

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 10 December 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, Pugh, Ray, Mrs Stamp and Stevens

BY INVITATION: Councillors Mrs Broughton (Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee), Houlder (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Forest Heath District Councillor Millar (Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities) and Mrs R V Hopfensperger

62. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

63. Minutes

Following the distribution of the agenda and papers for this meeting replacement pages 3 and 4 of the minutes of 6 November 2013 had been circulated as part of a sentence was missing from point (7) of the resolution of minute 51 on page 3.

Subject to the above addition to the minutes, the public minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

64. Declarations of Interests

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

65. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 27 November 2013

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolios

The Cabinet received and noted Report E193 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 27 November 2013:

- (1) Ernst and Young: Presentation of Annual Audit Letter 2012/2013;
- (2) Mid-Year Internal Audit Progress Report 2013/2014;
- (3) Key Performance Indicators and Quarter 2 Performance Report 2013/2014;
- (4) Biannual Corporate Complaints and Compliments Digest;
- (5) Budget Monitoring Report 1 April to 30 September 2013;
- (6) Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2014/2015;
- (7) Corporate Risk Register Quarterly Monitoring Report: September 2013;
- (8) Investment Activity 1 April to 30 September 2013 and Review of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy; and
- (9) Work Programme Update.

Councillor Mrs Broughton, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that a separate report was included on the Cabinet agenda in respect of item (8) above.

66. Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Investment Activity 1 April to 30 September 2013 and Review of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy
Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/08 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report E195 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the preferred option to support the Council's Treasury Management activities.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that on 27 November 2013 the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee had considered Reports E164 and E163, which had been scrutinised by the Treasury Management Sub-Committee on 18 November 2013.

Report E164 provided an update on treasury management activity for the period 1 April to 30 September 2013, the details of which were duly noted by the Cabinet.

Report E163 provided the findings of the review carried out by the Council's appointed external consultants, PS Live on the Council's current Treasury Management Investment Strategy; an outline to the external support available for treasury management activities, and a summary of the external support presentations held during the Treasury Management Sub-Committee meeting held on 23 September 2013.

The use of either a Treasury Management Advisor and/or the use of an external Fund Manager were considered as the options available to support the Council's treasury management activities. Brokers were unable to offer any form of treasury management advice to the Council, so had been excluded from the three options set out in Section 5 of Report E163. The three options therefore were:

- Option A – Treasury Management Advisors only
- Option B – External Fund Managers only
- Option C – Combination of both Option A and B.

Such external support required to assist the Council in ensuring that the Council had in place the necessary framework to ensure the effective management and control of treasury management activities were summarised in Report E195.

Councillor Mrs Broughton, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee added that PS Live had provided an extremely informative presentation at the Treasury Management Sub-Committee meeting on 23 September 2013 which helped in considering the possible options.

RESOLVED:

That the content of Report E164, being the Investment Activity report from 1 April to 30 September 2013, be noted.



RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) Option C, as detailed in Report E163 be approved and the potential use of Fund Managers be set out within the 2014/2015 Treasury Management Strategy; and**
- (2) a procurement exercise on a potential Fund Manager be carried out during 2014/2015.**

**67. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
4 December 2013**

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A

Cabinet Members: All Portfolios

The Cabinet received and noted Report E195 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 December 2013:

- (1) Draft Families and Communities Strategy;
- (2) Decisions Plan: December 2013 to May 2014; and
- (3) Work Programme Update.

Councillor Houlder, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that extensive discussion had been held on the draft Families and Communities Strategy as detailed in Minute 68 below, and that a joint informal meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils would be held on Wednesday 22 January 2014 to consider the draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/2016. Voting on the respective recommendations would be held during formal separate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings immediately following the joint session.

**68. Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
Draft Families and Communities Strategy**

Decisions Plan Ref: Nov13/02 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr Robert Everitt

The Cabinet considered Report E196 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the draft West Suffolk Families and Communities Strategy, which had been produced jointly with Forest Heath District Council.

On 4 December 2013 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered Report E182, which provided in Appendix A, the Draft West Suffolk Families and Communities Strategy. The Strategy provided the framework for reshaping the relationship between the Council, its communities and their families. Its aim was to foster resilience in local communities and sought to address the dependency culture which could accumulate when the Council was seen as the first port of call for any issue.

Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder for Communities, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that he had attended the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and duly responded to questions raised on the draft Strategy. Whilst a significant number of issues and concerns had arisen during the discussion at that meeting, including the matters summarised in Section 4.7 of Report E196, the Committee had not sought to amend the recommendation. Councillor Everitt then acknowledged the presence of Forest Heath District Councillor Millar, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, who was in attendance at the Cabinet meeting to support the content of the draft joint Strategy.

In response to a question, the Cabinet was informed that engagement had been undertaken with Suffolk County Council's (SCC) Portfolio Holder for Localities and relevant SCC officers, to ensure duplication of the aims and objectives of the Strategy was avoided and to ensure SCC acknowledged the proposed aspirations of both St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils in connection with this matter.



RECOMMENDED:

That the West Suffolk Families and Communities Strategy, as contained in Appendix A to Report E182, be adopted.

69. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes 2014/2015

Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/04 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report E197 (previously circulated) which sought approval for making no changes to the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2013/2014 or the Council Tax technical changes, in 2014/2015.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, informed the Cabinet that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) was introduced on 1 April 2013 (Paper D224, 12 December 2012 referred.) The scheme served two purposes:

- (a) to localise the system of benefits previously administered by central government; and
- (b) to reduce by 10% the amount of support paid to those finding it hard to pay council tax, in order to meet the Government's funding cut.

Following consultation, the Council had decided to meet the cost of the Government's 10% cut by requiring working age claimants to pay 8.5% more of the council tax charge than previously; and by changing the discounts/exemptions available to owners of second homes and empty properties. Limiting the increase for working age claimants meant that the Council received a year one transitional grant from Government.

The scheme adopted for empty and second homes in February 2013 (Paper D277 refers) was as follows:

Discounts	2012/2013	2013/2014
Class A, empty, unfurnished and undergoing major repairs to render habitable	100% exemption for 12 months maximum	10% discount for a twelve month period
Class C, empty, substantially Unfurnished	100% exemption for 6 months maximum	10% discount for a six month period
Second homes	10% discount	5% discount
Empty homes premium (property empty for more than 2 years)		Pay 150%

The Council had received a one off transitional grant in 2013/2014 from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the intention was to use some of this grant to implement a cost neutral scheme.

The Cabinet duly noted the monitoring position of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2013/2014 and Council Tax technical changes as at 1 October 2013, as detailed in paragraphs 5.7 to 5.12 of Report E197, and then considered the proposals for the 2014/2015 scheme provided in Section 6.

As the main precepting authority with around 80% of the Council Tax bill, Suffolk County Council had indicated its contentment with a 2014/2015 scheme along the lines of maintaining the overall 2013/2014 budget level for the LCTRS with no further reduction in expenditure required other than the original 10% Government reduction (cost neutral position at that point), which was achieved across the LCTRS and technical changes income.

Whilst the monitoring figures and position reported in Section 5 of Report E197 provided some comfort, a full year's review needed to be undertaken to understand the overall impact including behavioural changes around bringing empty properties back into use, property numbers and LCTRS caseload before recommending any changes to the schemes. The Cabinet considered it prudent to support the recommendation to continue the schemes in their current forms, including applying the current 2013/2014 level of applicable amounts within the LCTRS, for 2014/2015. The technical changes would also remain as those detailed in the table above for 2013/2014.

Due to the fact that the LCTRS was not changing this year there was no requirement to undertake specific consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the monitoring position of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2013/2014 and council tax technical changes as at 1 October 2013, as detailed in paragraphs 5.7 to 5.12 of Report E197 be noted.



RECOMMENDED:

That no change be made to the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2013/2014 or council tax technical changes for 2014/2015, as detailed in Section 6 of Report E197.

(Forest Heath District Councillor Millar left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

70. Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2014/2015

Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/05 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet received and noted Report E198 (previously circulated) which provided the basis for the formal calculation of the Council Tax base for the financial year 2014/2015.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, informed the Cabinet that the Council Tax Base (CTB) of the Council was the

total taxable value at a point in time for all the domestic properties in its area, projected changes in the property base and the estimated collection rate. It was used in the calculation of Council Tax. Each authority divided its total Council Tax required to meet its budget requirements by the Tax Base of its area to arrive at a Band 'D' Council Tax.

