

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 13 February 2013 at 5.00 pm
in the Conference Chamber West (F1R09), West Suffolk House,
Western Way, Bury St Edmunds**

PRESENT: Councillor J H M Griffiths (Leader of the Council)
(in the Chair)
Councillors Clements, Everitt, Mrs Gower, Mrs Mildmay-
White, Ray and Stevens

BY INVITATION: Councillors Hale (Chairman of the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee), Nettleton (Chairman of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Cox, Pugh, Spicer,
Mrs Stamp and Mrs P A Warby

90. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

91. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 November 2012 and 12
December 2012 (Special Meeting) were confirmed as correct records and
signed by the Chairman.

92. Declarations of Interests

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

**93. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
16 January 2013**

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolio Holders

The Cabinet considered Report D272 (previously circulated) which
informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Overview and
Scrutiny Committee on 16 January 2013:

- (1) Final Report of the Anglia Revenues Partnership Task and Finish
Group;
- (2) The Co-ordination of Licensing, Planning and Enforcement Functions
Relating to Street Vending (the 'A-Boards' Review);
- (3) Work Programme Update; and
- (4) Decisions Plan: January to May 2013.

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

94. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Final Report of the Anglia Revenues Partnership Task and Finish Group

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/11 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D273 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a number of recommendations emanating from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the Borough Council's first year of membership of the Anglia Revenues Partnership.

The Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) scrutiny review had been conducted with the following terms of reference: *'the review should assess the extent to which the first year of the Council's membership of the Anglia Revenues Partnership has delivered against the financial and operational aims of the business case that was developed, and supported the decision of St Edmundsbury Borough Council to join the partnership and in doing so assess the impact on stakeholders of that decision.'*

Key findings of the review were that:

- (i) planned financial savings had been realised and exceeded in year one;
- (ii) service performance was generally running to planned targets;
- (iii) there was scope for an improvement in written communications from ARP to its customers; and
- (iv) staff morale could be improved.

In carrying out the review a number of pieces of evidence had been considered including financial reports, operational performance reports, results of a customer service survey, and staff survey findings.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He thanked Councillor Nettleton and his Committee for the extensive work undertaken in carrying out the review and having confirmed that the Partnership was satisfied with the proposals, he moved all eight recommendations.

Councillor Nettleton, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was asked if there was anything he wished to highlight from the review. In response, he drew attention to the exceeding of the Borough Council's planned financial savings in year one, together with the operational successes of the Partnership.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) future shared service arrangements continue, like the Anglia Revenues Partnership, to be based upon business cases with clear opportunities for cost savings to be realised;
- (2) the savings realised by joining the Anglia Revenues Partnership be continually monitored and opportunities for further savings explored;
- (3) in any future shared service arrangements where members of staff are brought together from different employing authorities, efforts be taken to establish standardised terms and conditions;

- (4) issues identified through staff surveys be addressed with action plans put in place, and progress against actions regularly reviewed;
- (5) customer satisfaction surveys be undertaken at least annually, to complement operational key performance indicators and generate a greater depth of understanding regarding service performance;
- (6) areas for improvement arising from customer satisfaction surveys be acted upon and used to drive performance;
- (7) letters sent to customers be improved to provide 'Plain English' explanations in addition to any wording required as a result of legislation, and clearly showing at the beginning of each letter the amount owed by the customer or the amount due in the case of a benefit award; and
- (8) new or amended governance arrangements be explored and introduced should the partnership be expanded further.

(Councillor Spicer arrived during the consideration of this item.)

95. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
The Co-ordination of Licensing, Planning and Enforcement
Functions Relating to Street Vending (the 'A-Boards' Review)
Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/09 Cabinet Member: Cllr Anne Gower

The Cabinet considered Report D274 (previously circulated) which sought approval for recommendations emanating from the so-called 'A-Boards' Review undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a Task and Finish Group in 2012 to look at the issue of advertising boards (A-Boards) displayed on the highway.

The Group had investigated the issue in detail in order to try and strike a balance between the concerns of residents that the proliferation of A-Boards was detracting from the amenity of the area, and the needs of businesses to advertise their goods.

Following consultation, a scheme had been produced which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee had considered that the proposal to implement a permitting scheme for A-Boards (and planters) should be incorporated into a revised and updated Draft Street Vending Policy.

