

MINUTES OF ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 18 December 2012 at 7.00pm in the Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds.

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor T G Marks) (in the Chair),
Councillors Beckwith, Mrs Broughton, Buckle, Byrne, Chung, Clements, Cox, Everitt, Farmer, Farthing, French, Mrs Gower, Griffiths, Mrs Hind, P J Hopfensperger, Mrs R V Hopfensperger, Houlder, Marks, McManus, Mrs Mildmay-White, Nettleton, Oliver, Pugh, Ray, Redhead, Mrs Rushbrook, Mrs Rushen, Spicer, Springett, Mrs Stamp, Stevens, Thorndyke, Ms Wakelam, F J Warby, Mrs P A Warby, A Whittaker and Mrs D A Whittaker.

55. Prayers

The Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Canon Ian Finn, Rural Dean of Clare and Rector of Haverhill, opened the meeting with prayers.

56. Minutes

Before turning to the minutes of the last meeting, the Mayor welcomed Councillor Ms Wakelam to her first meeting since her election as a Borough Councillor in November 2012.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 September 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor, subject to the following two amendments:

- (1) the deletion of "Hordern" from the Apologies for Absence; and
- (2) under item 53 (a), the amendment of Councillor Mrs Broughton's pecuniary interest to delete the words "the owner of" and replace them with "having a beneficial interest in".

57. Mayor's Communications

The Mayor reported on the almost 100 civic engagements and charity activities which the Mayoral team (the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and some past Mayors) had attended since the last Council Meeting on 27 September 2012, a period of almost 12 weeks.

This period had been characterised by military related activities including several Remembrance parades, services and festivals and two military parades – the Royal Anglian Homecoming and 1st Royal Tank Regiment Medal Presentations, at all of which the Borough was represented.

The Christmas Fayre was launched on 23 November 2012 and proved to be an extremely busy three days despite the uncertain weather. Latterly there had been numerous Carol Services throughout the County with the Mayor's own service being held in St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds which was well supported by various organisations within the Borough.

At the end of October Haverhill had a visit from the Princess Royal where she opened the new facilities at Samuel Ward Academy and

visited Genzyme and also opened the newly refurbished Haverhill House council offices.

As mentioned in the Mayor's last report to Council, the Olympic Games and the passage of the Olympic Torch through the Borough had been an outstanding success witnessed by unprecedented crowds along the route and the Mayor wished to take a couple of minutes in the last full Council meeting of 2012 to reflect on these events.

Many people in the Borough had played a part in the Games and the Mayor wished to recognise the achievements of the members of the Council's staff who were involved. The Mayor and other Councillors had enjoyed the chance to meet them before tonight's meeting and hear their experiences and present them with a letter of thanks on Members' behalf.

The Mayor advised that there were two Games Makers present at the meeting: Karen Ray from Anglia Revenues Partnership and Peter Smulders, the Council's travel plan officer. Kevin Marshall from Strategic Housing was also a Games Maker but was unable to attend tonight and sent his apologies. Karen, Peter and Kevin were among the thousands of volunteers without whom the games could not have happened.

Also present was Brian Aldiss, an information officer at Bury St Edmunds Bus Station. Brian was a top wheelchair athlete who had represented his country at many games and events, including Beijing in 2008. This summer Brian was selected to carry the Olympic Torch in Bury St Edmunds and also the Paralympic Lantern on its relay. He had also helped the Council and Abbeycroft to promote the Games and sport generally.

Finally, as a Haverhill Councillor, the Mayor had particular pride in introducing Caroline Maclean who worked in the Benefits Team at Haverhill and lived in the town. Caroline represented Team GB in Women's Basketball in London at her 4th Paralympics. She also carried the Olympic Torch as it passed through Haverhill in July, and had helped the Council and partners to promote the Olympics to local residents.

On behalf of the Council the Mayor thanked the Council's Olympians and Paralympians, and asked Members to express their congratulations and give them a round of applause.

58. Announcements from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Griffiths, Leader of the Council, echoed the Mayor's congratulations to Councillor Ms Wakelam on her election as a Borough Councillor. Councillor Griffiths hoped that Members would continue to work across the political parties in the interest of the people they served, and in that context the Leader was hopeful that the Council would be able to freeze Council Tax for the fourth year in the last five, whilst maintaining the level of services to residents.

