



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# D70

## **Cabinet** **25 July 2012**

### **Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Final Report of the Task and Finish Group: The Variable Quality of Paving in Bury St Edmunds Town Centre (Aug12/12)**

1. This review was agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 16 November 2011 following a request from Councillor Mrs Levack as *'an investigation into the variable quality of paving in Bury St Edmunds Town Centre; to identify how this situation came about, and to ensure that in future the specification of paving in Bury St Edmunds Town Centre is appropriate for the expected use of any particular area of paving; and to look at the possibility of repairing/replacing any damaged paving'*.
2. The Committee considered the report and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, which had been formulated at a meeting and site visit held on 21 February 2012. The report had been further updated following the request of the Committee on 18 April 2012 to put together a list of areas of poor areas of paving across the Borough to accompany the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.
3. The report to Members set out the background to the review, and the lines of enquiry followed by Members during their site visit and meeting with Suffolk County Council's Area Highway Manager (West) in February 2012. Taking all the information gathered into account, the Task and Finish Group had accepted that unless the paving in the areas concerned deteriorated to an extent whereby it was more economic to repair the entire stretch of paving than to continue with running repairs, wholesale replacement of the slabs was unlikely. Members further accepted that the SCC budget covered the whole of the county, and that the area of paving of concern in the centre of Bury St Edmunds was not necessarily a high priority compared to other areas of footway.
4. Where the Borough Council was concerned, the report suggested that it should be accepted that Bury St Edmunds was growing, and that the Town Centre needed to both be attractive and able to accommodate new developments.
5. The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, which were agreed by the Committee, are therefore aspirational in nature. Firstly, for information, the Committee will be sending the following recommendations to SCC, that:-

- (a) when investing capital in paving areas of Bury St Edmunds Town Centre, good quality paving should always be prioritised based on life time costings, which does not need the high levels of ongoing maintenance of the current paving in some areas of the town;
  - (b) when choosing materials, consideration be given to the significance of Bury St Edmunds's "historic town" status;
  - (c) in line with the County Council's Corporate Priority to *'Drive Suffolk's Economic Development'*, if and when budgets become available, whether from the County Council, Europe, Community Infrastructure Levy, lottery funding etc, development of historic town centres be considered as a priority for such funding; and
  - (d) the list of areas of poor paving in St Edmundsbury, attached as Appendix A to Report D53, be taken into consideration when prioritising areas of paving for repair or improvement.
6. Turning to issues under the control of the Borough Council, the Committee **RECOMMENDS that:-**
- (a) **contributions towards maintaining and developing Bury St Edmunds Town Centre be added to the list of desirable contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy for new developments; and**
  - (b) **the Town Centre Masterplan element of the Council's Vision 2031 document include an aspiration to invest in a high quality, low maintenance public realm.**

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