Subject to Cabinet approval, consultation on the updated Draft Street Vending Policy incorporating the proposed permitting scheme for A-Boards (and planters) would be undertaken, following which the results would be considered by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee prior to adoption of the revised Policy being sought.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In particular, she proposed the following amendments to the recommendations contained in Report D274, as follows:

- (a) Recommendation (1) be amended to read *'the proposal to implement a permitting scheme for A-Boards and planters be incorporated into the revised draft Street Vending Policy and be consulted on'*; and
- (b) Recommendation (3) be amended to read *'the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be tasked to produce a detailed breakdown of the financial and staff implications of these proposals for consideration by the relevant Portfolio Holder and reference back to Cabinet'*.

Councillor Nettleton, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was in agreement with these proposed amendments and responded to questions raised.

Councillor Mrs Gower emphasised that subject to whether it was eventually incorporated into the finalised Street Vending Policy, it was important that the permitting scheme should be cost neutral. Details of the financial and staff implications would become evident at a later date, as required by Recommendation (3).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal to implement a permitting scheme for A-Boards and planters be incorporated into the revised draft Street Vending Policy and be consulted on;
- (2) the draft guidelines set out at Appendix A to Report D249 be amended to replace the word *'should'* at guideline 16 on page 1 to *'shall'*; and
- (3) the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be tasked to produce a detailed breakdown of the financial and staff implications of these proposals for consideration by the relevant Portfolio Holder and reference back to Cabinet.

(Councillor Nettleton left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

**96. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee:
28 January 2013**

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolio Holders

The Cabinet received and noted Report D275 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 28 January 2013:

- (1) Third Quarter 2012/2013 Internal Audit Progress Report;
- (2) Key Performance Indicators: Third Quarter 2012/2013;
- (3) Budget Monitoring Report: 1 April 2012 to 31 December 2012;
- (4) Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2013/2014; and
- (5) Treasury Management Performance and Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2013/2014.

Councillor Hale, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that item (5) was the subject of a separate report on this Cabinet agenda.

The Cabinet noted that a detailed discussion had particularly been held at the meeting of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on Report D262, 'Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2013/2014'. A proposed saving of

£125,000 had been shown for the Planning Service in 2013/2014 and the Committee had expressed its concern that any savings emanating from sharing services with Forest Heath District Council in Development Control should not diminish the Council's planning enforcement capacity. Officers had explained at that meeting that the need for a robust enforcement function had been built into the business case for the new shared Planning Service and planning officers would take on basic enforcement skills to investigate smaller enforcement matters.

97. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Treasury Management Performance and Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2013/2014

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/04 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D276 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2013/2014.

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee had considered an update on treasury management activity and performance for the period 1 April to 31 December 2012, together with the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statements for 2013/2014 and Prudential Indicators.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that it was a requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice to produce a Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for adoption by the Council on an annual basis. The estimate in the 2013/2014 Strategy had considered future interest rate levels together with revised projections for Council balances taking into account the updated and rescheduled capital expenditure and assets disposals programmes, and the maturity dates for the Council's current fixed term investments. It was estimated that in 2013/2014 treasury management activity would generate income of £554,000, representing a target investment rate for the year of 1.5%.



RECOMMENDED:

That subject to the approval of full Council, the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2013/2014, attached as Appendix 2 to Report D252, be approved.

(Councillor Hale left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

98. Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2013/2014 and Changes to the Level of Discounts and Exemptions in respect of Second Homes and Some Classes of Empty Properties

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/03 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D277 (previously circulated) which provided the Council Tax base for tax setting purposes in 2013/2014 and sought approval for issues relating to the localisation of Council Tax support.

Report D277 set out the new powers within the Local Government Finance Act 2012 for Local Authorities to reduce the level of discounts and exemptions currently granted in respect of second homes and some classes

of empty properties. Taking advantage of these new powers, proposals were detailed in the report to address the shortfall faced by local authorities as a result of the localisation of Council Tax support and the associated 10% cut in funding from Central Government.

The report also provided the basis of the formal calculation for the Council Tax base for the financial year 2013/2014 and detailed the impact at district, parish and town level of the changes previously agreed as part of the Local Council Tax Support scheme and the new changes proposed within paragraph 4.7 of Report D277.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, explained the proposed changes to the level of discounts and exemptions in respect of second homes and some classes of empty properties, as outlined in paragraph 4.7, including that the changes proposed regarding the treatment of empty homes for council tax purposes, would help provide incentives to home owners to bring more empty homes back into use. He added that the recommendations also addressed the impact the changes would have on parish councils directly and how the Council in 2013/2014 would design a scheme to compensate for the net changes.