At the last meeting of full Council the Leader had advised of the appointment of the two Directors across St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council. The remainder of the Leadership Team had now been completed, with the appointment of nine Heads of Service who would serve both councils. The Leader

thanked, on behalf of all Members, the Council's staff, who had professionally carried on delivering excellent services during the reorganisation. Finally, the Leader thanked all Councillors for working together through difficult times to achieve excellent results, and wished all a very happy Christmas.

59. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ager, Clifton-Brown, Cockle, Hale, Mrs Levack, Mrs Richardson and Rout.

Under this item the Mayor advised that Councillor Ager had been admitted to hospital for further diagnostic tests, and expressed his best wishes for a speedy recovery.

60. **Declarations of Interest**

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

61. **Public Question Time**

No questions were asked.

62. **Items referred to Full Council by Cabinet and Democratic Renewal Working Party**

The Council considered the Schedule of Referrals contained within Report D228 and Appendix A to Report D228 (both previously circulated).

(A) Referrals from Cabinet: 21 November 2012

(A)(1) Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Guidance – Joint "West Suffolk" Policy

Councillor Everitt advised that this joint policy was one of several which were being drawn up with Forest Heath District Council as part of the shared services programme. An amended paper was circulated to Members as the incorrect Portfolio Holder had been named in the second recommendation.

On the motion of Councillor Everitt, seconded by Councillor F Warby, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

(1) the West Suffolk Joint Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Guidelines for Working with Children and Young People, as contained within the Appendix to Report D169, be approved and adopted subject to the following amendments:

(a) Page 6, Paragraph 5.3 – the sentence at the end 'If a Child or Young Person is at immediate risk of significant harm dial 999 as in any emergency' be emboldened and moved so as to be the first paragraph of Section 5;

- (b) Page 6, Paragraph 6.1 – the last sentence be emboldened; and
 - (c) Page 11, Paragraph 4, sub paragraph (d) – the words ‘child or’ be inserted before the words ‘Young Person’; and
- (2) the Head of Housing be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Tourism and Community Services, to make any further minor typographical, factual, spelling, grammatical and other minor changes to the West Suffolk Joint Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Guidelines for Working with Children and Young People, as contained within the Appendix to Report D169, provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Policy.

(A)(2) Mid Year Treasury Management Performance Report and Investment Activity 1 April to 30 September 2012

The Council’s Treasury Management and Investment Strategy permitted the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources and Members of the Treasury Management Sub-Committee, to approve changes to the Council’s treasury management lending and counterparty limits, subject to those changes being reported to the next Treasury Management Sub-Committee meeting, and from there on to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and full Council.

Council noted the content of Report D170, being the Mid Year Treasury Management Performance Report and Investment Activity 1 April to 30 September 2012, including the extended counterparty lending limits approved by the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources and the Members of the Treasury Management Sub-Committee in October 2012, as set out in Section 4.3.3 of Report D170, namely:

- (a) increased lending limits with ‘blue’ Government-backed counterparties (namely, Lloyds and Royal Bank of Scotland Groups) from £12 million to £15 million; and
- (b) increased lending limits with ‘green’ counterparties (including banks such as Barclays and Santander) from £4 million to £6 million.

(A)(3) Joint Anti-Money Laundering Policy

Councillor Ray advised that the Council currently had an Anti-Money Laundering Policy, last revised in December 2010. This had recently been subject to review, including making it a joint policy with Forest Heath District Council. The policy had already been seen by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, and had been approved through full Council at Forest Heath District Council.

On the motion of Councillor Ray, and subject to a minor amendment to the first recommendation, seconded by Councillor Farthing, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Joint Anti-Money Laundering Policy between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council, as set out at Appendix A to Report D180, be approved, subject to the addition of the words 'although it is accepted that Members are far less exposed to the risks of money laundering' at the end of paragraph 2.3; and
- (2) the Head of Resources and Performance be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, to make any minor typographical, factual, spelling, grammatical and other minor changes to the Joint Anti-Money Laundering Policy as set out at Appendix A to Report D180, provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Policy.

(A)(4) Joint National Fraud Initiative Strategy

Councillor Ray advised the Council that the United Kingdom lost £73 billion per year due to fraud, and that it was estimated that local authorities lost £26 billion. It was therefore important for the two councils in West Suffolk to have a strategy in place to prevent fraud. St Edmundsbury's current strategy had been produced in 2008, and this had been updated and made a joint strategy with Forest Heath District Council.

