenancy Strategy setting out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district were to 'have regard' in formulating their own tenancy policies.

Having worked with key registered provider partners and following an extensive consultation exercise, a draft Tenancy Strategy had been produced for adoption. As part of the consultation exercise, the draft had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 February 2012 and its suggestions had been incorporated into the Strategy.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health commended the Housing Officers and the input provided by the Member Working Group for the extensive work undertaken to produce the Strategy.



**RECOMMENDED:- That**

- (1) the Tenancy Strategy, as contained in Appendix A to Report C413, be adopted; and**
- (2) the Head of Environmental Health and Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, be authorised to make any minor typographic, factual, spelling and grammatical changes to the document provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Strategy.**

*(Councillors Cox and Nettleton both left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)*

**101. Recommendations from the Joint Staff Consultative Working Party:  
10 February 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/02 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray***

The Cabinet considered Report C414 (previously circulated) which sought formal approval of the Apprenticeship Agreement between UNISON and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

The Apprenticeship Agreement would clearly define the Council's commitment to apprenticeships, and ensure a consistent and supportive approach to employing apprentices. A draft of the Apprenticeship Agreement had been attached as Appendix A to Report C347.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for training, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet and in response to a question, Members were informed that Forest Heath District Council had also signed the Agreement with UNISON.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the Apprenticeship Agreement, as contained in Appendix A of Report C347, be formally approved by UNISON and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

**102. Report from the Shared Offices Joint Committee (formerly West Suffolk House Joint Committee): 16 March 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/03 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths***

The Cabinet received and noted Report C415 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Shared Offices Joint Committee on 16 March 2012:-

- (1) Haverhill Council Offices: Operating Agreement;
- (2) Haverhill Council Offices: Proposals for External and Internal Signs;
- (3) Report of the West Suffolk House Building Manager; and
- (4) Items of Interest.

A discussion was held on the signage currently displayed on the external fascia of the Council Offices located in Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill. Members noted that a number of the 'signs' were actually artwork produced by local children, which had previously been displayed on the safety hoardings erected around the Tesco site while it was under construction. It was acknowledged that the severely weathered pictures should be permanently removed; however, it was hoped that others could be re-displayed in an appropriate position as they had previously received positive comments from the local community. Refurbishment of the Haverhill Council Offices was anticipated to be completed in July 2012.

**103. Recommendations from the Shared Services Steering Group: 24 February 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/04 Cabinet Members: Cllr John Griffiths and David Ray***

The Cabinet considered Report C416 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Shared Services Steering Group held on 24 February 2012.

On 24 February 2012 the Shared Services Steering Group considered the following items:-

- (1) Shared Services Project Update;
- (2) Planning Shared Service – Timeline and Process;
- (3) Environmental Health and Housing Shared Service Business Cases;
- (4) Customer Access Project Update;
- (5) Internal Audit Shared Service – Business Case;
- (6) Shared Property Service – Review of Business Case;
- (7) Suffolk County Council Future Back Office Requirements (FBOR) Project; and
- (8) Shared Services Project Board: Notes.

Councillor Ray, Vice Chairman of the Steering Group informed the Cabinet that positive developments were currently being made regarding progressing the shared service agenda. The newly appointed Joint Chief Executive would begin on 10 April 2012 and the shared Communications Service would commence from 1 April 2012. The Business Cases for a shared Internal Audit Service and Property Service had both recently been approved by Forest Heath District Council's full Council and approval was now sought for these Business Cases from the Borough Council at this Cabinet meeting.

Discussions were held on each of the recommendations. Members particularly supported the recommendation to defer the transformational change relating to the Environmental Health and Housing Services as it was considered appropriate to progress this phase alongside other services as part of the customer access work.

RESOLVED:- That

**(a) Planning Shared Service: Timeline and Process**

The Planning Shared Service timeline and consultative process, as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 to Report SSG12/007, be approved.

**(b) Environmental Health and Housing Shared Service Business Cases**

The production of first business cases for each Environmental Health and Housing Service, outlining the transitional structures and early savings ahead of full transformational change, as detailed in Report SSSG12/008, be supported.

**(c) Customer Access Project Update**

(1) The proposed Customer Access Model, as detailed in Appendix 3 to Report SSG12/009, to be used to underpin the development of a new joint Customer Access Strategy, be adopted;

(2) the Customer Access Project Group undertake the following work to inform the development of the Strategy:-

(a) to commission a half day Ignite-run Customer Journey Workshop for Members from both Councils;

(b) to explore best practice approaches adopted by other councils;

(c) the proposed ICT solutions for the delivery of customer access across both Councils be presented to the Shared Services Steering Group in June 2012; and

(d) to develop a Customer Access Strategy for consideration by the Shared Services Steering Group in April 2012.

