



Council 26 February 2013

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. Planning Policy

- 1.1 Elsewhere on the Council summons there is a recommendation that the Joint Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Development Management Policies document is submitted to the Secretary of State in order that the document can be examined by a Planning Inspector. This submission represents an important milestone in the preparation of up-to-date planning policies for both districts that, when finally adopted, will provide the policies by which day-to-day planning applications across both districts can be determined.
- 1.2 As noted in the Leader's Report, work continues on the preparation of the revised draft Vision 2031 documents. I can also report that work is progressing across the County on revising the car parking standards for new development. It is likely that Members will be asked to approve a draft consultation document in the near future. Public consultation will be carried out by the County Council but it will be down to each local authority to adopt them. The revised standards are required to reflect the government's abolition of maximum space provision within development.
- 1.3 Members may be aware that the government is proposing to change planning regulations which, when introduced, would allow the change of use of Use Class B1 offices to housing without requiring planning consent. These changes are to be introduced in the Spring, although the regulations and precise details concerning how this would operate have yet to be published.

2. Transport

2.1 In January I attended a meeting at Linton in Cambridgeshire concerning the A1307 between Haverhill and Cambridge. It was attended by MPs, Councillors and officers from parishes, districts and counties along the route and demonstrated a strong desire by all to deliver improvements along the whole corridor. It is recognised that the A1307 provides a main commuter route between Haverhill and Cambridge and elsewhere but for Haverhill itself, the road plays a key part in the ability to attract future investment into the town. While the majority of the road lies within Cambridgeshire, it is in our interests that we continue to seek improvements along this corridor, especially through improved bus links to Cambridge and, perhaps, railway stations. Officers will continue to work with their counterparts at Suffolk and in Cambridgeshire to identify potential solutions.

2.2 Parking Services

2.2.1 The Parking Team have had a very busy Christmas and New Year trading period in both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill – starting in late November with running the Park and Ride site at Rushbrooke Lane to support the Christmas Fayre. December saw very strong demand in the car parks both in Bury St Edmunds and in Haverhill, and both towns welcomed more visitors this year than the previous year.

2.2.2 The New Year period has seen good demand with customers visiting the post-Christmas sales, and despite some heavy snow and icy conditions, January was up 1.5% against last year.

2.2.3 We hope this was helped by the 280 hours of gritting delivered in January and especially the efforts of our front line parking team spreading around 220 kilos of salt on the main car park pathways in all weathers, keeping customers safe and acting as ambassadors to the town.

2.2.4 I am also very pleased to note I was asked to attend a ceremony in January to celebrate the fact that all our Borough car parks received the prestigious ParkMark Award, which awards authorities whose car parks are safe and well managed. The award is given jointly by the Police and the BPA (British Parking Association).