Councillor Everitt reiterated to the Council the importance of this policy due to the huge sums lost through fraud. Anglia Revenues Partnership did a sterling job in tracking down fraudulent benefit claims, and had recently listed several prosecutions for fraudulent claims.

On the motion of Councillor Ray, and subject to the amendment of the first recommendation to delete all words after "Appendix A to Report D181" and replace them with the word "approved", seconded by Councillor Everitt, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Joint National Fraud Initiative Strategy between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council, as set out in Appendix A to Report D181, be approved;
- (2) the Internal Audit Manager be given delegated authority to update information on NFI Outcomes (paragraph 1.4) and Data Leads (paragraph 7.3) within the Strategy, as appropriate; and

- (3) the Head of Resources and Performance be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, to make any minor typographical, factual, spelling, grammatical and other minor changes to the Joint National Fraud Initiative Strategy as set out at Appendix A to Report D181, provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Policy.

(A)(5) Review of Licensing Statement of Policy

Councillor Mrs Gower advised Council that the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 had made a number of changes to the Licensing Act 2003, justifying an early review of the current Licensing Statement of Policy. Additionally, following some new regulations regarding the late night levy there may need to be further changes to the policy, and provision had been made for this in the appendices. A more detailed report on the late night levy would be brought when the full implications of the Regulations were clearer.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Gower, seconded by Councillor Buckle, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revised Licensing Statement of Policy, as contained in Appendix A to Report D160, be approved; and
- (2) the Specialist Lead Officer - Licensing be given delegated authority, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, to make any typographical, grammatical or contextual changes to the Policy before adoption.

(A)(6) Revised West Suffolk Lettings Policy Document

Councillor Mrs Gower advised the Council that the Government, as part of its social housing and welfare reforms, had changed policy and regulations about who was given priority on the Housing Register and what size property they could claim housing benefit for. Due to these changes, the seven partner authorities who made up Home-Link were compelled to review their Lettings Policy to ensure compliance with the new changes.

Councillor Mrs Gower advised Members that in the latest Home-Link magazine, six pages gave details of the changes which she recommended all Members should read. She also advised Members that this magazine would be ceasing after this edition, as it had cost £130,000 per year to produce. Councillor Mrs Gower had voted against this decision, but the other partner organisations had voted to withdraw it. Instead, personalised fortnightly updates would be sent to everyone on the Register giving details of properties on which they could make bids.

In response to questions Councillor Mrs Gower confirmed that there was still a shortage of smaller accommodation, and that the Council would work with developers to encourage the provision of more of the types of properties needed to meet the requirements of the Register. She also confirmed that, for those people without internet access, the fortnightly contact would be by post, and it would still be possible to bid for properties by phone or completion of the relevant form.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Gower, seconded by Councillor Chung, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the changes to the current Lettings Policy detailed in Section 4.2 of Report D203 be noted, as amended to reflect the tabled changes to Section 4.2(b) of the Report;
- (2) the new West Suffolk Lettings Policy, contained in Appendix A to Report D203, be approved, as amended to add 'except in the cases detailed in Section 2.4 below', to the end of the sentence in Section 2.3.1(a) of the Policy; and
- (3) the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health, be authorised to make any minor typographical, factual, spelling and grammatical changes to the document provided they do not materially affect the substance or meaning of the Strategy.

(B) Referrals from Cabinet (Special Meeting): 12 December 2012

(B)(1) Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2013/2014

Councillor Ray referred Members to Appendix A to Report D224 which explained the detail of this important issue. He advised Members that currently Council Tax Benefits were determined by the Council, with Anglia Revenues Partnership, in accordance with Central Government guidelines, and the money to pay this was provided by the Government.

From 1 April 2013 the Government aimed to cut the welfare bill in order to encourage more people into work, and as part of this would pass to local authorities the responsibility for administering and running the scheme. The Government would give local authorities a grant basically equivalent to the council tax benefits of the past, but less between 10 and 14%. The Council had not yet been told the exact level of this cut, but once it was announced the Council would need to manage the new local Council Tax Support Scheme within this budget. At that stage decisions would need to be made regarding where the reductions in support should sit.