**(d) Internal Audit Shared Services: Full Business Case**

The full Business Case for a shared Internal Audit Service for Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, as contained in the Exempt Appendix to Report SSG12/010, be approved.

**(e) Shared Property Service: Review of Business Case**

The establishment of a shared Property Service Team between Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, as detailed in the full Business Case (Exempt Appendix 1 to Report SSG12/011) and reviewed as detailed in the Summary of History and Changes (Exempt Appendix 2); Proposed 2011/2012 Costs and Savings (January 2012, Version 2) - Exempt Appendix 3) and a revised Staffing Structure (Exempt Appendix 4), be approved.

#### **104. Administrative Arrangements for the ONE Haverhill Community Grant Fund**

**Forward Plan Reference:** Apr12/13 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr Anne Gower

*(Councillor Mrs Gower declared a personal interest as the Chairman of the ONE Haverhill Board and remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.)*

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which sought approval for regularising the situation regarding the transfer of funding relating to the newly established ONE Haverhill Community Grand Fund to a third party managing agent. Paper C417 (previously circulated) contained the criteria applicants must meet to apply for grants offered by the ONE Haverhill Board.

Through the budget setting process, Cabinet and Council had accepted the recommendations of the Grant Working Party of 6 December 2011 in relation to the establishment of a Community Grant Fund for Haverhill. As outlined in Report C253, £50,000 would be allocated per annum to the fund and would operate from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2016 and would be administered by the ONE Haverhill Board.

As the transfer of the funding to a third party managing agent, which for 2012/2013 would be Haverhill Town Council, had not been addressed in Report C253, it was suggested that the situation be regularised through granting the necessary delegated authority to officers. This would enable the release of sufficient funds to the 'banker' at appropriate times in accordance with the instructions of the ONE Haverhill Board.

As the fund would run for four years, an amendment to the second recommendation was proposed to delete reference to '2012/2013' so that it read *'for the life of the funding, and within the budgetary allocation for **that particular year...**'*. This amendment was accepted by the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:- That

- (1) The guidelines and criteria for the ONE Haverhill Community Grants Fund, as set out in Paper C417, be endorsed; and
- (2) for the life of the funding, and within the budgetary allocation for that particular year, the Corporate Director for Community Services and/or the Chief Finance Officer, be authorised to make the necessary transfers of funds to any body the ONE Haverhill Board nominates to manage and/or act as banker for the Haverhill Community Grants Fund, at the intervals specified by the ONE Haverhill Board.

#### **105. Recommendations from the Central Safety Working Party: 26 March 2012**

**Forward Plan Reference:** Apr12/09 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report C418 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Central Safety Working Party held on 26 March 2012.

On 26 March 2012, the Central Safety Working Party considered the following items:-

- (1) Minutes: Joint Health and Safety Group;
- (2) Incidents involving Employees and Incidents involving Members of the Public;
- (3) Joint Health and Safety Policy: New Instruction on Event Safety;

- (4) Terms of Reference: West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel;
- (5) Health and Safety Training; and
- (6) Health and Safety News.

The Cabinet noted that in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Section C(a) in Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, of the Council's Constitution, the Chief Executive had exercised his urgency powers by appointing John Smithson, Parks Development Manager, as a temporary substitute for Damien Parker, Parks Manager, to attend as an employee representative at the above meeting of the Central Safety Working Party, in order that the employees' side was fully represented.

Councillor Thorndyke, Chairman of the Central Safety Working Party, informed the Cabinet that a new Instruction relating to Event Safety had been produced for incorporation into the Joint Health and Safety Policy. In addition, he explained that in accordance with the Cabinet's previous decision to explore the merging of the Borough Council's Central Safety Working Party with the equivalent body at Forest Heath District Council (FHDC), the Working Party had supported the formation of a West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel.



**RECOMMENDED:-**

***That the new Instruction 32 relating to Event Safety, as detailed in Appendix A to Report C409, be incorporated into the Joint Health and Safety Policy.***

RESOLVED:- That

**Terms of Reference: West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel**

Subject to the agreement of the appropriate decision making body at Forest Heath District Council:-

- (1) a West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel be formed with Forest Heath District Council based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) detailed in Report C410, as amended to delete reference to 'The employee representative elected to be Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall act as Secretary to the employees' side for the agreeing of minutes', from Section 2.4 of the proposed ToR;
- (2) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to appoint Councillors to the West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel on the nomination of Group Leaders and staff be nominated by the Joint Health and Safety Group; and
- (3) the Borough Council's Central Safety Working Party be disbanded on the formation of the new West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel.

**106. Recommendations from the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Panel:  
16 February 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/11 Cabinet Member: Cllr Robert Everitt***

The Cabinet considered Report C419 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel on 16 February 2012.