The Band 'D' Properties figure as at 7 October 2013 of 34,477.90 as quoted in the CTB1 form attached as Appendix 1 to the report had been updated as at 19 November 2013 to allow for:

- (a) technical changes outlined in Report E197 (for the purpose of the CTB1 form the full property was removed and therefore the element chargeable for Council Tax under each individual authority's scheme, needed to be added back into the Council Tax base); and
- (b) potential growth in the property base during 2014/2015 taken from an average of the housing delivery numbers for those sites within the local plan and those that had planning permission, adjusted for an assumed level of discounts/exemptions within that growth of property base.

An allowance was then made for losses on collection, which assumed that overall collection rates would be maintained at approximately 98.5%. In addition to this collection rate change, an adjustment had been made to allow for the collectability of the Council Tax arising from the changes in the new Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which had been assessed at 90%. The resulting Tax Base for Council Tax collection purposes had been calculated as 34,725.00 which was an increase of 44.48 on the previous year.

Appendix 2 attached to Report E198 showed the tax base estimated figures for Town/Parish Councils for 2014/2015.



RECOMMENDED:

That full Council NOTES:

- (1) the tax base for 2014/2015, for the whole of St Edmundsbury is 34,725.00 equivalent Band 'D' dwellings, as detailed in paragraph 4.8 of Report E198; and***
- (2) the tax base for 2014/2015 for the different parts of its area, as defined by Parish or special expense area boundaries, are as shown in Appendix 2 to Report E198.***

71. Recommendations from the Sustainable Development Working Party: 19 November 2013

Decisions Plan Refs: Nov13/01 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Terry Clements and Peter Stevens

The Cabinet considered Report E199 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party held on 19 November 2013.

On 19 November 2013 the Sustainable Development Working Party considered the following substantive items:

- (a) North-West Bury St Edmunds Masterplan; and
- (b) West Suffolk Sustainability Strategy.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, informed the Cabinet that Report E168 outlined the process for the preparation of the Masterplan for North-West Bury St Edmunds and sought its adoption as non-statutory planning guidance. Land at North-West Bury St Edmunds was allocated in Policy CS11 of the adopted St Edmundsbury Core Strategy to accommodate long term strategic growth for Bury St Edmunds which would deliver around 900 homes, a relief road, employment, education, community and leisure facilities. The allocation was developed further by Policy BV3 of the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 submission draft document. A Concept Statement adopted by the Council on 16 May 2013 provided the parameters and framework for the development of the site was included as Appendix 6 to the Vision 2031 document.

The draft Masterplan was prepared by consultants acting on behalf of developers, Countryside Properties. Wide consultation on the document had been carried out by the developers between 4 July 2013 and 1 August 2013 in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and the Protocol for the Preparation of Masterplans.

Following due consideration, the Sustainable Development Working Party had proposed amendments to the draft Masterplan, which were incorporated into the recommendation below.

Councillor Mrs R V Hopfensperger, Ward Member for Fornham Ward, addressed the Cabinet on this matter. She largely expressed the concerns of Fornham All Saints Parish Council, which whilst it had welcomed the consultation undertaken by Countryside Properties Ltd, and acknowledged this was a masterplan and the detail would come later with the planning applications, specific concerns remained in connection with the following proposals:

- (a) the alignment of the link road and the potential traffic noise impact on properties located in Fornham All Saints;
- (b) the provision of additional housing rather than leisure/green space on the area designated for a new primary school should the site not be used for this purpose;
- (c) whether land between the proposed link road and the village could be retained and designated as farmed agricultural land;
- (d) the visual impact of potential 4-storey building heights; and
- (e) although not detailed in the masterplan, whether a contribution could be made to the Parish Council for perimeter fencing for the Parish Charity-owned allotments via the Section 106 Agreement.

Councillor Clements duly responded to these issues including that:

- (a) the alignment of the road largely followed the line walked in March 2011; however it had been moved slightly closer to Bury St Edmunds in order to avoid Oak trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders. Noise

modelling had demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on the village and no buffer was required;

- (b) the outcome of the School Organisation Review might indicate that the existing Howard Middle School could be used to serve the primary school need and therefore the site would not be used for this purpose. Given the amount of open space already being provided by the developers, there was no justification for further leisure provision;
- (c) the Council could not compel a developer to purchase land from a private landowner with any such consideration would need to be between the parties concerned;
- (d) the scale and mass of new buildings and the wider visual impact would be taken in to consideration at the planning application stage; and
- (e) the Council was required to test the reasonableness for requiring contributions under S106 and as such, any obligation had to directly be related to the development concerned but given the location of the allotments it was considered the Parish Council's requirement for perimeter fencing was not a satisfactory request.

