



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

D71

Cabinet 25 July 2012

Cabinet Annual Report 2011/2012 (Aug12/10)

1. Summary and reason for recommendation

- 1.1 The Constitution requires that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives reports from the Leader of the Council or a 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.
- 1.2 On 6 June 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was presented with the report by the Leader of the Council. He provided an overview of the progress made in 2011/2012 and comprehensively responded to questions raised. The Committee had noted that unlike previous years, the Annual Report does not set out the Cabinet's plans for the next year, as these are now covered under the new Corporate Plan 2012-2016.
- 1.3 The Annual Report also sets out the Cabinet's Portfolio Holders and their respective responsibilities for 2012/2013.
- 1.4 When considering the report on 6 June 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee broadly supported it and suggested some textual amendments, which have been incorporated. Members are invited to discuss and approve the Cabinet's Annual Report for 2011/2012, attached as Appendix A to the report.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet's Annual Report 2011/2012, as contained in Appendix A to Report D71, be approved.

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3. Corporate Objectives
3.1 (a) <i>'Working together for an efficient Council'</i>
4. Key Issues
4.1 The Annual Report 2011/2012 is a retrospective analysis of the Cabinet's achievements against its commitments detailed in the Corporate Plan 2011/2012. Further details are provided in the Annual Report attached as Appendix A.
5. Other Options considered
5.1 Not applicable.
6. Community Impact
6.1 Community impact is covered within the Annual Report.
7. Consultation <i>(refer to the Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy)</i>
7.1 The Annual Report is a summary of achievements against Cabinet Commitments. Consultation has been undertaken with residents, businesses, staff, councillors and other stakeholders in various areas to achieve some of the commitments outlined in the Annual Report.
8. Resource implications <i>(including asset management implications)</i>
8.1 Production of the Annual Report has been undertaken within existing resources.
9. Risk/Opportunity Assessment <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>
9.1 Not applicable.
10. Legal or policy implications
10.1 From 2012/2013, progress of the Cabinet will be measured against the priorities in the new recently adopted Corporate Plan. The Annual Report will therefore, no longer be presented in this format.

Wards affected	All
Background Papers	None

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St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Report
2011/12

June 2012

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Foreword

St Edmundsbury, like almost every public and private sector organisation in the country - and indeed most people living and working in our borough - continues to face financial challenges.

Within this climate, and while freezing Council tax yet again, St Edmundsbury has striven to continue to deliver the services our residents and businesses expect, and deserve. This annual report sets out what we promised to do during 2011/12 and the progress we have made against each of our commitments. Despite the significant cut in our Government grant, I believe we have achieved a tremendous amount.

Just a couple of small examples. We have supported local businesses paying invoices quickly and making sure they are aware of the rates relief they may be able to claim. We have worked with others to provide a range of community activities and events. And in the Southgate area local people are now running their own community centre instead of the council – real localism in action. Small examples perhaps - amongst many - but they can have big impacts.

Over and above this, we have saved £1.42 million from our budget for 2011/12. We have done this in a variety of ways, including through sharing services with Forest Heath District Council. We are still in the early days of this partnership – and we hope to make significant savings, while maintaining the quality of our services, in the coming years as a result of it – but we have made a good start in a number of areas, including the appointment of a Joint Chief Executive.

This is the last time we will present our annual report in this format because from next year we will measure our progress against the priorities set out in our Corporate Plan. I hope you find it an interesting read, and look forward to reporting further progress next year.

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

Cllr John Griffiths, Leader of St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Review of 2011/2012 Cabinet Commitments

1. Continue to improve efficiency and value for money

Key activities for 2011/12

- Reduce costs and explore opportunities to increase income, including through sharing services with Forest Heath District Council.
 - Set a sustainable and affordable level of Council Tax which will enable us to prioritise frontline services.
 - Improve performance and service delivery through maintaining a strong learning culture among staff and councillors.
-

Why was this a priority in 2011/12

Securing efficiencies and providing value for money has been a priority for a number of years. Despite the fact that we have already made significant savings, a tough financial settlement from central government meant that we had to work harder than ever to balance our budget. Maintaining a focus on efficiency is essential and will remain so over the next few years.