A consultation exercise had taken place, details of which were set out in Appendix A to Report D224, on the four options of: requiring working age people in receipt of Council Tax Benefit to pay more; requiring owners of second homes to pay more; requiring owners of empty homes to pay more; and requiring people who benefited from the 2nd adult rebate to pay more.

As the new scheme needed to be in place by April 2013, it would initially be broadly equivalent to the current scheme, however, it could be updated annually to take account of experience. The Council was working with the other Suffolk local authorities on a broadly similar scheme, but which could be amended to take account of local variations and demography. The Government had offered a transitional grant for the first year of the new scheme, but only if working age claimants were not charged more than 8.5% of their Council Tax. The Council was proposing to accept that one year grant, and had revised its local scheme accordingly. The financial impact on claimants would vary with individual circumstances, but had been modelled on examples which showed the cost to a working age claimant varying between £1.20 and £2.60 per week.

The recommendations before Council tonight sought approval for the local Council Tax Support Scheme, the detailed policy document that staff would work to; approval of an application for the transitional grant; and the necessary supporting delegations. However, this was only the first part of the issue. There would be less money from the government than it would cost to administer the scheme, although the exact shortfall was not yet known. Within the budget setting process for the next financial year the Council would need to identify how it would cover that shortfall, and there were various options to do this, as outlined in the consultation which had been undertaken. Briefings on the new scheme would be provided for Members in the New Year.

Councillor Ray drew Members' attention to Section 8.2 of Appendix A to Report D224 concerning risk, which showed that the Council, rather than Central Government, would carry the risks associated with the new scheme of new claimants, of non-collection due to requiring contributions from those who may not be able to afford to pay them, of the cost of administering the scheme and of the Government grant reduction.

Finally, Councillor Ray expressed his thanks to the Finance Team and Anglia Revenues Partnership who had worked hard to bring this scheme forward, often with late inputs from the Government.

In response to questions Councillor Ray advised that the changes had been covered in the Local Government Finance training session held earlier in the year, at the two visits to Anglia Revenues Partnership that had been offered to Members, and had also been mentioned in his last two Portfolio Holder reports. Further training would also be provided to ensure all Members fully understood the issue. He also advised that the 135 page detailed policy was not in conflict with the Regulations, and that whilst changes to it had been consulted on, it would have been impractical to send out the whole 135 pages for consultation.

Regarding the four options listed at 7.4 of Appendix A to Report D224, the Council would need to decide how it met the funding shortfall but would probably look at using all four options. Other issues raised in the consultation at 7.6 of the document would also be considered.

Other clarification provided by Councillor Ray in response to questions was that the total number of Council Tax Benefit claimants, including pensioners, was just under 7,500; that whilst there would be a broadly similar scheme throughout Suffolk, each local authority would work on its own detailed figures on how to make up the shortfall based on its own demographics, for example some authorities had more second homes than others; and that the Government was providing funding which the Council hoped to use to make the changes cost neutral to parish councils.

On the motion of Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Everitt, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Local Council Tax Support Scheme, as set out in Section 4 of Report D224 and detailed in the Policy document contained in Appendix A to Report D224 be adopted;
- (2) the transitional grant for one year support, as detailed in Sections 4.14 to 4.18 of Report D224 be applied for;
- (3) the change to the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out under Legal and Policy implications at Section 10.2 of Report D224 be approved; and
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Head of Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Resources, to make final decisions on any additional changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme arising as a result of the final funding decisions, as detailed in Section 10.3 of Report D224.

(B)(2) Supplementary Planning Document for Open Space Contributions: Consultation

Councillor Clements advised that consultation had taken place, together with Forest Heath District Council, on this new policy on open space, which should in future make it easier to make the required calculations under Community Infrastructure Levy on the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in conjunction with the provision of new housing development.

In response to questions, Councillor Clements advised that the new document would move more towards the provision of larger areas of open space, and to making them even more accessible

so that people would be within easy reach of a good sized open space, not simply a small pocket park.

On the motion of Councillor Clements, seconded by Councillor Stevens, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft Supplementary Planning Document for Open Space and Recreation Facilities, as contained in Appendix 2 to Report D225, be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Guidance; and
- (2) the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, to make any further minor typographical, factual, spelling, grammatical and other minor changes to the Supplementary Planning Document for Open Space and Recreational Facilities prior to its implementation.