A detailed briefing on this complex issue had been offered to all Members prior to the final decision being taken by full Council on 26 February 2013.

Emphasis was placed on funding being provided by the Government to support parish and town councils during this period of change was available in 2013/2014 but was not necessarily forthcoming for future years. This would be communicated to all town and parish councils in the Borough.



RECOMMENDED: That subject to the approval of full Council:

- (1) the changes to the level of discounts and exemptions currently granted in respect of second homes and some classes of empty properties, as outlined in paragraph 4.7 of Report D277, be approved;***
- (2) the tax base for 2013/2014, for the whole of its area, is 34,380.85 equivalent Band 'D' dwellings, as detailed in paragraph 4.14 of Report D277, be noted;***
- (3) the tax base for 2013/2014 for the different parts of its area, as defined by Parish or special expense area boundaries, as shown in Appendix 2 to Report D277, be noted; and***
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Head of Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, to design a scheme that aims to compensate Parish and Town Councils for the net changes agreed as part of the Local Council Tax Support scheme (Cabinet Report D224 – 12 December 2012) and the changes proposed within paragraph 4.7 of Report D277.***

99. National Non Domestic Rates Forecast (NNDR1 Return) and Suffolk Pooling Update

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/10 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet received and noted Report D278 (previously circulated) which provided an update on the new Suffolk Business Rates Retention Pool and set out a Business Rates forecast for 2013/2014.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, informed the Cabinet that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had allocated each authority with an amount of rates they were expected to retain in 2013/2014 if no changes occurred. This amount was called the business rate baseline and was calculated using the average rates collected over the last two years. At St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC), the business rate baseline had been communicated for 2013/2014 as £17,520,000. The completed National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR1) forecast return contained in Appendix A to the report, calculated the expected business rate for 2013/2014 as £18,185,000. Given an increase in the business rate baseline of £665,000, 50% would be levied back to Central Government, leaving £332,500 (50%) being retained by the Council.

SEBC, along with other Suffolk Authorities and Suffolk County Council, had signed up to be designated as a Suffolk Business Rates Retention Pool. Based on the most recently available NNDR1 return figures for Suffolk Authorities, the total financial benefit of the Suffolk Pool stood at £2,376,000 for 2013/2014. Of this total, £1 million would be retained to establish a reserve to fund potential future safety net payments; £651,000 would be allocated to Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and the remaining £725,000 would be distributed to the partners. SEBC's share of the £725,000 was only £77,000 as the Council's share of overall growth in its business rate baseline was low for 2013/2014. The confirmed amount, once all returns had been submitted by 31 January 2013, would be included within the 2013/2014 budget setting process.

The Cabinet considered the retention of business rates and being part of the Suffolk Pool positively provided the potential to deliver more benefits to Suffolk and promoted closer working within Suffolk. It would also provide negotiating leverage with the two Local Enterprise Partnerships to help bring grants forward for economic growth.

100. Budget and Council Tax Setting: 2013/2014

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/02 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D279 (previously circulated) which presented the proposals for Budget and Council Tax Setting in 2013/2014.

The Cabinet was required to consider the budget for the Authority and recommend to Council the level of Council Tax required to fund this budget. Report D279 set out details of the Council's proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2013/2014 together with the medium term forecasts for the period 2014/2015 to 2016/2017.

The Council faced a number of financial challenges and opportunities for the future. In addition to the report itself, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provided at Appendix D, detailed in general terms how these challenges and opportunities would be tackled over the coming years.

The most significant challenge that the Council faced was the continuation of public expenditure cuts and the reduction in Central

Government grant funding. 2013/2014 also marked the start of a new era in the way Local Government was funded with the introduction from April 2013 of the Government's new Business Rates Retention Scheme and the implementation of the Localised Council Tax Support Schemes (Minutes 98 and 99 above refer).

The proposed 2013/2014 net revenue budget was £11.843m compared to the 2012/2013 net budget of £11.739m. Efficiency savings totalling £0.999m, arising from shared services with Forest Heath District Council together with other local savings initiatives, were being proposed.

It was estimated that £11.43m would be spent on the Council's capital programme during 2013/2014, to be funded from a combination of grants and contributions (£5.15m), earmarked revenue reserves (£2.03m) and usable capital receipts reserve (£4.25m). The capital programme included a growth bid of £0.08m to fund the continuation of the Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme during 2013/2014.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In particular, he referred to the conclusions reached by the Chief Finance Officer, as detailed in her report at Appendix E, that the estimates were robust, taking into account known risks and mitigating strategies and the reserves were adequate for the 2013/2014 budget plans. Councillor Ray added that considering the Council had needed to address the changes in business rates retention; the localisation of Council Tax support; inflation; and the reduction in Government Formula Grant, which had reduced by 4% for 2013/2014 resulting in a cumulative reduction of 30% over the last three financial years, it was encouraging that despite these challenges, the Council remained debt free and had achieved a balanced budget.

