



## Council 13 December 2011

### CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

#### ***Report by Cllr Terry Clements, Planning and Transport Portfolio***

**Portfolio includes:**

- Planning Policy, including Conservation and the Built Environment;
- Building Control;
- Property Gazetteer and Land Charges;
- Transportation Policy, Public Transport, Bus Station and Car Parking; and
- Engineering.

#### **1. Vision 2031**

- 1.1 The Council is on course to publish the draft Vision 2031 documents for Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and the Rural Area in the New Year. The Area Working Parties will be considering the draft documents in January 2012 prior to consultation with local communities and organisations commencing soon after.
- 1.2 In so far as Planning is concerned, the draft documents will set out the detailed strategy for the location of sustainable growth in the Borough. Their content will be informed by the outcomes of the Member engagement facilitated by the Prince's Foundation, which was attended by over half of the Borough Councillors. The conclusions of the exercise will inform the content of the initial draft Vision 2031 documents.

#### **2. Local Development Framework**

- 2.1 I am pleased to be able to report that we are pioneering the preparation of a joint planning policy document that covers the Borough and Forest Heath District Council, one of the first such documents in the country. The Development Management Policies document covers the day-to-day policies by which all planning applications will be considered and the Cabinet have approved the draft document for consultation. This will be commencing in January 2012, with the intention that the final document will go through examination by a Planning Inspector in 2013 prior to adoption. The draft document has taken on board the general aspirations of the draft National Planning Policy Framework, although it is recognised that the national framework is not yet approved by Government.

### **3. National Changes to Legislation and Policy**

- 3.1 In October 2011, the Council submitted its detailed response to the draft National Planning Policy Framework. This followed consideration by both the Sustainable Development Working Party and Development Control Committee and the circulation of the draft response to all Members prior to submission. The Borough Council raised some fundamental concerns to the draft Framework and it is hoped that the final document will address these concerns.
- 3.2 The Localism Act was given Royal Assent in November 2011 and signals intention to bring in a number of changes to the local planning system, in particular the introduction of neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders led by local communities. The regulations are the subject of consultation and it is likely to be Spring 2012 by the time that these are implemented. A good discussion on neighbourhood plans was held as part of the Council's Parish Conference in October 2011 and further work will continue with Parish Councils as more details emerge.

### **4. New Development Proposals**

- 4.1 I am pleased to be able to report that Development Control Committee met at Haverhill on 24 November 2011 to consider planning applications for the development of the new Research Park at Hanchet End. The site has been identified for development for many years and the Council has allocated Government Growth Area Funds by way of a loan to help provide the infrastructure ahead of the development taking place. The Development Control Committee resolved to approve the applications, subject to a Section 106 agreement being signed.

### **5. Car Parking**

- 5.1 Parking events in both Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds have continued to compare well with last year. We have experienced modest growth in contrast to many local authorities where car park use has declined.
- 5.2 The car parking service recorded that events over the 3 days of the Christmas Fayre rose by 7.9% to approximately 22,500. This was a record and excludes the park and ride service.
- 5.3 I am pleased to report that many improvements have been made over the past few months to the car parks in both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, namely:-
- (a) a new signage package has been rolled out to Bury Leisure Centre car park;
  - (b) St Andrews Street, Bury St Edmunds short stay car park has been re-surfaced and re-marked; and
  - (c) a new entry barrier/exit traffic controls has been installed at Meadows in Haverhill and the site is now secured at night.
- 5.4 Controls aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour in off street car parks are currently being investigated and will be the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order in the New Year.
- 5.5 The car parks team have received in-house customer service training and will be issued with new corporately branded uniforms before Christmas.