



## Council 28 September 2010

### CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

***Written report by Cllr Robert Everitt,  
Bury St Edmunds and Community Safety  
Portfolio***

**Portfolio includes:**

- Cabinet Commitment for Bury St Edmunds;
- Community Safety;
- Safeguarding Children;
- Licensing;
- Environmental Health;
- Environmental Management;
- CCTV;
- Emergency Planning
- Youth Action Plan (excluding Haverhill);
- Community development (excluding Haverhill); and
- Grants

**1. *Environmental Health***

- 1.1 The Commercial and Food Team has been very busy washing hands over the last two months. The whole team has been involved in Crucial Crew, 2 weeks of activities aimed at 10-11 year old school pupils. The children get the opportunity to learn various personal safety messages in a secure environment. The team encouraged students to 'wash their hands properly' and discuss other food safety issues. Over 1,100 attended Crucial Crew across the 2 weeks.
- 1.2 In addition, the Commercial and Food Team were also in attendance at Haverhill Big Day Out on 28 July 2010, where again food safety and hand washing were the key messages, with over 130 competition entries. It was a lovely sunny day and luckily the team had decided to give away sun hats, so they helped with sun safety too. It was estimated that over 2,500 people attended the event and as the Team were part of the sticker collection activity, felt as if they washed hands with most of them.

**2. *Dealing with Contaminated Land in the Borough***

- 2.1 Environmental Health Services is responsible for inspecting and co-ordinating clean up of contaminated land in the Borough as part of its statutory duties under Part IIa of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Contaminated land, in the worst case, can seriously affect human health and ecological systems, damage property, and pollute water resources. Domestic oil spills for example, can be very expensive to clean up with local examples that the Service has dealt with costing over £40,000 without taking into account the stress and disruption caused to the unfortunate householder.

2.2 As part of our inspection regime, the Environmental Management Team is carrying out detailed investigations of former landfill sites in the Borough. In March 2010, the Team successfully applied for a Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) contaminated land capital grant of over £21,000 to investigate two former landfill sites in the Borough. This work is now progressing with the drilling of monitoring wells followed by environmental testing, which has been agreed with the land owner and other parties with an interest. This will give the Team a better picture of the impact of the landfill and whether any further action needs to be taken. This follows a successful application for grant funding in 2008 of approximately £11,500 to carry out a similar investigation at another former landfill site.

### **3. Grants**

#### **3.1 Home Renewable Energy Grant Update**

- (a) The Council is committed to working with its partners to reduce per capita Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions in the Borough. In support of this work, since August 2009, the Council has offered grants to householders who wish to install renewable energy technologies.
- (b) From a total grant pot of £10,000, to date nineteen applications have been received for grants of £500 each, with nine awarded to householders wishing to install renewable energy technologies such as solar hot water systems and heat pumps.
- (c) Financial savings for householders and wider environmental savings are being achieved as a result of the grant awards. Furthermore, under the new Government-backed *'Feed in Tariff'* regime, householders are now able to receive income from renewable electricity generation.
- (d) Together, these installations are predicted to give annual financial savings of £2,828 and £60,914 over the life of the equipment, which is typically over twenty years. This does not include the income from the *'Feed in Tariff'* for those installing renewable electricity generation. Environmental benefits include predicted annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 14.7 tonnes and lifetime CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 306 tonnes. In comparison, the average carbon dioxide footprint of a resident in St Edmundsbury is around 10 tonnes per head each year.
- (e) The Council's current grant scheme has provided a small but significant financial lever to help householders who are considering renewable energy generation at their property, whether this is to produce heat or electricity. It is the intention to seek further funds to continue the grant targeting renewable heat generation in the home.
- (f) Due to the success of this Scheme, on 15 September 2010 the Cabinet agreed to the continuation of this Scheme and allocated a further £10,000 for 2010/2011.

### **4. Community Development and Community Safety**

#### **4.1 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

- (a) In partnership with the other agencies tackling anti-social behaviour, the Borough Council is establishing a 'co-located' team to deal with high risk ASB cases. The aim is to reduce the time taken to resolve complex cases by holding weekly casework meetings. In keeping with the style of working in West Suffolk House, this will be a virtual team which, outside of the weekly meetings, will come together as and when

needed to progress the work. Environmental Health, Havebury Housing Partnership, Adult Social Care and the Police are all committed to taking part. The Police will be basing an officer in West Suffolk House to support work on ASB across West Suffolk (who will be sitting with the Community Development Team on the second floor). Other agencies are all in the process of identifying how they can be involved. The Team is due to be up and running from 4 October 2010. Reports of ASB should continue to be made in the usual way to the Police, individual services or Safer Neighbourhood Teams who will refer the more intractable cases to the new Team.

