



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

D311

Council **26 February 2013**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Written report by Cllr David Nettleton
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

This report covers the meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2013.

1. Work Programme Update

- 1.1 The Committee now has a rolling work programme, whereby suggestions for scrutiny reviews are brought to each meeting, and if accepted, are timetabled to report to a future meeting.
- 1.2 Additionally, the Committee considered a "Suggestion for Scrutiny" form which asked Members to agree to add to their March 2012 agenda a report containing details of loans made by the Borough Council to private firms, including loan amount, schedule of repayments and interest charges. The aim of the proposed review is to scrutinise the reasons why the Council has lent money to private firms, whether the interest rate charged reflects risk, and why these firms are unable to obtain loans through banks.
- 1.3 The Committee agreed to the suggested review, and a report will be brought to the March 2012 meeting of the Committee where a discussion will take place in order to gain a clearer understanding of this issue.

2. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Final Report of the Anglia Revenues Partnership Task and Finish Group

- 2.1 This scrutiny review was conducted with the following Terms of Reference: "the review should assess the extent to which the first year of the Council's membership of the Anglia Revenues Partnership has delivered against the financial and operational aims of the business case that was developed, and supported the decision of St Edmundsbury Borough Council to join the

partnership and in doing so assess the impact on stakeholders of that decision”.

- 2.2 The Committee considered the key findings of the review, which were that: (i) financial savings had been realised and exceeded in year one; (ii) service performance was generally running to planned targets; (iii) there was scope for an improvement in written communications from ARP to its customers; and (iv) staff morale could be improved.
- 2.3 The eight recommendations of the Committee, set out in Report D248, were made as a result of the analysis of a number of pieces of evidence including financial reports, operational performance reports, results of a customer survey, and staff survey findings.

3. The Co-ordination of Licensing, Planning and Enforcement Functions Relating to Street Vending (the “A-Boards” Review)

- 3.1 The Committee set up a Task and Finish Group in 2012 to look at the issue of advertising boards on the highway (A-Boards).
- 3.2 The Task and Finish Group looked at the issue in detail in order to try to strike a balance between the concerns of residents that the proliferation of A-Boards was detracting from the amenity of the area, and the needs of businesses to advertise their goods. A consultation exercise was also undertaken on a proposal, to implement a permitting scheme for A-Boards.
- 3.3 The outcome of the consultation was broadly supportive of the Committee’s proposal. The Committee therefore recommended that the proposal to implement a permitting scheme for A-Boards (and planters) should be incorporated into the revised draft Street Vending Policy, which would then be subject to further consultation.