Councillor Clements added that it was important to acknowledge that the provision of the required infrastructure was not reliant on public funding. The developers would need to meet these costs from their receipts for selling houses on the site and therefore a phased approach would be required. He then informed Councillor Mrs Hopfensperger that further detail in response to the issues raised would be provided in a written reply.

Councillor Stevens, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for environmental management, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet in respect of seeking approval for the West Suffolk Sustainability Strategy. He explained that to achieve a shared approach to policy and service delivery for the people of West Suffolk and meet statutory obligations, Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils had developed a draft Sustainability Strategy for West Suffolk. Report E169 had outlined consultation undertaken on the draft strategy and the amendments made to it as a consequence. The adoption of the strategy in its amended form was being sought.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for health and wellbeing, wished to make an amendment to the revision proposed by the Sustainable Development Working Party so that it read 'medical care can prolong survival after serious illness but social and economic conditions often influence mental and physical health and wellbeing in the first place.' This amendment was accepted by the Cabinet.



RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the Masterplan for the development of the site at North-West Bury St Edmunds, as set out in Appendix A to Report E168, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance subject to the following amendments:**

- (i) **Section 7 – Movement and Access**
New paragraph to be inserted – ‘7.1 It is acknowledged that there will be a wider traffic impact resulting from this development and planning applications will need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment that addresses how and when these wider impacts will be addressed to the satisfaction of the highways authority and the Highways Agency.’ (with the rest of the paragraphs in the section being re-numbered); and
- (ii) **Section 9 – Sustainability and Energy**
Paragraph 9.13 to be amended by the insertion of the words ‘and sizes’ after the word ‘types’ in the third line.
- (2) **The proposed West Suffolk Sustainability Strategy, as contained in Appendix A of Report E169 be adopted subject to the amendment of the second sentence in the first paragraph of Section 2.4 to read:**

‘Medical care can prolong survival after serious illness but social and economic conditions often mental and physical health and well-being in the first place.’

72. Joint Development Management Policies: Further Representation Breakdown and Key Issues
Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet received and noted Report E200 (previously circulated) which informed of an issue connected with the Joint Development Management Policies Document.

The submission draft of the Joint Development Management Policies Document (JDMPD) was the subject of consultation during October to December 2012. The document and summary of representations had progressed through the democratic process having been approved for submission by St Edmundsbury Borough Council on 26 February 2013, and was due to be considered by Forest Heath District Council on 11 December 2013.

In preparation for submission, the representations submitted during the consultation period at the end of 2012 had been analysed and broken down further through categorisation by policy or paragraph number, as shown in Appendix A, to aid the Inspector and the Examination process. This process had not resulted in any new issues being raised, but had produced a clearer and more detailed summary of all the objections.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, informed the Cabinet drew relevant issues to the Cabinet.

73. Vision 2031: Consideration of Modifications

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A

Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

(Whilst not a Member of the Cabinet, and would therefore not be debating or voting on the recommendation, Councillor Mrs Broughton declared a pecuniary interest in this item as her husband had a beneficial interest in land referred to in the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2013 document and left the meeting for the consideration of this item.)

The Cabinet considered Report E201 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the relevant delegations to be authorised to enable proposed main modifications required to the Vision 2031 documents to be approved ahead of public consultation following the close of the Local Plan hearings.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, explained that on 30 September 2013, full Council had resolved to submit the Vision 2031 local plan documents for Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and the Rural Area to the Secretary of State for Examination by a Planning Inspector. Examination of the documents had now commenced and Hearings were expected to be held early in 2014. During the course of the Examination, it was likely that there would be a need to suggest and agree modifications to the documents in order to ensure that the Inspector could find them 'sound'. Some modifications would arise from questions asked by the Inspector and others would result from comments received from people or organisations that submitted representations during consultation on the Vision documents. Although it was anticipated that most would be minor in nature, there may be a need for the Council to propose some 'main modifications' to the plan in order for the Planning Inspector to find it 'sound' by the time the Examination concluded. While it would ultimately be necessary to consult on these main modifications, it was unlikely that there would be an opportunity before or during the Hearings to take officers' suggested main modifications through the democratic process for consideration and endorsement. To do so would add considerable delays to the Examination process given that the Inspector would have arranged the Hearings and report writing to fit in with his other case load.