Councillor Ray also drew attention to the details of the Mid-Term Financial Strategy; the planned capital expenditure over four years to 2016/2017; and progress made over the past year in the delivery of the shared services initiative with Forest Heath District Council.

The Cabinet not only wished to commend the extensive work of the Chief Finance Officer and her team but also the Chief Executive, Directors and all the staff who had shown dedication and commitment in making the Council more efficient in delivering the necessary savings whilst maintaining the delivery of services.

Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, proposed that Council Tax should be frozen at the same level as for 2012/2013, which meant there had been no increase in Council Tax for the third consecutive year and for four out of the last five years. With costs rising and all the other changes and pressures on the Council, the Cabinet considered this to be a tremendous achievement whilst maintaining the provision of excellent services for the residents of the Borough.



RECOMMENDED: That subject to the approval of full Council:

- (1) the revenue budget, as summarised in Appendix A to Report D279, together with the shared services and local savings proposals, as detailed at Appendix C, be approved;***

- (2) *the revised Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix B, including the proposed growth of £0.08m to fund the continuation of the Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme during 2013/2014, as detailed in paragraph 4.8.4 of Report D279, be approved;*
- (3) *having taken into account the conclusions of the Head of Resources and Performance's report on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of budget estimates (Appendix E) including the Scenario Planning and Sensitivity Analysis (Appendix H) and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Appendix D) and all other information contained in this report, Cabinet be requested to establish the level of Council Tax for 2013/2014; and*
- (4) *the Head of Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, be authorised to transfer any surplus on the 2012/2013 revenue budget to the General Fund, and to vire funds between existing Earmarked Revenue Reserves, as set out at Appendix F, as deemed appropriate throughout the year.*

101. Recommendations from the Grant Working Party:

11 December 2012

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/17 Cabinet Member: Cllr Robert Everitt

The Cabinet considered Report D280 (previously circulated) which provided the recommendations emanating from the Grant Working Party meeting held on 11 December 2012:

On 11 December 2012 the Grant Working Party considered the following items:

- (1) Annual reports from Council-appointed representatives;
- (2) Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme (RIGS): Applications for Project Funding;
- (3) Streamlined System of Rural Grant Applications; and
- (4) 2013/2014 Core Funding Applications from Voluntary Organisations.

Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Grants, informed the Cabinet that largely due to the Council's prudence, it was encouraging that the Council was still able to grant a substantial amount of funding to voluntary and charitable organisations.

RESOLVED: That

- (a) **Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme (RIGS): Application for Project Funding: 2012/2013**

A grant of £8,000 be awarded to St Edmund's Archers, Whepstead towards the cost of providing an indoor range with a clubhouse and associated amenities.

- (b) **Core Funding Applications from Voluntary Organisations: 2013/2014**

Subject to the approval of full Council as part of the budget setting process for 2013/2014:

- (1) Community Action Suffolk be awarded a grant of £18,000, subject to a review after one year, to provide infrastructure support to the voluntary sector in St Edmundsbury and the grant be inclusive of the sum required to cover the cost of the rent of accommodation in Haverhill;
- (2) no award of core funding be made to St Edmundsbury Newstalk but this organisation be advised to seek funding from Town and Parish Councils;
- (3) no award of core funding be made to Out and About (inclusion of disabled children and young people in local activities);
- (4) no award of core funding be made to Bury St Edmunds Foodbank but the applicants be advised to seek funding from Bury St Edmunds Town Council; and
- (5) Open Road be given a grant of £2,500 for drug and alcohol recovery services in Haverhill, subject to a review after one year in respect of which more financial information and evidence of other funding should be provided.

102. Recommendations of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 13 December 2012 and 30 January 2013

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D281 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee at its meetings held on 13 December 2012 and 30 January 2013.

On 13 December 2012, the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee considered the following items:

- (1) The Future of the Anglia Revenues Partnership;
- (2) Fraud;
- (3) Counter-Fraud Activity Report;
- (4) Performance Report;
- (5) Partnership Budget 2013/2014;
- (6) Microsoft Licensing;
- (7) Business Rates Resourcing;
- (8) Home Working/Home Enabled Report;
- (9) Risk Based Verification Policy; and
- (10) Welfare Reform.

