



## Council 1 March 2011

### 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. Community Development and Community Safety**

##### **1.1 Community Picnic**

Planning is currently underway for a community picnic to be held on the Howard Estate during the half-term week, which starts on 30 May 2011. Officers are working with the Residents' Association, Children's Centre and schools to provide a free, local event aimed at encouraging parents to spend some fun time outdoors with their children. The aim is for the Residents' Association to take the lead if there is an appetite for subsequent events.

##### **1.2 Bury Skatepark**

Officers have been supporting the young people who have formed a skatepark committee and have just heard that they have successfully secured £50,000 from the Changing Spaces lottery fund. This money will be used to improve lighting, replace street furniture and install a 'pump track' for BMX riders, resulting in the park having a much wider appeal for young people in Bury St Edmunds and the surrounding area. This is an excellent example of the kind of 'Big Society' activity which the Council fosters by providing some officer support to groups to help them develop their capacity, whether in terms of developing their ideas or applying for external funding.

### 1.3 **Southgate Community centre**

Officers continue to work with the Southgate Community Partnership towards the transfer of the community centre to this new community group later in the year. The Partnership has now registered as a private company limited by guarantee and is also in the process of achieving registered charity status. A community survey has been carried out and the Partnership is reflecting the results in their business planning.

### 1.4 **Grants**

On 7 December 2010, the Grant Working Party allocated a range of core and project funding. We have honoured existing grant agreements for 2011/2012. However, given the reduction in funding available to the Council, the core funding allocations for the grants which were up for review in 2011/2012 were reduced by 10%. I appreciate that these reductions are not welcomed by the organisations concerned, but I know from our discussions with them that there is a general appreciation of the financial issues we face. 10% represents a smaller cut than the Council is absorbing itself, and applying the same reduction 'across the board' seemed the fairest approach. We will also offer every other assistance we can to voluntary organisations to help them through these difficult times, including helping with advice so they can access funds from other organisations, for example. The Working Party intends to review all grants paid by the Council as part of budget-setting for 2012/2013.

- 1.5 On a more positive note, two capital projects involving Scout Huts were awarded project funding. Volunteers from the Great Barton Scout Group have been doing a lot of work to upgrade their hut, and £4,000 was allocated. The Horringer Scout Group is embarking on a complete rebuild of its hut and store using an eco-friendly straw bale construction and £5,000 has been allocated. The latter project is a good example of how our Grants Officer can help point applicants in the direction of other sources of funding. The group were made aware of the 'Greenest County' funding being managed by the Suffolk Foundation and have successfully secured £25,000 from that fund.

## 2. **Environmental Health**

### 2.1 **Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency**

Over 150 households in the Borough have been able to obtain free home energy efficiency materials when they attended Greener Homes DIY showcase events held at Stanton in October 2010 and the Bury St Edmunds Green Fair held at The Apex in December 2011. Everyone attending was able to apply for at least £50 of free products, with some households eligible for up to £350 of products, saving money on fuel bills and reducing their carbon footprint.

Further showcase events are planned over the coming months. The list of goods on offer includes loft insulation, draught proofing, pipe insulation, hot water tank jackets, solid wall insulation, reflective radiator panels, and water butts. Linking to Councillor Stevens' portfolio, the events also provide the opportunity for residents to find out about renewable energy systems and the opportunities available from Feed in Tariffs.

### **3. Bury St Edmunds**

#### **3.1 Signs in Bury St Edmunds**

I am delighted to report that the first phase of the visitor signing project in Bury St Edmunds overseen by the Area Working Party has been completed. Blue and white signs have been erected directing visitors from the main arrival points in the town, the bus and railway stations and the car parks, to the town centre via shopping streets such as Abbeygate Street and St. John's Street. Signs have also been erected directing visitors from the car parks to Risbygate Street shops and restaurants, at the request of the newly-formed Risbygate Street Traders' Association.

#### **3.2 Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031**

The consultation for the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 was launched on 2 February 2010 at The Apex by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive. Vision 2031 is a new strategic long-term vision covering every aspect of life in the town including housing, shops, business, open spaces, schools, transport, health, social services, leisure, and planning for new neighbourhoods. More than 80 people attended the event and they were asked to identify key issues and to put forward their vision for the town in 2031. Geoff Barton, Headmaster of King Edward VI School, made an inspirational presentation and showed photographs taken by a student at the school. There will be further consultation events and Members are welcome to drop in to these or to contact [LDF@stedsbc.gov.uk](mailto:LDF@stedsbc.gov.uk) or telephone (01284) 757352 or 757368 for more details. Reply paid cards are also available and residents are encouraged to give their views by telephone or email.