



Council 29 June 2010

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

*Written report by Cllr Nigel Aitkens
Chairman of the Policy Development Committee*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Before summarising the work of the Committee's first meeting for 2010/2011, I would firstly like to pay tribute to the Committee's outgoing Chairman, Councillor Ian Houlder. Ian's sterling work as Chairman of the Policy Development Committee for the past three years has, I know, been greatly appreciated by the Committee's Membership and the wider Council, and I would like to thank him for his leadership of the Committee during that time, and also to wish him well in the busy year ahead as Mayor of St Edmundsbury.
- 1.2 This report covers the meeting of the Committee held on 9 June 2010.

2. Annual Report of the Cabinet 2009/2010

- 2.1 The Leader of the Council attended the last meeting of the Policy Development Committee, and presented the Cabinet's Annual Report for 2009/2010. The Committee questioned the Leader on the report's contents, resulting in discussions on a range of topics.
- 2.2 The Committee expressed its broad support for the document and the revised priorities of the Cabinet for 2010/2011.

3. Adoption of 2010/2011 Work Programme

- 3.1 In common with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, due to the lower number of suggestions for the work programme which were received compared to previous years, the Committee has also been able to include all suggested work in the work programme for 2010/2011. The new work programme was adopted by the Committee.
- 3.2 In addition to adopting the work programme, the Committee considered its requirements for 2010/2011 and re-appointed Councillors Mrs Warby, Mrs Whittaker and Redhead to the Diversity Group for 2010/2011. Additionally, six Councillors were appointed to work with officers on the programmed review of Parks Byelaws.

4. Equality Action Plan

- 4.1 The Committee is responsible for overseeing the work of the Diversity Group, and receives regular updates on the work of that Group, ensuring a Member lead on diversity across the organisation.
- 4.2 The Committee received a progress report on the implementation of the Equality Action Plan over the past year. Additionally, Members were advised of the Equality Peer Review which was undertaken in March 2010, to provide an independent analysis of the Council's progress. These findings were discussed by the Committee.
- 4.3 The Peer Review identified a number of areas where the Council could improve its equality and diversity work, and as a result a new Equality Action Plan had been developed. The new Equality Action Plan for 2010/2011 was recommended for approval.

5. Taking Vision 2025 Forward

- 5.1 In December 2005, full Council approved the St Edmundsbury Vision 2025 document and action plans, and Members will recall that between 2007 and 2009 each of the document's six themes was monitored to assess progress against the actions.
- 5.2 The Committee received an overall review of Vision 2025, together with recommendations on a way forward that built upon the aims of the original document, but which also reflected recent policy developments.
- 5.3 When taking the aims of Vision 2025 forward, the Council will also need to take into account other relevant documents into which Vision 2025 had an input, such as the Cabinet Annual Report, Corporate Plan, area strategies and various other policies and strategies, as well as recent policy developments such as place shaping and development of the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 5.4 Development of the LDF will include preparation of town and rural Master Plans, which will be documents covering a twenty year period up to 2031. The Master Plans will, in effect, replace 2025 in setting out the vision of place in St Edmundsbury, enabling the issues and priorities of Vision 2025 to be moved forward to 2031.

6. Asset Management Plan and Capital Management Strategy – Performance Management and Implementation Plans

- 6.1 The Committee considered the annual report on performance of the Asset Management Plan (AMP) for 2009/2010 and proposals for implementation in 2010/2011. The Asset Management Plan facilitates the Council to achieve its strategic aims by working towards an ideal and sustainable property portfolio to meet service delivery needs, and to help support major items of capital expenditure.
- 6.2 The Committee noted the outcomes and performance of the AMP and Implementation Programmes 2009/2010, and performance against the National Property Performance Indicators. Discussions were held on a number of areas of the report, following which the Committee recommended the Implementation Programmes 2010/2011 and the Asset Management Plan Action Plan 2010 for approval.