



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# D189

## **Cabinet**

### **21 November 2012**

#### **Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 24 October 2012**

The following reports were also considered at this meeting of the Committee, further to which recommendations to Cabinet have been made:

- (a) Final report of the Task and Finish Group: Review of Car Parking Charges Throughout the Borough; and
- (b) Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Guidance – Joint ‘West Suffolk’ Policy.

Separate reports relating to the above appear elsewhere on this Cabinet agenda.

#### **1. Work Programme Update**

- 1.1 The Committee now has a rolling work programme, whereby suggestions for scrutiny reviews are brought to each meeting, and if accepted, are timetabled to report to a future meeting. The work programme also leaves space for Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action. Members reviewed the current position of the work programme, and noted the items which were expected at the next meetings of the Committee.

#### **2. Decisions Plan: November 2012 to May 2013**

- 2.1 The Committee was advised of the new Regulations which came into force from 10 September 2012 which affected some elements of Cabinet decision making. Some of the changes required under the Regulations affected the publication of Cabinet decisions.
- 2.2 The former Forward Plan was no longer required to be published to cover a period of four months on a monthly rolling basis at least 14 days before the start of each calendar month. There was, however, a new requirement to publish a document detailing the intended key decisions, plus any matters intended to be considered in private, at least 28 clear days before each decision was taken. Other amendments were required to the new Decisions Plan, and these had been implemented accordingly.

- 2.3 Members considered the latest Decisions Plan, covering the period November 2012 to May 2013, and after seeking clarification on some of the expected decisions, did not request any further information or involvement in these.

### **3. St Edmundsbury Tenancy Strategy Monitoring Report**

- 3.1 The St Edmundsbury Tenancy Strategy was developed and reported to the Committee in February 2012, and subsequently approved through Cabinet and full Council in June 2012. Members had requested a six-month review of the Strategy's impact, and considered a report which advised Members of how officers had worked closely with the Cambridge housing sub-region and Registered Providers in developing the Strategy, and in monitoring its impact.
- 3.2 Key issues outlined in the report included the slowdown in the delivery of affordable homes and turnover of affordable housing, and the continued increase in the demand for homes. The current position of the Tenancy Strategy Action Plan was also shown.
- 3.3 A wide ranging discussion on the impact of the Strategy took place, issues discussed including affordable rents, under-occupancy, the number of single households on the register and the need for more one bedroom properties, communication of the housing reforms under the Localism Act to tenants, the need to be flexible and look at each case individually, and the need for the Housing and Planning teams to work closely with regard to affordable housing requirements in new developments.
- 3.4 An action plan is being worked on jointly with Forest Heath District Council, whose Tenancy Strategy was approved through its full Council in July 2012, and it was proposed that a further joint report be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of both councils in April/May 2013.

#### **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)