Progress in 2011/12

Reduce costs and explore opportunities to increase income, including through sharing services with Forest Heath District Council

Despite public sector funding cuts and the challenges this places on us, we delivered savings of £1.42 million in 2011/12. In October 2011, both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury formally agreed to deliver joint services and share a staffing structure. Of the £1.42 million savings delivered in 2011/12 £396,000 related to shared services savings. In addition, income for 2011/12 was increased by a further £260,000.

In August and September we sought the views of residents about a range of potential options relating to savings and income generation. A questionnaire was made available via our website and posted to 2,000 households across the borough. We also held focus groups to gauge opinion on our budget ideas. The results of this consultation exercise supported councillors to make decisions about the budget.

In partnership with Forest Heath we have undertaken a comprehensive review of our cleansing routes and litter picking rounds. One significant outcome has been the sharing of a mechanical street sweeper, saving £40,000 per annum, in addition to overtime and staff savings.

Also in partnership with Forest Heath we undertook a vehicle procurement programme which will see an investment in our combined fleet of over £2 million. The purchasing of these vehicles should deliver savings to both organisations as they will provide much greater efficiencies in comparison to our current arrangements as the fleet is standardised and modernised with newer, more efficient vehicles. The vehicles include a 7.5 tonne box van, 13 refuse collection vehicles and three road sweepers.

Set a sustainable and affordable level of Council Tax which will enable us to prioritise frontline services

Following the government's offer of a subsidy, we have been able to freeze council tax. This means that we have frozen the level of council tax for three out of the last four years.

Improve performance and service delivery through maintaining a strong learning culture among staff and councillors

staff: We continue to ensure that our staff receive the necessary training and personal development to enable them to contribute effectively during a period of significant change and uncertainty. We have a strong learning culture and all staff are encouraged to update their skills to ensure that we continue to provide effective services. Our Human Resources team continues to perform well with decreasing budgets and a high workload which is focussed on transforming services as we move to a shared staff structure with Forest Heath District Council.

councillors: This was an important year for Member Development as we worked towards re-gaining Member Development Charter status. This involved meeting a number of criteria set down by the Charter Assessors. The criteria included updating our Member Development Policy, closer monitoring of expenditure, achieving a minimum 60% return of Training Needs Analysis (TNA) forms and adopting a training programme based on both corporate, national, legislative and partnership priorities and those needs identified in the TNA. We were delighted that all this work resulted in the council being re-awarded Member Development Charter status in October 2011.

Following the elections in 2011 a programme of induction activities for new and re-elected councillors was launched. By the end of April 2012 over 30 development opportunities were made available to councillors, all of which were offered following consideration of TNA forms. We can therefore be confident that the training offered this year has reflected Members' own assessment of their training needs.



2. Work with our communities to shape the future development of the borough and its relationship with the wider area

Key activities for 2011/12

- Involve residents and businesses in building a future through Vision 2031 which balances sustainable housing and business growth with protecting the character of the rural areas, Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds.
- Maximise the delivery of affordable housing throughout the borough.
- Act, and encourage others to act, to design services which take climate change and environmental challenges into account.

Why was this a priority in 2011/12?

As a borough council we recognise that we have significant influence over our residents' quality of life and can shape the environment of those working in, and visiting, our area. Our work this year has focused on developing masterplans for the borough, which are known as Vision 2031, which will help shape our area over the next 20 years. Supporting people to secure suitable housing remains a challenge but we have continued to find innovative ways of working in partnership with others to meet this challenge.

Progress in 2011/12

Involve residents and businesses in building a future through Vision 2031 which balances sustainable housing and business growth with protecting the character of the rural areas, Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds

Vision 2031 is a comprehensive plan to guide the overall direction of future service provision and management of growth in the borough for the next 20 years and beyond. It brings together a broad overall approach to providing services with the way land is used within the borough to make sure we have enough jobs, homes and facilities. The production of a vision for Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds and the rural areas will help to ensure that new development in the area is integrated with the provision of infrastructure and community facilities.

Many people have come together over the past year to say what they would like to see in 20 years' time, and how St Edmundsbury could help achieve those expectations. We have involved residents, businesses and other stakeholders in planning our vision in a variety of ways including launch events, workshops, 17 public drop-in sessions, 12 focus groups and providing a website for comments to be submitted electronically. The Vision 2031 consultation exercise closed at the end of April 2012. We will now analyse the comments received and make changes before further public consultation is undertaken in Autumn 2012.