#### 4.2 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT)

- (a) A new process aimed at encouraging members of the community to play a greater part both in identifying community safety issues and finding solutions to them started in early September 2010 (details were circulated in the Members' Bulletin). Quarterly public meetings are being held in Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Rural, followed by a multi agency problem solving meeting, which will work to reduce/eradicate the issues raised. The next round of meetings will be in December and dates will be advised.
- (b) The officers have supported the Police '*Street a week*' campaign which took place over the summer. The SNTs identified 'vulnerable' streets based on ASB complaints and crime figures. Each resident in those streets was then visited by a member of the team with a short questionnaire asking about ASB and crime generally. The results have still to be analysed but overall satisfaction with the work of the SNTs including the wider partners, was very high. This was a worthwhile but intensive piece of community engagement work.

#### 4.3 Positive Futures

- (a) This is a Community Safety Partnership funded project which has been working in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill over the summer holiday and will continue until October 2010. Street dance and football are provided on Friday evenings as a diversionary activity. The project, which is popular and well supported by young people, will be the subject of a full evaluation which will be available at the end of October 2010.

#### 4.4 Bury St Edmunds Skate Park Experience

- (a) The Skate Park Committee is now well established and is holding regular meetings. The group have reached the second round in a Big Lottery 'Changing Spaces' bid which, if successful, will see a scheme of improvements taking place including a BMX pump track, new lighting, street furnishings and planting which will significantly improve the appearance of the site.
- (b) The Skate JAM ran again this year with huge success and over 2,000 people of all ages attending across the whole day, compared to 600 in 2009. The day included live DJs and competitions across the three disciplines (BMX, Skate and Inline). As the reputation of the event has grown we have been able to gain more sponsorship from local skate companies in the form of prizes. With the current attendance it is officially the UK's biggest free Skate Park JAM. I would like thank our partners in this great event, Hardcore Hobbies and St John's Ambulance Service, and our staff who plan and run it.

#### 4.5 **Local Democracy Week 2010**

- (a) This will be taking place from 11 to 15 October 2010. It is focussing on promoting the democratic system to young people. The week is going to be very busy with several events happening across the Borough including the production of a short film and Councillor 'Speed Dating' events. I would encourage all Members to try and be involved in this initiative. Further information will be available in the Members' Bulletin or from the Youth Development officer.

#### 4.6 **Older People's Falls Prevention Event**

- (a) Over the summer Borough Council officers and partners from the NHS Suffolk, Forest Heath District Council and Babergh District Council held events in each of the three districts aimed at reducing the incidences of falls in older people. Blood pressures were taken and checks made on the rubber ferrules of walking sticks plus referrals were made to local healthcare teams when thought necessary. A large amount of information on health and wellbeing was given out, including advice on personal safety. The feedback from those attending was very positive. The events are a good example of local partnership working, which the team is involved in.

#### 4.7 **Community Centre Transfer**

- (a) You will see that on this agenda Council is being asked to formally adopt '*Transfer of Council owned Community Centres to Community ownership – Expectations Document*'. As the name suggests the document sets out the expectations the Council has of any group which wishes to take on a community centre. These expectations are around being responsive to the community, having sound financial and business planning processes in place, being committed to equality and diversity and ensuring that local people are at the heart of the group running the centre.
- (b) Also being recommended is a timetable for the transfer of the Southgate Centre to the Southgate Community Partnership (SCP), a group comprising of the Community Association and local church, provided they meet the various criteria set out in the 'Expectations Document'. A target date of April 2011 has been set. There will now follow a period of close working with the SCP as they demonstrate that they meet those requirements. We hope that the successful transfer of this Centre will demonstrate the benefits that such a transfer can bring.

### 5. **Bury St Edmunds**

#### 5.1 **Overview**

- (a) A number of the reports presented to the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party are covered in my fellow Cabinet Member's reports, such as the engineering updates, but I want to specifically bring to Members' attention the following important items.

#### 5.2 **Markets Review**

- (a) The presentation made by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) of their findings together with recommendations was excellent and the Area Working Party had no hesitation in recommending adoption of the action plan to Cabinet. I was delighted with this outcome and consider the £6,000 a good investment for helping secure the long term future of the markets.

### 5.3 **Electric Car Charging Points**

- (a) The Area Working Party received a report regarding a proposal to install two electric car charging points in the multi-deck car park for a trial period. This innovative proposal was fully supported by the Area Working Party and endorsed by the Cabinet.

### 5.4 **School Yard Land**

- (a) A proposal to convert the two parcels of land surrendered to the Council by Centros was also well received by the Area Working Party at its meeting in September. This proposal will satisfy a specific user demand to provide a weekly permit for long stay users together with the introduction of a small parking area for low emission cars. Similar to the electric car charging points item above, this hopefully will encourage car owners to be 'greener' and reduce their carbon footprint.

### 5.5 **Town Centre**

- (a) Bury St Edmunds town centre continues to buck the trend of other town centres up and down the country. Despite one of the deepest recessions in decades the town continues to thrive. Car parking events continue to show a year on year increase, illustrating the increase in the number of visitors to the town. Also, shop vacancy rates hover around 8%, a figure that is not only within the range considered to be healthy by the Association of Town Centre Management but also does not include some big new names about to open in the town: Carluccio's; Tesco Express and Poundland.