On 16 February 2012 the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel considered the following items:-

- (1) Terms of Reference: West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel;
- (2) Business Continuity;
- (3) Community Preparedness;
- (4) Emergency Planning and Responses; and
- (5) Joint Emergency Planning Unit Performance and Capability Assessment.

In response to a question, Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Emergency Planning informed the Cabinet that Parish Clerks would be informed of how to obtain a Local Emergency Kit for their Parish Council and the issue would also be raised at the forthcoming Parish Conference on 23 April 2012.

RESOLVED:- That

**(a) Terms of Reference: West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel**

The Terms of Reference detailed in Report C356 be approved, subject to Paragraph 6, frequency of meetings to include 'every 6 months or as appropriate'.

**(b) Community Preparedness**

Members of both Councils promote the opportunity for communities to obtain the Local Emergency Kit by raising awareness of it at Town/Parish Council meetings attended by them with a view to encouraging greater participation.

**107. Recommendations from the Sustainable Development Working Party:  
13 March 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/05 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Terry Clements  
and Peter Stevens***

*(Councillor Mrs Gower declared a personal interest as the Suffolk County Councillor for Haverhill East and Kedington Division in respect of the Design Briefs for the redevelopment of Stourmead Close, Kedington, and land at Westfield Primary School, Haverhill and remained in the meeting for the consideration of these items.)*

The Cabinet considered Report C420 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party held on 13 March 2012.

On 13 March 2012 the Sustainable Development Working Party considered the following items:-

- (1) Achieving Energy Improvements in St Edmundsbury;
- (2) Design Brief for Redevelopment of Stourmead Close, Kedington; and
- (3) Design Brief for Redevelopment of Westfield Primary School, Haverhill.

In the absence of Councillor Stevens, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste Management, Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, drew the Cabinet's attention to issues relating to achieving energy improvements in the Borough as a result of new powers for local authorities contained in the Energy Act 2011. He also explained the remit of the Government's new 'Green Deal' initiative, whereby the cost of energy efficiency improvements could be funded by a loan, which would be repaid by a charge on the consumers' electricity bill on the basis that the cost did not exceed the energy savings. There would also be additional subsidies direct from



energy suppliers for more expensive measures to assist vulnerable households. The Working Party had considered it appropriate to work with partners to run a joint time limited domestic insulation campaign across Suffolk whilst investigating various options to deliver the Green Deal. This would ensure best value for the Council, its residents and local businesses. The Cabinet placed emphasis upon promoting the current campaign and any future programmes as much as possible.

Councillor Clements then expressed his support for the two Design Briefs in respect of the redevelopment of Stourmead Close, Kedington, and also of land at Westfield Primary School, Haverhill, both of which proposed suitable development schemes in each location. Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Environmental Health and Licensing, also welcomed the Design Briefs and made particular reference to the proposed provision of much needed affordable housing in both these areas.



**RECOMMENDED:- That**

- (a) **Design Brief for Redevelopment of Stourmead Close, Kedington**

*The Design Brief for the development of the land at Stourmead Close, Kedington, as contained in Appendix A to Report C391, be adopted as non-statutory guidance for the determination of future planning applications.*

- (b) **Design Brief for Redevelopment of Westfield Primary School, Haverhill**

*The Design Brief for the development of the land at Westfield Primary School, Manor Road, Haverhill, as contained in Appendix A to Report C392, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance for the determination of future planning applications.*

RESOLVED:- That

**Achieving Energy Improvements in St Edmundsbury**

The Council:-

- (1) continues to work with its local authority partners to run an enhanced time-limited domestic insulation campaign across Suffolk making use of all channels of media, both mass and targeted, and working with selected insulation installers which can access funding; and
- (2) investigate the various options to deliver the Green Deal utilising the experience of existing energy and climate-related programmes in Suffolk and beyond to deliver best value for the Council, its residents and local businesses.

**108. Recommendations from the Rural Area Working Party: 14 March 2012**

***Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/06 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths***

The Cabinet considered Report C421 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the Rural Area Working Party held on 14 March 2012.

On 14 March 2012 the Rural Area Working Party considered the following items:-

- (1) Review of Year One of the current Rural Action Plan;
- (2) Rural Profiling Project; and
- (3) Rural Area Working Party Work Programme.

Councillor Thorndyke, Chairman of the Rural Area Working Party, made reference to the final paragraph of Report C421, which asked if it would be appropriate for an elected Member to serve on the Pilot Project Steering Group and whether this Member should be selected from the Ward being profiled. In response to this suggestion, the Cabinet considered that whilst local knowledge and a genuine interest in the pilot would be valued, (and a local Member should indeed be involved), an elected Member not associated with the Ward being profiled should also be appointed in order to oversee the whole profiling project and provide an impartial opinion.