Maximise the delivery of affordable housing throughout the borough

Delivery of affordable housing is dependant on successful partnership working. This year has been a difficult one following significant changes to the way affordable housing is funded and programmed. A new, more flexible form of social housing, known as Affordable Rent, will become the main type of affordable housing supply. Due to the robustness of our Local Investment Plan

we have been able to help partners contract with the Homes and Communities Agency to maximise their development programmes over the next four years.

We have also implemented an Empty Homes Task Force which has helped bring over 300 homes back into use since 2009. We have achieved this by robustly targeting those homes that have been empty for more than twelve months and engaging with owners of all empty properties, encouraging them to be brought back into use. The Empty Homes Strategy will be reviewed and updated in 2012/13 jointly with Forest Heath.

In 2011/12 we successfully prevented approximately 39% of households who presented to us as potentially homeless from actually becoming homeless. In the Autumn we introduced a new Access Scheme to help homeless families access housing in the private rented sector. To date, we have supported eleven families to find housing through this scheme and have also helped a further thirty two families secure and maintain a home through our private sector leasing scheme.



Throughout the winter, twenty four single homeless people made use of our Cold Weather Provision and were accommodated for seventy nights during the coldest winter weather. In addition, four people were permanently housed after using the scheme and we offered significant advice and support for the remainder.

Act, and encourage others to act, to design services which take climate change and environmental challenges into account

Throughout the year we continued to demonstrate our commitment to improving our own environmental performance and encouraging others to do likewise. For example, we managed a partnership project to investigate the potential for district heating and renewable energy generation in Bury St Edmunds. The aim of this project was to realise potential opportunities that exist for renewable energy and inform planning policy. With the support of funding from the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership, we helped eighteen businesses in West Suffolk with a Greener Business Grant to cut their carbon emissions. This work is predicted to deliver annual business savings totalling £32,799 and 148 tonnes of CO₂ reduction.

In partnership with Forest Heath and Babergh District Councils, we helped over 300 householders across West Suffolk to carry out home energy and water efficiency improvements. We offered discounted DIY products along with advice predicted to deliver a total annual household saving of over £15,200 and 41 tonnes of CO₂ reduction.



Also by working in partnership, we were able to secure £265,000 of funds from the Department of Health to tackle winter-related illness and death due to cold homes. In St Edmundsbury alone, over 180 vulnerable households have contacted the helpline since January 2012 and over 160 homes are being surveyed with each receiving support to cut heating bills and improve householders' life chances.

In terms of our own environmental performance, we have undertaken a programme of installing approximately 220kWp of solar photovoltaics on our buildings to generate income and electricity and reduce carbon emissions. The performance of the schemes is being monitored but it is predicted that they will generate an annual income of £64,000 and cut our annual CO₂ emissions by 100 tonnes.

In 2011 we were delighted to win a Bronze Award from an organisation called Motorvate, part of the Energy Savings Trust, which carries out an annual assessment of fleet of cars and light commercial vehicles to review carbon impact. The award was for our success in cutting carbon emissions across our vehicle fleet (up to 3.5 tonnes) by in excess of 5%.

3. Reduce crime and disorder

Key activities for 2011/12

- Work towards a sustainable Community Safety Partnership structure and action plan.
- Encourage local communities to play an active role in keeping their communities safe.
- Work with our partners, especially the police, to support the prevention of crime and to tackle the causes of crime.

Why was this a priority in 2011/12?

Although St Edmundsbury is one of the safest places to live, we are not complacent and over a number of years we have remained committed to doing all we can to reduce crime and disorder. We know that we can only tackle issues of crime and disorder with the support of communities and colleagues in other agencies.

Progress in 2011/12

Work towards a sustainable Community Safety Partnership structure and action plan

Councillors and staff contributed to the Suffolk-wide review of community safety partnership structures. The initial focus of the review was to streamline the arrangements to improve efficiency for all partners. As the review progressed it also provided a useful opportunity to consider how the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) positions itself to work with the Police and Crime Commissioner when elected in November 2012. The outcome of the review was that Babergh District Council has joined the existing WSCSP so it is now a four district partnership, including St Edmundsbury, Forest Heath and Mid Suffolk. The enlarged partnership is now developing a common set of priorities and supporting action plan.

Encourage local communities to play an active role in keeping their communities safe

Councillors and staff work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams to support people to improve the safety of their own communities. Over the last year communities have tackled issues such as speeding, anti-social behaviour involving both adults and young people in public areas and parking issues in town centres and on housing estates.