On 30 January 2013, the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee considered the following items:

- (1) Strategic Review; and

(2) ARP ICT Support Service.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED: That

(i) Meeting: 13 December 2012

(a) Partnership Budget 2013/2014

Subject to the Borough Council's budget setting process, the 2013/2014 budget for the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) be shared as follows:

Breckland Council: 34.76%: £1,912,716;
East Cambridge: 20.68%: £1,115,393;
Forest Heath: 16.80%: £ 952,184;
St Edmundsbury: 27.76%: £1,398,973

(b) Microsoft Licensing

Subject to the Borough Council's budget setting process for 2013/2014:

- (1) a new methodology for future licensing refreshes be approved;
- (2) the amounts needed for the licence refresh be funded via contributions from the Partner Authorities; and
- (3) the option to purchase by annual subscription over three years, be approved.

(c) Business Rates Resourcing

Subject to the Borough Council's budget setting process for 2013/2014

- (1) the changes to the current legislation be noted; and
- (2) the proposed changes to the Business Rates Service be approved.

(d) Home Working/Home Enabled Report

- (1) Changes to the Home Working Scheme be approved; and
- (2) the new Homeworking Policy be approved.

(ii) Meeting: 30 January 2013

(a) ARP ICT Support Service

The legal agreement between the four Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) partners be amended accordingly to reflect the change in ICT provision.

103. The Apex Two Year Review: Proposed Collaboration with the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/12

Cabinet Member: Cllr Sara Mildmay-White

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which detailed the current position in respect of the proposed collaboration of The Apex with the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds.

The Theatre Royal's consultation process had started with its stakeholders in respect of a proposed collaboration with The Apex. It was evident that the Theatre would not be seeking a 'single operation' model for the two venues at the current time, but was likely to suggest to the Council a less formal method of collaboration, potentially including some sharing of services. As such, the requirement for due diligence to be carried out on any proposals by the Borough Council was significantly reduced.

The Theatre was aiming to sign-off a new business plan with its other funders by 31 March 2013. In order to do that, the Council's agreement was to be sought on any elements of the new plan which involved collaboration with The Apex in advance of that deadline. Such a decision by full Council may have needed to be taken, depending on the proposals. The Theatre's Board had not ratified its final proposal to the Council before this meeting of the Cabinet and therefore it was suggested that a report be submitted direct to full Council on 26 February 2013, without prior reference to Cabinet. This would allow all Councillors to be involved in the decision (in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that emanated from its review of The Apex), and also avoid any delay for the Theatre Royal.

All Councillors had already been provided with details of the Theatre's consultation so they could scrutinise the proposals and respond individually if desired. The report to full Council would contain the Council's own initial due diligence of whatever was proposed.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Sport, informed the Cabinet that it was understood the Theatre Royal was open to collaboration in some form which may include the operation of a joint box office. She, and the other Members of Cabinet, looked forward to receiving the proposals from the Theatre in due course.

RESOLVED:

That any proposals for collaboration between the Theatre Royal and The Apex are submitted directly to full Council on 26 February 2013 without prior referral to Cabinet.

104. Providing Flexibility Over the Start Time for Annual Council

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A

Cabinet Members: Cllrs Sara Mildmay-White and David Ray

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which sought approval for a change to the Constitution relating to the start time for the Annual Meeting of Council.

The Council Procedure Rules at Part 4 of the Constitution currently stated:

'The Annual Meeting of the Council will be held at 11 am on the second Thursday following the four yearly elections, or if there are no elections, the third Thursday in May'

In order to provide some flexibility over the start time to this important event in the annual cycle of meetings, the Cabinet was asked to recommend to Council a change to the Constitution. This change would provide the flexibility to explore a later start time which could aid the planning of a more compact programme of events on the day of Mayor Making which would be more accessible and relevant to stakeholders and the key strategic partners of the Council.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Sport drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.



RECOMMENDED:

That, subject to the approval of full Council, the existing Council Procedure Rules at 1.1.1 of Part 4 of the Constitution be replaced with the following:

'The timing of the Annual Meeting of the Council will be established by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Mayoral Advisory Committee, the meeting to be held on the second Thursday following the four yearly elections, or if there are no elections, the third Thursday in May'.

105. Suffolk Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr Sara Mildmay-White

The Cabinet considered Report D282 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the adoption of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Suffolk.