Given that the proposed main modifications would be subject to public consultation following the conclusion of the Hearings, it was suggested that an appropriate way forward would be for the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, and pending his arrival in post the Place Shaping Manager, should be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, to agree draft proposed main modifications to the Vision 2031 documents to be submitted to the Planning Inspector. The proposed modifications would be reported back through Cabinet following the conclusion of the Hearings.



RECOMMENDED:

That the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, and pending his arrival in post the Place Shaping Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, be given delegated authority to approve proposed main modifications required to the Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Rural Vision 2031 documents ahead of public consultation on the main

modifications following the close of the local plan hearings.

(Councillors Houlder and Mrs R V Hopfensperger left the meeting at the conclusion of this item. Councillor Mrs Broughton returned to the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

**74. Recommendation from the Haverhill Area Working Party:
21 November 2013**

Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/06 Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report E202 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a recommendation emanating from the meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party on 21 November 2013.

On 21 November 2013, the Haverhill Area Working Party (HAWP) considered the following substantive item:

- (1) Options for the partial cancellation of the Article 4 Direction in Haverhill.

Following the approval by HAWP (and subsequently Cabinet) on 15 November 2012 (Report D185 refers), public consultation was carried out on the proposal to cancel the Article 4 Direction affecting the two Haverhill conservation areas. Although there had been public support for the cancellation, Members had been concerned that alterations could then take place which would potentially harm the character of the conservation areas and therefore did not wish to support the cancellation of the Article 4 Directions. Members concerns had related in particular to the painting of front elevations and the loss of decorative elements and patterned brickwork which were distinctive features within the conservation areas. The proposal to cancel the Direction was subsequently deferred by Cabinet to allow officers to investigate other options for amending the Article 4 Direction.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. The Cabinet noted that whilst the Article 4 Direction could not be removed from some of the streets of the conservation areas, it was possible to remove several classes of development of the existing Direction. By retaining some of these the protection of the distinctive features referred to above would be maintained and would address Members' previous concerns regarding its complete removal. This would now be subject to consultation before final approval was sought.

Councillor Mrs Gower, a Member of the Haverhill Area Working Party, then provided a synopsis of the discussion held at the Working Party meeting and explained that local residents that had expressed concerns regarding the retention of the Direction had been pleased that a suitable compromise appeared to have been reached and they would respond to the public consultation on the revision accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the revised proposals detailed in Section 5.3 of Report E171 be approved for public consultation. This is an amendment to the Article 4 Direction which retains some restrictions to protect key features of the buildings.

**75. Recommendations from the Grant Working Party:
5 December 2013**

Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/07 Cabinet Member: Cllr Robert Everitt

The Cabinet considered Report E203 (amended) (previously circulated) which sought approval for recommendations emanating from the Grant Working Party meeting held on 5 December 2013.

On 5 December 2013 the Grant Working Party considered the following substantive item:

- (1) Core Funding Applications: 2014/2015.

Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for grants drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. In line with the Grants Policy, each year the Council awarded core funding grants to a variety of organisations. The majority of the funding was allocated to organisations for a four year period from 2012/2013 (Report C252 referred), therefore as with 2013/2014 this had given limited opportunity for some new applicants to apply for core funding with up to £11,000 being available for allocation in 2014/2015. Report E192 provided a summary of the applications received for funding for 2014/2015, as follows:

- (a) MENTA;
- (b) Artheads;
- (c) Suffolk Accident and Rescue Service (SARS); and
- (d) Haverhill Local History Group.

Each application had firstly been assessed in terms of whether it fell into a particular category to establish its eligibility for funding, as detailed in Section 4.2 of Report E192, or whether it could be referred to the four year (up to 2015/2016) £50,000 Community Grant scheme administered on behalf of the Borough Council by ONE Haverhill.

In addition, two applications, Open Road and Community Action Suffolk, had been awarded funding of £2,500 and £18,000 respectively in 2013/2014 for the initial year, with funding for a further year being subject to review (Cabinet minute 101 – 13 February 2013 referred). The funding for these two organisations was currently built into the base budget so the £11,000 quoted above would increase if these sums were not awarded for 2014/2015. The officers had recommended that delegated authority be given to the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities to review the performance of these two organisations after a full year of operation to enable them to make the decision as to whether it was appropriate to release the second year of funding. The Working Party had considered that as a discussion had been held earlier in its meeting regarding the possibility of another meeting needing to be arranged prior to budget setting for 2014/2015, it may wish to consider the recommendations directly following the outcome of the review rather than automatically providing delegated authority to the relevant officer and Portfolio Holder to make the decision. This resulted in an amendment being made to the recommendation, which was accepted by the Cabinet.