There are a wide range of self-help organisations active across the borough including SpeedWatch, FarmWatch, and Neighbourhood Watch schemes. In both Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds there are also PubWatch schemes and teams of Town Pastors who support the police and other agencies in addressing issues arising from the night-time economy. The Haverhill Town Pastor team was established in October 2011.

We know that speeding traffic is of particular concern to those living in rural areas. Community SpeedWatch has therefore been promoted and supported through the Parish Councils. There are a growing number of schemes in which volunteers are trained to use a speed indicator 'gun' which monitors the speed of vehicles. This information is recorded and passed to the police who can then offer an advisory notice if vehicles are found to be exceeding the speed limit. However it is often the sight of people in fluorescent jackets which acts as a deterrent and results in drivers reducing their speed.



Since May 2011, Bury St Edmunds has benefitted from the presence of the Western Suffolk SOS bus. The bus is staffed by trained volunteers and St John Ambulance who provide first aid. It has a presence in the town each Friday night between 9pm and 3am. People visiting the bus can be assured of a safe place to receive help, advice and support as well as water, a blanket or medical assistance as required. Since August 2011, St John Ambulance staff have provided first aid to 21 individuals. Whilst some treatments are for relatively minor issues, such as blisters and the effects of alcohol, at least 13 were of a more serious nature, such as a overdose of paracetamol and a head injury. These latter cases would otherwise have resulted in an ambulance call as a minimum and in most instances, a visit to the Accident and Emergency Department at hospital.

At a neighbourhood level, we work with communities to solve local issues specific to their area. For instance, we worked with the Mildenhall Estate Residents Association in Bury St Edmunds which had raised concerns about the area around Anselm Avenue. These issues ranged from concerns about security at communal entrances in residential buildings, to parking problems near to the community centre. Supported by Havebury Housing Partnership, a multi-agency event, including councillors, was arranged in February to address the issues. This was preceded by a questionnaire to all the residents in Anselm Avenue and followed up with personal visits by representatives from various agencies to address residents' concerns. The feedback from residents was overwhelmingly positive.

We also supported the Haverhill Impact Day. This multi-agency project sought to engage with residents through improving the environment in which they live.

Work with our partners, especially the police, to support the prevention of crime and to tackle the causes of crime

We work with a broad range of partners through the WSCSP to ensure a joined-up approach to addressing local trends in crime and disorder. The WSCSP action plan for 2011/12 focused on the following priorities:

- o creating a safer night time economy;
- o helping vulnerable families;
- o protecting young people; and
- o protecting our communities.

To support these priorities the WSCSP provided funding for a range of projects. These included; (i) a family intervention programme for the most serious or complex cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB) where family relationships are an issue; (ii) part funding a housing officer working with those recovering from substance misuse to keep them in their accommodation within the terms of their tenancy, rather than slip back into a chaotic lifestyle; and (iii) promote campaigns highlighting the importance of responsible drinking at key times of the year. The work of the WSCSP is supplemented by the local priorities identified by the individual Safer Neighbourhood Teams in which both councillors and staff play a key part.

Assistance has been provided by Housing Officers and the Community Safety Officer to the county-wide Integrated Offender Management Scheme. This scheme manages the rehabilitation of the most prolific offenders back into the community. It aims to change behaviours by finding settled housing and provides access to drug and alcohol support.

The ASB co-ordinator and staff from environmental health and housing form part of an ASB co-located team. This team manages repeat and/or vulnerable or high risk victims of ASB. The team meets weekly and manages a case load of between six and ten cases at any one time. This year the co-ordinator has led the implementation of the new multi-agency case management system

which has been adopted county wide and allows all cases to be managed in one system providing a clear picture about repeat victims and perpetrators.

In August 2011 we investigated a reported fly tip of plasterboard and insulation materials in the Rougham Hill area of Bury St Edmunds. Following a successful court case the offender pleaded guilty, was fined and ordered to meet the full costs incurred during the course of the investigation. This case of environmental crime received extensive coverage in the local media.



4. Provide a strong voice for West Suffolk

Key activities for 2011/12

- Encourage and support communities across West Suffolk through effective community engagement to shape and deliver their local services, taking into account the Government's localism agenda.
- Contribute to the development of organisations which will have a positive impact on people in West Suffolk, such as the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Work with partners to protect and promote the needs of all those who live, work in, or visit, West Suffolk.