(C)(1) The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Councillor Mrs P Warby advised Members that they may have noticed changes made in the last couple of months to the Forward Plan, now known as the Decisions Plan, as well as other documents regularly produced such as the Decisions Notice and the exempt part of Cabinet agendas. These changes were required as a result of these new Regulations, and the Working Party had discussed the changes brought about by them. These changes would require a number of amendments to the Council's Constitution.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs P Warby, seconded by Councillor Ray, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority to make any necessary changes to the Council's Constitution identified as a result of the coming into force of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

63. **Review of Political Balance and Re-Appointment to politically balanced bodies**

The Council considered Report D229 (previously circulated) which detailed the results of a Political Balance Review.

Following a by-election, the political balance of the Council had changed, and additionally one Member was currently suspended from the Conservative Group. Whilst neither of these changes triggered a

review of the Council's political balance on committees, several Councillors had requested that such a re-calculation occur.

The Council was required by law to allocate seats to the following Committees based on political balance:

Development Control	:	16	Members
Licensing and Regulatory	:	13	Members
Overview and Scrutiny	:	16	Members
Performance and Audit Scrutiny	:	10	Members
Staffing Appeals	:	7	Members
Joint Officer Appointments	:	3	Members

The Democratic Renewal Working Party was not required to be politically balanced but the allocation of seats was, by custom and practice, undertaken on this basis. The Treasury Management Sub-Committee was also required by law to be politically balanced.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White congratulated and welcomed Councillor Ms Wakelam to the Council, and reiterated that following her success at a by-election in November 2012 several Members had requested a review of committee places. She pointed out a typographical error at Section 8.1 of the report, which should show two Conservative places on the Treasury Management Sub-Committee.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White agreed that three of the five unallocated places left following the calculation at Section 4.1 should be allocated to the three un-grouped Members, and that the remaining two places would be allocated following negotiation between Group Leaders, although the Conservative Group had always been magnanimous in giving seats to lone Members, as it could see that great things could be achieved by working together for the benefit of the Council Tax Payer.

In response to questions Councillor Mildmay-White confirmed that Councillor Cox had been suspended from the Conservative Group and removed from all Conservative-nominated committee places, and that the Officer Appointments Committee would be disbanded from this evening as its remit was now covered by the Joint Officer Appointments Committee.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, seconded by Councillor F Warby, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the formula for the allocation of seats to the political groups on those Committees which are required by law to be politically balanced, as set out in paragraph 2.1 of Report D229, be approved;
- (2) the allocation of seats on the Committees of the political groups of the Borough Council as indicated in Section 4 of Report D229 be approved;
- (3) the allocation of seats on the Democratic Renewal Working Party of the political groups of the Borough Council, as indicated in Section 5 of Report D229 be approved;

- (4) the current membership of the Standards Committee continue until such time as recommendations for a joint committee are brought to Council;
- (5) the allocation of seats on the Mayoral Advisory Committee as indicated in Section 7 of Report D229 be approved;
- (6) the allocation of seats on the Treasury Management Sub-Committee as indicated in Section 8 of Report D229 be approved;
- (7) the Officer Appointments Committee be disbanded, as its remit is now covered by the Joint Officer Appointments Committee; and
- (8) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority to appoint Members and substitute Members of those bodies (2), (3), (5) and (6) above on the basis of nominations from the relevant Group Leaders.

64. Havebury Housing Partnership Management Board

The Council considered a narrative item which advised that Councillor Jeremy Farthing had resigned his position as one of the Council's three representatives on the Havebury Housing Partnership Management Board, and sought a nomination to fill this vacancy.

Councillor Griffiths thanked Councillor Farthing for his representation on the Board. Given the increasing demands of his business interests and his duties as a Borough Councillor, Councillor Farthing had decided to give someone else the opportunity to make a contribution on this important body.

On the motion of Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Everitt, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Springett be appointed to the vacancy as one of the three Borough Council appointed Non-Executive Directors on the Havebury Housing Partnership Management Board.

65. Motion on Notice

Under Paragraph 12.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, as contained within the Council's Constitution, Councillor Nettleton had given notice of the following motion:

'That this council adopts the Living Wage (currently £7.45 an hour) as a minimum standard for its entire payroll.'