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Suffolk County Council was required to establish a Health and Wellbeing Board for Suffolk and, with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), had a duty to produce a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) for the county. Although not statutory partners, the contribution of Suffolk District Councils to local communities, for example, housing, licensing, planning economic development, leisure etc, was recognised as being a key factor in the health and wellbeing of Suffolk residents. Suffolk District Councils had four seats on the Board representing Ipswich, plus the three sets of shared service paired authorities. The current West Suffolk representative was Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White.

The Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board (SHWB), which had been meeting in shadow form for over a year, would become statutory from April 2013 and the JHWS would guide the work of the Board. It was important that all those with representation on the Board, including St Edmundsbury, agreed the content of the JHWS and contributed to its implementation through the Council's service delivery, where appropriate, in terms of meeting local need and matching the policies and resources of the individual partner organisations.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Health and Wellbeing, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In

particular, she stated that district councils had a significant role to play in the health and wellbeing of their local communities, therefore it was important that St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC), as one of many partners, supported the implementation of the Strategy. Emphasis was placed on the four strategic themes detailed in Section 5.3 of the report. She added that having representation from SEBC and Forest Heath District Council on the Health and Wellbeing Board helped to enable both Councils develop a shared understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of the community and have strategic influence over commissioning decisions regarding public health and social care.



RECOMMENDED: That subject to the approval of full Council:

- (1) the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Suffolk developed by Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing Board, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report D282, be approved as part of the St Edmundsbury policy framework; and**
- (2) it be agreed that St Edmundsbury will contribute to the implementation of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy through its service delivery mechanisms (where appropriate in terms of meeting local need and matching the policies and resources of the Council), and through membership of the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board which has the statutory duty to produce the Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.**

106. Commitment of Capital Funding for Housing Scheme in Whepstead

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/16 Cabinet Member: Cllr Anne Gower

The Cabinet considered Report D283 (previously circulated) which sought approval for capital funding for an affordable housing scheme in Whepstead.

Suffolk Housing Society, working with Iceni Homes, was in the process of developing an affordable housing scheme of five homes in Whepstead, including a bespoke bungalow for a family with complex needs. St Edmundsbury Borough Council had been working in partnership with the aforementioned and Suffolk County Council on how best to meet the housing needs of this local family.

The housing scheme formed part of Iceni Homes' commitment to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to deliver affordable homes by March 2015 and therefore would receive funding towards the cost of delivering the homes, however there was a shortfall due to the additional requirements of this particular family.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In response to a question, the Cabinet was informed that the funding could not be awarded in the form of a Disability Facilities Grant, as provided under the Housing Assistance Policy, as this was a complex new build not an adaptation of an existing property.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) an allocation of £15,000 from the Council's Affordable Housing Capital Programme, as detailed in paragraph 8.3 of Report D283, be approved to enable the delivery of an affordable housing scheme in Wepstead, which will only be released following written confirmation that the other £15,000 allocation from Suffolk County Council has been secured; and
- (2) the £15,000 allocation be drawn down within 12 months from the approval of the planning permission, otherwise the allocation will be withdrawn.

107. Recommendations from the Licensing and Regulatory Committee: 21 January 2013: Triennial Review of Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Licensing Principles

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/07 Cabinet Member: Cllr Anne Gower

The Cabinet considered Report D284 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the Licensing and Regulatory Committee meeting held on 21 January 2013.

On 21 January 2013 the Licensing and Regulatory Committee considered the following items:

- (1) Triennial Review of Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Licensing Principles;
- (2) Review of Street Vending Policy: 'A' Boards; and
- (3) Summary of Licensing Applications and Appeals: 1 October to 31 December 2012

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.



RECOMMENDED:

That, subject to the approval of full Council:

- (1) ***the draft Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Licensing Principles, as set out in Appendix A of Report D253, be adopted; and***
- (2) ***the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, to make any minor typographical, grammatical, factual or contextual changes to the Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Licensing Principles, provided they do not materially affect the meaning of the document.***

**108. Recommendations from the Rural Area Working Party:
24 January 2013**

***Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/15 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Robert Everitt
and Anne Gower***

The Cabinet considered Report D285 (previously circulated) which contained the recommendations emanating from the Rural Area Working Party meeting held on 24 January 2013.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, informed the Cabinet that the purpose of the first set of recommendations were to propose changes to the current method of evidencing housing need in rural areas to support development of rural exception schemes. These changes were closely linked with the Rural Profiling Project which was currently being developed. She provided details of how evidence could now be obtained without the need for carrying out housing needs surveys, as contained in Report D285.

Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Youth Provision, informed the Cabinet of the various activities, events and projects which had been delivered over the past year as part of the Rural Youth Work Programme. He particularly drew attention to the 'Wos Up' project which was now in its fifth year. Approval was sought to continue to fund this project in the rural areas of St Edmundsbury in partnership with parish councils located in the Borough. The Cabinet noted that in 2012, the total project cost £12,082 of which £1,500 was met by parish councils.

RESOLVED: That

(1) Evidencing Rural Housing Need

The Borough Council stops carrying out housing needs surveys and evidences future housing schemes in the following way:

- (a) carry out Borough-wide assessment of rural housing, focusing on key service centres, service centres and infill villages; this assessment to be undertaken using the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Housing Register and other data with an objective of completing this work within 3 months and updating annually thereafter;
- (b) this assessment would allow the Borough Council to map localities showing the greatest housing need, thus providing a strategic overview which can then be used to determine future development priorities and allow the Council to be responsive to future opportunities, and would be of particular use once the situation regarding funding post-March 2015 becomes clearer;
- (c) the assessment to provide a mandate to engage with Parish Councils and work with local communities to shape solutions and then link in with the draft Rural Vision 2031 and the work currently being developed around the Rural Profiling Project; and

- (d) in the event of approaches by individual parishes who are concerned about housing need in their locality, based on the information from the assessment, the Council would be in a better position to advise accordingly and work with them on potential solutions.

(2) Rural Youth Work Programme

Subject to budgetary provision for 2013/2014 the following be approved:

- (a) the Borough Council continue to fund IPSUM YP, or a similar group, to deliver a 'Wos Up' Project in the Rural Areas of St Edmundsbury and look to work with Parish Councils to increase the number of sessions;
- (b) officers be asked to look at what the future format might be for Rural Youth Work under Shared Services arrangements;
- (c) officers be asked to investigate relevant external funding to develop other work in the rural areas with the Council's partners, including looking at innovative projects with an aim to increase the participation of females in the Rural Youth Work Programme; and
- (d) any changes or new recommendations to be followed up by a period of consultation with young people conducted by officers.

109. Housing Assistance Policy: Administrative Matter

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr Anne Gower

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which sought delegated authority to make minor amendments to the previously adopted Housing Assistance Policy.

A joint Housing Assistance Policy was produced in 2012 for utilisation across both Forest Heath District (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough (SEBC) Councils. When this Policy was approved at FHDC (11 July 2012 – Council Minute 097 referred), it included a paragraph to enable the Head of Service, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to make minor amendments to the Policy without the full document having to come back through the Cabinet and Council approval process. Unfortunately at the time, this second recommendation was not included with the recommendation when approval was sought for the Policy at SEBC (27 September 2012 – Council Minute 47 (A) (1) referred).

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health informed the Cabinet that the recommendation should be amended to read *'the Head of Housing be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health...'* instead of *'the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health...'*

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Housing be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, to make any further minor typographical, factual, spelling, grammatical and other minor changes to the joint Housing Assistance Policy, as contained within Appendix A to Report D78, provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Policy.

110. Suffolk Growth Strategy

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths

The Cabinet considered Report D286 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the Suffolk Growth Strategy.

The Suffolk Growth Strategy clearly articulated the ambitions for economic growth held by the constituent local authorities in Suffolk. It provided the opportunity for all of Suffolk's stakeholders to understand not only the appetite for economic growth in Suffolk but also how it was intended this growth would be realised. Ultimately, the Strategy would help influence the growth plans that both the New Anglia and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnerships were about to prepare and would enable future funding opportunities to be co-ordinated and supported. It would also supplement local growth plans that would contain more detail.

The Strategy was accompanied by a Suffolk Delivery Programme that would focus on the four elements of the Strategy, namely: Innovation and Enterprise; Growth locations; Skills; and Infrastructure. Whilst the content of the Strategy was important, it was the Delivery Plan that would articulate how the authorities would bring the aspirations for growth into reality.

The Strategy had been out to consultation from 21 January to 8 February 2013. The finalised version of the document would be launched at The Apex, Bury St Edmunds on 27 February 2013.

Councillor Griffiths, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for economic development and growth, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. As further changes were required to the draft Strategy prior to its launch on 27 February 2013, he suggested that the first recommendation should be amended to read *'the broad thrust of the draft Suffolk Growth Strategy, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report D286, be approved'*.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the broad thrust of the draft Suffolk Growth Strategy, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report D286, be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Economic Development and Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Rural Affairs, be given delegated authority to approve the final version of the Strategy prior to its launch on 27 February 2013.