Why was this a priority in 2011/12?

We retained this commitment over a number of years because we want to ensure that everyone feels able to contribute to decision-making and that opportunities for participation, in whatever form that might be, are open to all. When communities express an interest in developing and delivering services or facilities, we are committed to providing support where it is needed. We know that the new Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board will have significant influence over the delivery of health services and we want to ensure that the needs of West Suffolk are addressed.

Progress in 2011/12

Encourage and support communities across West Suffolk through effective community engagement to shape and deliver their local services, taking into account the Government's localism agenda

As outlined earlier, we have undertaken wide-ranging consultation on the development of the Vision 2031 documents for Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and the rural areas. This has given residents, stakeholders and partners the opportunity to shape the way in which the borough evolves over the next twenty years, protecting the unique character of the area whilst providing the homes and jobs which local residents and their families need.

Throughout the year we supported a number of groups and communities to deliver services or develop facilities for themselves. For example, in September 2011 we supported the community asset transfer of the Southgate Community Centre to the Southgate Community Partnership. This important local centre is now being run by the community, for the community and provides a wider range of activities to serve the local area. Staff also worked with the Bury SkatePark Committee to secure just over £50,000 of National Lottery funding to develop a pump track at the park. In July 2011 over 200 young people attended the opening of the new track which regularly attracts large numbers of users. As a result of our support, the park users now have a much greater sense of ownership.



We have also worked with residents of a housing estate helping them to explore the establishment of a Community Land Trust to address issues associated with un-adopted roads on an estate. After initial support, the group is now working with Foundation East to develop a proposal to form a Trust.

The ONE Haverhill Board has been chosen to lead one of just ten neighbourhood community budget pilots across the country. It will engage with the community to explore two priority areas which are young people and the public realm. The Board is working towards all partners using their combined resources to best effect to deliver what residents have said is important. This community-led approach was a key factor in the success of the application to become a budget pilot.

To further our support for community litter picking, and funded through the Rural Area Working Party, we offered rural parishes across the borough free litter picking equipment. Almost 300 adult and children's litter pickers and bag hoops have been distributed as part of the scheme together with fluorescent waistcoats. By distributing the equipment, our rural communities will have more flexibility to undertake litter picking at a time that suits them.

Contribute to the development of organisations which will have a positive impact on people in West Suffolk, such as the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board

The Suffolk Wellbeing Board began meeting as a Shadow Board in September 2011. Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury have a seat on the Board, and in the first year Cllr Burt from Forest Heath has been the representative. In September 2012 we will take the seat on the Board and represent both councils. The Board is still in its early stages of formation but once it has produced its Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy we will identify how existing resources can best be used to support its work. The Strategy will also influence the services commissioned by the new Clinical Commissioning Group.

In February 2011 the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership was disbanded and a new West Suffolk Partnership was formed. A strategic group now brings together local partners from business, health, police, further and higher education and faith groups in order to focus on securing sustainable and strong communities. The strategic group is supplemented by a network which will be open to voluntary and community groups, any statutory agencies or interested individuals and will help provide feedback to the partnership on local issues. Rather than provide the traditional kind of staff support to the new partnership, members of the partnership and their wider networks were invited to express an interest in providing that support. The Newmarket and District Chamber of Commerce was awarded the work and will provide a programme of support drawn from its membership. This is a good example of the way public services are being developed and delivered.

Work with partners to protect and promote the needs of all those who live, work in, or visit, West Suffolk

We work with a great many partnerships from the very local to the large scale partnerships such as the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership and the West Suffolk Partnership. Whether it is working with a village helping residents to identify sources of funding for a play area, supporting communities to stage local events, or a larger partnership, we depend on working with others to provide for the needs of residents and visitors alike. At a time of scarce resources, it is even more important that public, voluntary and community groups work together to get the best value possible from the resources they have. The ONE Haverhill neighbourhood community budget will be testing that approach at a town-wide level in the coming year.

5. Promoting the local economy

Key activities for 2011/12

- Maximise the opportunities presented by the Local Enterprise Partnerships and other initiatives which will promote the area as a destination for economic development, research, employment opportunities and tourism.
 - Robustly lobby for high speed broadband, especially in rural areas, to strengthen the foundations for a prosperous local economy.
 - Work in ways which will support local businesses to create jobs and enable them to thrive, including paying invoices promptly and providing small business rates relief where possible.
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Why was this a priority for 2011/12?