This motion was seconded by Councillor Ms Byrne.

The Mayor, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, considered that this motion, as a motion which, if carried, would involve the Council in expenditure not included in the approved budget, should be referred without discussion to the appropriate forum for consideration. He considered that the appropriate forum with regard to the Council's staff was the single pay and reward strategy negotiations currently being undertaken which would be brought through Cabinet and full Council. With regard to Members, the appropriate forum was the Independent Remuneration Panel, when it next considered the Members' Allowances Scheme.

66. **Quarterly Report on Special Urgency**

The Council received and noted a narrative item as required by the Council's Constitution in which the Leader of the Council reported that, at the time the Council agenda was published, no executive decisions had been taken under the Special Urgency Provisions of the Constitution.

67. **Reports and Questions**

- (i) Report from the Leader of the Council: Councillor Griffiths (Report D230)

(Councillor Mrs Broughton declared a pecuniary interest as having a beneficial interest in land referred to in 'Policy BV5: North East Bury St Edmunds Strategic Site' of the Draft Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 document, and left the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

(Councillor P Hopfensperger declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a trader in Risbygate Street, and as Chairman of the Risbygate Street Traders Association, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

(Councillor Mrs R Hopfensperger declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Risbygate Street Traders Association, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

The following topics were the subject of questions put to Councillor Griffiths, who duly responded:

- (1) under Vision 2031, the potential for the School Yard Car Park to be part of the shopping street, and how this suggestion would be affected by the planning application for housing in this area which would be considered before Vision 2031 was adopted; and
- (2) when the lost playing field associated with Hamlet Croft would be replaced, and where.

- (ii)(a) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Culture and Sport Portfolio: Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White (Report D231)

(Councillor Mrs Stamp declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a Borough Council observer to the Theatre Royal Management Board, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

(Councillor Clements declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a County Council representative on the Theatre Royal Management Board, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

(Councillor P Hopfensperger declared a local non-pecuniary interest as his business was linked with health and wellbeing, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of this report.)

Councillor Mildmay-White expressed her pleasure at the Mayor's having invited the Council's Olympic and Paralympic athletes to this meeting of full Council.

The following topics were the subject of questions put to Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, who duly responded:

- (1) how the enlargement of the car park at West Stow Country Park fitted with the Core Strategy hierarchy of transport modes, the lack of a bus service to West Stow, and the lack of pavements for the whole length from Bury St Edmunds to West Stow;
- (2) the current figure to date for the subsidy to The Apex, and comments from residents that the venue was not large enough;

The following topics were the subject of questions which time limits meant were unable to be answered:

- (3) that the high levels of breast cancer in this country were largely down to peoples' eating habits, and we should start with prevention rather than cure, and therefore when was the Overview and Scrutiny Committee due to consider the headline figures arising from the Forest Heath review of Educational Attainment, which officers were due to amend to reflect the situation in St Edmundsbury; and
- (4) when the dead elm trees to the front of Haverhill Leisure Centre were to be removed.

(ii)(b) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Waste Management Portfolio: Councillor Stevens (Report D232)

The following topic was the subject of a question put to Councillor Stevens, who duly responded:

- (1) the potential to include glass in roadside waste collections.

(ii)(c) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health Portfolio: Councillor Mrs Gower (Report D233)

The following topics were the subject of questions put to Councillor Mrs Gower, who duly responded:

- (1) the process of applying for the Council's home insulation scheme; and

- (2) the need for more affordable housing, specifically one and two bedroomed homes.

RESOLVED:

That a written response be provided as to the number of affordable homes which would be included in the 15 units proposed for the Swan Lane development.

(ii)(d) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Performance and Resources Portfolio: Councillor Ray (Report D234)

Councillor Ray advised that, in respect of Section 6.3 of his report, use of the new video and audio conferencing facilities between the College Heath Road and West Suffolk House offices was being promoted through Wavelength, the joint staff newsletter, particularly in the light of the engineering works due to commence on the A11 which would make travel between the two offices difficult.

