



## **Council** **30 June 2014**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL**

#### ***Report by Cllr Ian Houlder***

This report covers the meetings of the Committee held on 5 March 2014 and 13 May 2014.

##### 5 March 2014

#### **1. Future Developments for Regional Transport in West Suffolk (A1307)**

- 1.1 The Committee received a presentation from Cambridgeshire County Council who had been invited to its meeting to discuss their Transport Strategy for Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 Members discussed the presentation in detail and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the park and ride service and whether the hours could be extended; whether the park and ride service could be extended to Haverhill near to the research park; the viability of dualling the A1307 between Haverhill and Fourwentways; toll roads; guided bus-ways, transport needs for the elderly and people with disabilities; and the aspiration of reinstating the railway line between Haverhill and Cambridge.

#### **2. Annual Report on the West Suffolk Partnership**

- 2.1 The Committee received and noted an update on the work of the West Suffolk Partnership (WSP), which included changes made to the St Edmundsbury representation on the WSP; the leadership of its Strategic Group and the further evolution of the WSP where the focus was now on the Network element of the partnership, resulting in the involvement of the Council in the WSP being limited.
- 2.2 Members discussed the report and asked a number of questions, to which Officers and the Portfolio Holder for Community responded. In particular discussions were held on the future role of the Network element of the partnership as it had no statutory role/authority.

### **3. Decisions Plan: March to May 2014**

- 3.1 Members considered the latest Decisions Plan, covering the period March to May 2014. Members noted that officers were looking to hold an Extraordinary Informal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting with Forest Heath's Overview and Scrutiny Committee during May 2014, to enable discussions to be jointly held on the Joint Annual Report 2013-2014.
- 3.2 The Committee did not request any further information or involvement in any of the current planned decisions.

#### 13 May 2014 (Informal Joint Meeting)

### **1. Draft West Suffolk Annual Report (2013-2014)**

- 1.1 Prior to the formal meeting, the Committee held an informal joint Overview and Scrutiny meeting with Members of Forest Heath District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. All Members of the St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend the District Offices in Mildenhall to enable joint informal discussions to take place between the two authorities on the Draft West Suffolk Annual Report 2013-2014, prior to their presentation to both authorities' Cabinets during June and July 2014.
- 1.2 The report highlighted the key activities and developments which had been achieved over the financial year 2013-2014, with regard to the priorities set out in the Forest Heath Strategic Plan 2012-2016 and the St Edmundsbury Corporate Plan 2012-2016. The draft report reflected the fact that a great deal of the work our services carried out in the 2013-2014 financial year was on behalf of both Councils and for the benefit of all residents, visitors and businesses in West Suffolk; whilst also allowing for the distinctive needs, activities and characters of the two councils' areas to be captured. The final version of the report would be designed and would include photographs to highlight progress during the year.
- 1.3 Both Leaders drew relevant issues to the attention of the Committee, in particular the councils continued to support the Suffolk Business Park development; work with partners to deliver housing and economic growth summit; created a West Suffolk Diary website; continued to support the Home of Horseracing project in Newmarket; Mildenhall Museum project; supported over 60 community projects through the Forest Heath locality budgets and supported 178 households across West Suffolk to make improvements to their home.
- 1.4 Members examined the document in detail and asked a number of questions of both Leaders, to which comprehensive responses were provided. Following the informal meeting the Committee formally convened and recommended that the Draft West Suffolk Annual Report (2013-2014), as contained in Appendix B to Report E345, be approved, subject to comments made during the informal discussions.