We know that the difficult economic climate means our local businesses are facing financial challenges. That is why we remain committed to supporting our local economy and working in partnership with others to help it grow and thrive.

Progress in 2011/12

Maximise the opportunities presented by the Local Enterprise Partnerships and other initiatives which will promote the area as a destination for economic development, research, employment opportunities and tourism

We work in partnership with a number of local, regional and national organisations to support the growth of new and existing businesses in the local economy.

Bury St Edmunds has a shortage of land for new and expanding businesses. 68 hectares of employment land has been allocated at Suffolk Business Park on the eastern side of the town. The development of this land will ultimately provide 14-15,000 new jobs, not including the temporary jobs created in construction. This land cannot be occupied until the Eastern Relief Road and junction 45 of the A14 improvements have been made. The cost of this infrastructure has delayed the development of the site. To date, two applications for Regional Growth Fund have been made to government for funding to support this infrastructure along with two separate bids to New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership for Growing Places Fund. Although these bids have not secured funding thus far we have continued to work with the developer Churchmanor Estates PLC to bring the site forward for development. We have used Growth Area Funding to support the development by unlocking the high up front infrastructure and technical costs.



Our Economic Development team has also made two separate applications to both Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for their Growing Places Fund to support the development of Haverhill Research Park. In this instance both LEPs have agreed, subject to detail, to provide a loan to the developer, Carisbrooke Ltd, towards the infrastructure works required to bring the park forward for development.

During the past year we have initiated, or been involved with, a number of business networking events, the most notable of these was the Business Festival. Held over ten days in September the business festival included 12 separate events, from seminars and conferences, to business-to-business events attracting over 1,500 attendees. The Business Festival is the first of its kind in the East of England and planning is well underway for Business Festival 2012.

We have worked with New Anglia LEP to devise a Rural Growth Network which would see business support delivered at a local level to some of the established rural business and industrial parks. Although this project is in its infancy much of the justification for funding to support this project has been achieved.



Three Economic Development News publications and six Rural News bulletins have been published this year. Both publications aim to support local businesses and communities and to promote the area as a great place to do business. In addition, the Economic Development team provides articles and editorial for third party publications such as Anglia in Business.

The two towns of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill are widely used to promote the area as a whole for business. Although they have different attributes, both are as important as each other in economic development terms. Bury St Edmunds continues to trade well on its importance as a historic destination and plays a key role in tourism and the retail sector. Haverhill is a town with a local economy based on manufacturing and is home to key businesses such as Genzyme, IFF (International Flavours and Fragrances) and The Herbert Group. Haverhill has the added advantage of its close proximity to Cambridge and Stansted Airport; availability of competitively priced housing, employment land and premises; and two 'outstanding' upper schools.

We continue to work closely with Bid4Bury, the Business Improvement District to promote Bury St Edmunds as a destination for visitors and businesses and support ONE Haverhill's task and finish group aimed at promoting Haverhill in its widest sense. Along with Suffolk County Council we commissioned Kent Business School to carry out a project called 'Destination Haverhill'. This project involves working with the local retailers to encourage more footfall into the town centre. We have also submitted a bid for Haverhill to become a Portas Pilot.

Robustly lobby for high speed broadband, especially in rural areas, to strengthen the foundations for a prosperous local economy

We have worked with BT Openreach in the upgrading of both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill to Superfast Broadband. Both towns have a significant uplift in the broadband service for much of their areas.

In addition, we are part of Suffolk County Council's Better Broadband for Suffolk campaign which aims for a predominantly fibre-based solution (a mix of fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) and fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC)) to 85-90% of premises by 2015, with interim solutions (mostly Fixed Wireless Broadband (FWB), but also some Satellite Broadband) serving the remaining 10-15% of premises also by 2015.

Work in ways which will support local businesses to create jobs and enable them to thrive, including paying invoices promptly and providing small business rates relief where possible

We continue to work with local businesses to ensure they receive the rate relief available to them. Currently 1048 out of 1112 eligible businesses claim Small Business Rates Relief, this equates to a 94.24% take up rate. We are committed to increasing the levels of take up to 99% and work with stakeholders, such as the Local Chamber of Commerce, to achieve this goal. We exceeded our target of 95% for paying non-disputed invoices within 30 days of receipt, by achieving 96.1%.