Referring to Section 7.4.4 and the visit to the Council of Lord Adonis and Matthew Hancock MP to learn more about the apprenticeship programme, Councillor Ray announced that the Human Resources Team, working with Unison, had won an award for their excellent work with apprentices at St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath. Last week they were awarded the East of England Regional Council for Local Government Services Sarah Swane Award for Workforce Development and Equality. This recognised the amount of work carried out to support the employment and development of apprentices – a total of 36 at St Edmundsbury so far. Many of these had gone on to get permanent appointments in a range of roles, including landscapes, community development, planning and waste management. This was a terrific achievement and Councillor Ray congratulated the HR team, Unison, all those services who had been responsible for welcoming these young people into their working lives, and, of course, the apprentices themselves for making the most of the opportunities offered to them. Councillor Ray finished by showing Members the certificate and glass trophy awarded to the two councils.

The following topic was the subject of a question put to Councillor Ray, who duly responded:

- (1) the reason why Members' overnight subsistence allowances had been exceeded on two occasions when there was no provision for this in the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED:

That a written response be provided as to whether all Councillors would at some point be given an "@westsuffolk.gov.uk" email address.

(ii)(e) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Planning and Transport Portfolio: Councillor Clements (Report D235)

Councillor Clements was pleased to announce that all the public car parks in Haverhill run by the Council had received the prestigious ParkMark award. This award gave customers the assurance of safer parking status and meant that these car parks had measures in place to create a safe, as well as clean, environment.

The following topics were the subject of questions put to Councillor Clements, who duly responded:

- (1) the single rail line in the Newmarket area, and the potential for this situation to cause signalling problems even if the rest of the line was improved;
- (2) the removal of the white lining at the car park in Ingham Road, off Millfield Way, Haverhill following resurfacing and when this would be reinstated;
- (3) how a waterless car wash worked; and
- (4) an update on the use of sustainable transport.

A question regarding charging in School Yard East car park was deferred for Councillor Nettleton to respond to under his Chairman's report.

(ii)(f) Report from the Cabinet Member for the Tourism and Community Services Portfolio: Councillor Everitt (Report D236)

The following topics were the subject of questions put to Councillor Everitt, who duly responded:

- (1) whether the markets "blueprint" devised by officers had contributed to the 10% reduction in market toll income, and what initiatives there were in place to turn this around; and
- (2) the success of the last Safer Neighbourhood Team meeting, and whether the next meeting could be held in the New Bury Community Centre.

(iii) Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Nettleton (Report D237)

Councillor Nettleton gave an explanation of the historic and proposed charges to the School Yard East car park, in response to a question raised under Councillor Clements's Portfolio Holder report.

(iv) Report from the Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Hale (Report D238)

No questions were raised.

(v) Questions to the Chairmen of other Committees

No questions were raised.

68. Exclusion of the Public

On the motion of the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Griffiths, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.

69. Exempt Appendix: Schedule of Referrals from Cabinet

(B) Referrals from Cabinet: 12 December 2012

(B)(3) Reduced Business Rate Package for Research/Business Parks

Councillor Griffiths advised that the full details behind these recommendations could be found in Exempt Report D227 to Cabinet on 12 December 2012. The purpose of the recommendations was to support and promote economic development in Haverhill and the surrounding area, and in particular the Haverhill Business Park. The Council had been successful in attracting funding from both Local Enterprise Partnerships of which it was a member, and wished to ensure that this business park provided the facilities which would benefit the area.

In order to attract businesses in a competitive market, a business rate discount could be granted under the Localism Act 2011. This would result in a short term cost to the Council over 5 years, but should be outweighed by the long term benefit of future business rates, and by supporting the local economy by helping to attract firms, investment and jobs. Councillor Griffiths referred Members to an amended version of Exempt Appendix B to Report D228 which had been circulated, which included an additional recommendation added at the Cabinet meeting on 12 December 2012.

In response to a question, Councillor Griffiths advised that the Council was also trying to get support for the Suffolk Business Park in Bury St Edmunds.

On the motion of Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Farthing, and duly carried, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the pilot for Haverhill Research Park be approved subject to the satisfaction of the criteria listed at Section 4.11 of Exempt Report D227 and funded from New Homes Bonus;

- (2) the provision of Local Development Orders for business/research parks be investigated;
- (3) opportunities to further improve access to superfast broadband on business/research parks be investigated on a site by site basis; and
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Head of Economic Development and Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Rural Affairs, to implement the pilot at Haverhill Research Park.

70. **Conclusion of Business**

The meeting concluded at 9.27pm.

MAYOR