111. Recommendations from the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party: 5 February 2013

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Members: Cllrs Terry Clements and Robert Everitt

The Cabinet was informed that as no recommendations emanated from the meeting of the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party held on 5 February 2013, Report D287 had not been prepared for consideration.

Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Bury St Edmunds and Chairman of the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party, informed the Cabinet of issues discussed at that meeting.

112. Recommendations from the Sustainable Development Working Party: 7 February 2013

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/08 Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report D288 (amended) (previously circulated) which provided the recommendations emanating from the Sustainable Development Working Party meeting held on 7 February 2013.

On 7 February 2013 the Sustainable Development Working Party considered the following items:

- (1) Joint Development Management Policies: Submission; and
- (2) Suffolk Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The Cabinet noted that Report D288 had been amended to reflect an additional recommendation proposed by the Working Party for consideration by the Joint Development Management Policies Committee. This had been provided in Report D288 (amended) for information only.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that a helpful leaflet had been produced by the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership, which provided useful information for residents that may consider themselves to be at risk of flooding.



RECOMMENDED:

That, subject to the approval of full Council, the content of the Suffolk Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report D266, be adopted.

113. Recommendations of the Joint Development Management Policies Committee: 11 February 2013

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/01 Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report D289 (amended) (previously circulated) which provided the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Joint Development Management Policies Committee meeting held on 7 February 2013.

The Cabinet noted that an amended version of Report D289 had been circulated as it contained an additional recommendation proposed by the Sustainable Development Working Party and also an amendment to

recommendation (3) from the Joint Development Management Policies Committee.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.



RECOMMENDED: That, subject to the approval of full Council

- (1) the Joint Development Management Policies document, as attached at Working Paper 2 to Report D110, be approved for submission to the Planning Inspectorate;***
- (2) the possibility of further consultation being necessary in relation to the potential impacts on this document of the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) be noted;***
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders from each authority, to make minor changes to the document, as required, as a result of discussion and negotiation with interested parties prior to the Examination in Public; and***
- (4) a method be brought forward whereby all Members can be kept informed of changes to the document being recommended to the Inspector.***

114. Land at Eden Road, Haverhill

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/13 Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths

The Cabinet considered Report D290 (previously circulated) which sought approval for Land at Eden Road, Haverhill being gifted to Havebury Housing Partnership (Havebury), subject to restrictions.

The Council had been approached by Havebury, which wished to develop a scheme of three houses on the Council's vacant site at Eden Road, Haverhill. This would complement the scheme of seven flats currently being built by Havebury on adjoining land fronting the High Street.

Havebury proposed to fund the scheme from its own resources. There was no additional social housing grant available. If the Council required Havebury to buy the land, the scheme might become unviable and may not proceed.

Councillor Griffiths, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for asset management, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

Councillor Mrs Gower, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Housing and for Haverhill, responded to questions raised by Councillor Cox who was present at the meeting. However, as a Member of the Development Control Committee, she refrained from responding to matters which related to planning issues.

As a result of the discussion held, an amendment to the first recommendation was proposed so that it read '*subject to the grant of*

planning consent, Land at Eden Road, Haverhill be gifted to Havebury Housing Partnership, as detailed in paragraph 4.18 of Report D290,’.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) subject to the grant of planning consent, Land at Eden Road, Haverhill be gifted to Havebury Housing Partnership, as detailed in paragraph 4.18 of Report D290, with the requirement that it remains in perpetuity in affordable housing use; and
- (2) the scheme viability is reappraised at completion, and a return is made to the Council if the scheme improves its profitability, as detailed in paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 of Report D290.

115. Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs

Decisions Plan Ref: Feb13/06 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report D291 (previously circulated) which provided the collection data in respect of Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates and sundry debts and sought approval for the write off of debts as contained within 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, 3 and 4.

RESOLVED:

The write off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report D291, be approved as follows: -

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|--------------------|---|
| Exempt Appendix 1: | 8 accounts for Council Tax totalling £20,819.53; |
| Exempt Appendix 2: | 21 accounts for Business Rates totalling £159,278.62; |
| Exempt Appendix 3: | 1 Sundry Debtor account totalling £2557.20; and |
| Exempt Appendix 4: | 5 Housing Benefit overpayment totalling £15,350.31. |

The meeting concluded at 6.58 pm

**J H M GRIFFITHS
CHAIRMAN**