We have strong links with West Suffolk College which offers numerous courses and training workshops to provide individuals and businesses with the skills they need. In particular, we work to encourage businesses to consider employing an apprentice. We have established a further 32 apprenticeships in the small to medium enterprise (SME) sector in West Suffolk through partnership working and funding from the WSLSP.

Our Economic Development team works with a range of partners to support existing business with their plans to employ more staff or for new businesses to start up. In particular we work with the Mid Anglia Enterprise Agency (Menta) which manages the St Edmundsbury-owned Menta Business and Training Centre and the Hollands Centre both in Haverhill. Menta also offers courses for start up and small businesses, some of which we fund.



We were named as the runner up district in the country for 'business champions' in research carried out nationwide by Experian for the BBC. 'Business champions', says Experian, have directors that show 'entrepreneurial skills, appetite for business risk and real international outlook'. This means that, with Forest Heath coming top in that category, West Suffolk is seen as an excellent place to do business.

6. Health and wellbeing

Key activities for 2011/12

- Recognise the social, economic and health benefits that thriving leisure, heritage and cultural services, such as our parks, open spaces, sporting facilities, museums and public halls, provide for residents.
 - Contribute to the public health agenda by encouraging healthy physical and mental lifestyles across all age groups, particularly through inspiring people to play more sport and take part in social and cultural activities in the run-up to, and beyond, the Olympics being staged in London.
 - Embrace the opportunity the Rwandan Olympic and Paralympic teams' base provides for lasting links between the borough and Rwanda's young people and sporting organisations.
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Why was this a priority for 2011/12?

We recognise that our leisure and heritage services can do so much to enhance the health and wellbeing of our communities. Our commitment to increasing participation in sports and activities has continued. Our focus on the Olympics over the past year has helped to strengthen links with Rwanda whose Olympic and Paralympic Team will be based in the area.

Progress in 2011/12

Recognise the social, economic and health benefits that thriving leisure, heritage and cultural services, such as our parks, open spaces, sporting facilities, museums and public halls, provide for residents

Working with partner organisations we continue to provide a wide range of sport, arts, heritage, tourism and parks opportunities and events to residents and visitors throughout the year.

The Active People Survey (conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England) showed we performed well compared with other leisure providers, in particular:

- 28% of the community were active which is the seventh highest percentage participation figure in the country, and we achieved the highest percentage increase.
- We were one of only four areas in the east of England to have increased levels of activity and we have the highest percentage of participation in the eastern region.
- 41.5% of 16-34 year olds are active, the highest percentage in the eastern region.

We continue to maintain and promote our numerous parks and public venues. The Apex entered its second year of operation by continuing to make a major contribution to the cultural and economic vibrancy of the borough. Our new Visitor Centre at Nowton Park provides purpose built contemporary facilities including a café, toilets and changing rooms. It is estimated that the Christmas Fayre produced an economic return of approximately £1.6 million to the local economy and the Tour of Britain cycle leg approximately £1million. The first Abbeyfest concert in the Abbey Gardens attracted more visitors to the town.

The new Heritage Ticket has assisted in promoting increased access and income for West Stow and Moyses Hall and a single ticket now provides admission to the two heritage sites and events for a whole year. Monitoring shows that visitors to one site do visit the other and this has had a positive effect upon numbers and income.

Securing the services of a commercial caterer for the major town centre sites in Bury St Edmunds will enable us to offer support catering to venues and events while providing an income stream to offset other costs within the service.

Contribute to the public health agenda by encouraging healthy physical and mental lifestyles across all age groups, particularly through inspiring people to play more sport and take part in social and cultural activities in the run-up to, and beyond, the Olympics being staged in London

A number of health and wellbeing activities have been carried out in the past year, including visiting a large local employer for Men's Health Week, Cancer Awareness sessions for staff, falls prevention information for older people and providing ongoing support to a community group in Haverhill which supports isolated women on the Clements Estate.

In partnership with Forest Heath District Council, we secured funding as part of the Warmer Homes, Healthy People initiative and provided vulnerable residents with extreme temperature sensors free of charge.

Two community picnics were held in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill in the May/June half term week as part of National Family week and both were extremely successful. The aim of the picnics was to provide an opportunity for the local community to get together, bring a picnic and enable children to enjoy outdoor activities together at no cost to families. Looking forward, community groups in the two towns are being encouraged to play a larger role in the running of these events, with a view to their taking them on as entirely community-led events.