Members supported the suggestion of selecting Ixworth and surrounding villages as a suitable area to undertake the pilot project.

RESOLVED:- That

### **Rural Profiling Project**

- (1) The draft project brief, as contained in Appendix A to Report C394, be approved subject to the amendment of Section 5.3 of the first bullet point in the second paragraph to read 'focus groups to help develop understanding of aspirations and fit with national/local policies'; and
- (2) agreement be given for a pilot scheme to be implemented which will be funded from the £10,000 already approved for carrying out housing needs survey work.

### **109. Reports from the West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee: 27 January 2012 and 23 March 2012**

*Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/07 Cabinet Member: Cllr Peter Stevens*

The Cabinet received and noted Reports C422 and C423 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of items discussed by the West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee at meetings on 27 January 2012 and 23 March 2012 respectively.

On 27 January 2012 the West Suffolk Waste and Street Scene Services Joint Committee considered the following items:-

- (1) Procurement of Waste Transfer and Recycling Services;
- (2) Vehicle Procurement Programme; and
- (3) Options for Diverting Organic Waste.

On 23 March 2012 the Joint Committee considered the following items:-

- (1) Progress on Delivering the 2011/2012 Joint Waste Service Plan and Review of Performance;
- (2) Joint Service Plan 2012/2013;
- (3) Amending the Powers of Local Authorities Regarding Presentation of Waste for Collection: Response to Government's Consultation;
- (4) Proposed Improvements for the Provision of Litter and Dog Bins;
- (5) Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP) Textiles Project; and
- (6) Suffolk Waste Partnership discussions to Agree Future Cost and Governance Arrangements: Update.

Councillor Ray, Member of the Joint Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

During the discussion, the Cabinet was informed that:-

- (a) the current rotation of fortnightly three-bin collections would continue; however, investigations were currently being undertaken into options for the handling of food waste; and
- (b) a consistent approach was being developed for the provision and emptying of litter and dog bins. In particular, where charges were currently made to Parish and Town Councils for the emptying of litter and dog bins, that these charges would be standardised at the consistent rate of £2.65 per empty from 1 April 2013, and increased annually in line with inflation thereafter.

**110. Borough Council Owned Property Accessible to the Public: Inspection and Maintenance Management**

*Forward Plan Reference: Apr12/12 Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements*

The Cabinet considered Paper C424 (previously circulated) which contained the Inspection and Maintenance Management document relating to the inspection of Borough Council owned property accessible to the public.

Following the cessation of the Highway Agency Agreement with Suffolk County Council (SCC) in April 2011, officers had continued to inspect car parks, footways and other areas owned by St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) in order to identify defects and ensure there were no dangers to members of the public through trip hazards.

Inspections, together with frequencies and response times for correcting defects to the above had mirrored those previously set by SCC; however, it was important that standards were set by this Council for reviewing its own assets. Accordingly, maintenance and intervention criteria relating to the inspection of Borough Council owned property accessible to the public had been incorporated into a draft Inspection and Maintenance Management document for adoption.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, informed the Cabinet that it was necessary to ensure the relevant documentation was in place now that the Highway Agency Agreement with SCC had ceased.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Haverhill, wished it to be placed on record that she commended the work of SEBC officers in ensuring the defects identified with the recently refurbished Haverhill Bus Station had been rectified with SCC's Highways Officers.

RESOLVED:-

That the Inspection and Maintenance Management document relating to the inspection of Borough Council owned property accessible to the public, as contained in Paper C424, be approved.

### **111. Revenues Collection Performance and Write-offs**

*Forward Plan Reference: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray*

The Cabinet considered Report C425 (previously circulated) which provided the collection data in respect of Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates and sought approval for the write-off of debts as contained in the exempt appendices.

The Revenues Section collected outstanding debts in accordance with either statutory guidelines or Council agreed procedures. When all these procedures had been exhausted the outstanding debt was written off using the delegated authority of the Chief Finance Officer, for debts up to £1,500, or by Cabinet, for debts over £1,500. The specific reasons for recommending each write-off were included in Exempt Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, informed the Cabinet that the overall collection rates detailed in Section 8.4 continued to be ahead of target. As at 29 February 2012, collection rates were 97.7% against a target of 97.54%. Business rates collection was 97.52% against a target of 97.4%, which was worth acknowledging in the current economic climate.

RESOLVED:-

That the write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report C425, be approved as follows:-

Exempt Appendix 1: 6 accounts for Council Tax totalling £18,319.34;

Exempt Appendix 2: 12 accounts for Business Rates totalling £144,655.15; and

Exempt Appendix 3: 3 Housing Benefit overpayments totalling £5,664.33.

The meeting concluded at 6.21 pm

**CHAIRMAN**