Against the officers' recommendation, the Working Party had felt that the full amount of £1,500 applied for by SARS should be awarded as Members had considered that whilst it was acknowledged that this was not a service area where the Council had responsibility, this charitable, voluntary organisation was an extremely valuable and worthwhile resource provided to

the people of St Edmundsbury. The Cabinet accepted the recommendation, however it was emphasised that this was in exceptional circumstances for 2014/2015 only.

A detailed discussion was also held on the application submitted by the Haverhill Local History Group. In 2012/2013 the Group had been given notice that funding would no longer be available and that it should apply to the Community Grant scheme administered by ONE Haverhill for future funding. Despite being given this advice in 2012/2013, an application for £2,250 had been submitted to the Borough Council to enable them to continue to operate out of its current premises at Haverhill Arts Centre. Consideration was given to a representation previously circulated by email to Members of the Grant Working Party from the Clerk to Haverhill Town Council, which had set out the Group's and ONE Haverhill's position. Members concurred with the Working Party's recommendation that no award should be made on the basis that the Group had previously been signposted to seek funding from ONE Haverhill as it was better placed to consider the grant than the Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the budget setting process for 2014/2015 and in accordance with the details provided in Sections 5 to 9 of Report E192:

- (1) unless another meeting of the Grant Working Party is convened sufficiently late in the financial year to allow Members to consider recommendations following the outcome of the review, delegated authority be given to the Head of Leisure Culture and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community, to review the performance of Open Road and Community Action Suffolk after a full year of operation and decide whether it is appropriate to release the second year of funding;
- (2) MENTA be awarded £2,970 per year for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 to support the 'Go Menta - Create Your Future' project in St Edmundsbury;
- (3) Artheads be awarded £2,500 for 2014/2015 from the Substance Misuse core funding;
- (4) SARS be awarded £1,500 for 2014/2015; and
- (5) no award be made to the Haverhill Local History Group but that, as previously advised, they focus future applications to the Community Grants funding administered by ONE Haverhill on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

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

At this point it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.

76. Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Expansion

Decisions Plan Ref: Dec13/01P

Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report E204 (previously circulated) which sought approval for authorising the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee to consider the expansion of the partnership.

The Council's Revenues and Benefits service was delivered through a formal partnership of four authorities (Breckland, East Cambridgeshire, Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils) under the auspices of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP).

Other authorities received services from ARP but were not full members of the partnership vehicle. For instance, Members recently approved the addition of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils to ARP, which would result in a management restructuring in 2014. This arrangement was being undertaken without Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Districts becoming full partners (although they may choose to do so in the future). Another council, Fenland District Council (DC), had indicated a desire to become a full (and fifth) member of the partnership, which would deliver further savings, increased resilience, and the commercial opportunity to operate a 'resource sharing platform' (to sell surplus capacity to non ARP authorities).

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, explained that the ARP Joint Committee would normally recommend a course of action to the respective Cabinets of the member authorities. However, the Joint Committee did not meet until 12 December 2013, after which St Edmundsbury's Cabinet would not meet again until 11 February 2014.

In order to progress with the already agreed shared management structure with Suffolk Coastal DC, Waveney DC and ARP, the Cabinet is being asked to support the decision of the Joint Committee, *should it be in favour* of inviting Fenland DC to join the partnership. This would mean that the management restructure could take place quickly, and only once. Waiting for approval at the Cabinet meeting in February 2014 would mean staff at ARP would be subject to two restructurings within the space of a few months, and also that savings would not be delivered as quickly as possible. No change in service levels will be experienced by residents in West Suffolk. Should the Joint Committee decide not to proceed with allowing Fenland DC to become part of the partnership, no further action would be required by Cabinet.

The Cabinet considered the significant benefits for the expanding the partnership, as detailed in the business case attached at Exempt Appendix A to Exempt Appendix 1 to the report, and considered it prudent to support the recommendation.

RESOLVED:

That the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee be authorised to enter into a new partnership arrangement which includes the existing four authorities of the ARP and Fenland District Council, provided that the Joint Committee concludes that this is the best course of action for the partnership at its meeting on 12 December 2013, as detailed in the report and business case contained in Appendix 1 to Exempt Report E204.

77. Exempt Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 6.21 pm

**J H M GRIFFITHS
CHAIRMAN**