Our new outdoor Green Gym in Haverhill provides facilities to enhance fitness for both the Haverhill community and visitors. The meadow enhancements at No Mans Meadows, Ram Meadow and Holy Water Meadows have increased access and improved the ecology of these sites providing increased opportunities for recreation.

The 'On the Spot' project in Haverhill enables us to engage with hard-to-reach young people and acts as a conduit to provide health information. It also provides an opportunity for the young people to participate in safe activities which are based on their needs.



Some of our active and healthy lifestyle work has been linked to the forthcoming Olympics, for example, the Suffolk's Lap of Honour Olympic exhibition at Moyses Hall promoted interest in the role of Suffolk people in the Olympics. The Suffolk Youth Games provided an opportunity for young people to experience an 'Olympic' type event. The 'Get Going' event was staged in partnership with the voluntary sector to encourage people to try something new in advance of the 2012 Olympics and to promote healthy lifestyles. The event had a Rwandan theme and included 'taster activities' such as Zumba and Tai Chi.

The new museum club at Moyses Hall has provided a venue for adults with learning difficulties to access opportunities for learning in a stimulating heritage setting.

Embrace the opportunity the Rwandan Olympic and Paralympic teams' base provides for lasting links between the borough and Rwanda's young people and sporting organisations

Local schools have embraced our links to Rwanda. King Edward VI School has established an official Rwanda week which celebrates links with the country. Two head teachers from Rwanda visited the area and met local community representatives. Teachers from the St Edmundsbury area organised a visit to Rwanda to further cement relations. In addition, two Rwandan schools have

received sports equipment and stores supplied by the fund raising initiative "Sport for Rwanda". The Bishop of Kigali has joined the project and he has identified a number of schools in Rwanda to link with schools in the area. Last year, a number of UK-based Rwandans held their annual football tournament in Bury St Edmunds.

We look forward to welcoming the Rwandan Olympic and Paralympic Team later this year and the development of this relationship.



Our plans for 2012/13

Our plans for 2012/13 are set out in our new Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan details how we will deliver our new Corporate Priorities which are:

1. Working together for strong, healthy and diverse communities
2. Working together for prosperous and environmentally-responsible communities
3. Working together for an efficient council

Progress against the Corporate Plan will be reported in next year's Annual Report.

2012/13 Portfolio Holders and responsibilities

Name	Position	Portfolio Responsibilities
Cllr J Griffiths	Leader of the Council with responsibility for Corporate and Rural Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vision 2031; 2. External Relations including Local Enterprise Partnerships; 3. Rural Affairs; 4. Economic Development; 5. Communications; 6. Property, Asset, Facility and Estate Management (including West Suffolk House); and 7. Shared Services
Cllr S Mildmay-White	Deputy Leader with responsibility for Culture and Sport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sports and Olympics; 2. Public Halls; 3. Arts and Cultural Development; 4. Festivals and Events; 5. Heritage Services; 6. Health and Wellbeing; 7. Parks and Open Spaces; and 8. Cemeteries.
Cllr D Ray	Performance and Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance, Resources and Information Technology; 2. Internal Audit; 3. Legal and Democratic Services; 4. Democratic Renewal/Member Development; 5. Human Resources, Risk Management, Training and Organisational Development; 6. Health and Safety; 7. Performance Management and Customer Access; and 8. Diversity.
Cllr R Everitt	Tourism and Community Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism; 2. Community Development (excluding Haverhill); 3. Emergency Planning, Community Safety and CCTV; 4. Children, Young People and Safeguarding Issues; 5. Grants; 6. Localism; 7. Markets; and 8. Cabinet Commitment to Bury St Edmunds.
Cllr A Gower	Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Housing and Homelessness; 2. Licensing; 3. Environmental Health; and 4. Cabinet Commitment to Haverhill
Cllr T Clements	Planning and Transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Policy, including Conservation and the Built Environment; 2. Building Control; 3. Property Gazetteer and Land Charges;

Name	Position	Portfolio Responsibilities
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Transportation Policy, Public Transport, Bus Station and Car Parking; and 5. Engineering.
Cllr P Stevens	Environmental and Waste Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Waste and Recycling; 2. Street Scene, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance; 3. Street Names and Numbering; 4. Environmental Sustainability, and the Environmental Management System; 5. Conservation, Climate Change and Energy Action; and 6. Public Toilets.