



Full Council 17 December 2013

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Report by Cllr Robert Everitt Communities Portfolio

Portfolio includes:

- Bury St Edmunds
- Community Safety
- Youth Provision/Children and Young People
- Community Development
- Third Sector/Localism
- Equalities
- CCTV
- Emergency Planning

1. Community Safety

1.1 Reduce the Strength Campaign

- 1.1.1 As detailed in the September report the Reduce the Strength Campaign aims to remove from sale all beers and ciders with an alcohol content of over 6.5% which are being sold cheaply. It is being rolled out in St Edmundsbury with an expected launch date in December. All 'off licence' premises in the area have been sent a letter explaining the scheme which was followed up by a visit from the Police to sign them up. Those who were not able to commit at that time were revisited by a Police Officer and St Edmundsbury Community Development officer. Approximately 65% of premises have signed up to support the scheme which is an encouraging start. I very much hope that those who have not chosen to take part at this time will join the scheme when the benefits can be shown. The Ipswich scheme has recently published the results of the pilot. One year on and with 66% of premises in Ipswich taking part, there has been a reduction of 23.5% in calls from the public regarding street drinking and a fall in crime and ASB in locations close to premises which have signed up. This has reflected in a reduction in the overall crime (-17%) and anti social behaviour (-15%) in Ipswich.

2. Community Development

2.1 Community Centre Transfer

2.1.1 Work continues on the transfer of the remaining Council-owned centres. I am very encouraged by recent correspondence I have had with the Newbury Community Association (NCA). The group have expressed a range of concerns at the sustainability of a transfer of the current building. The Council has been doing some further work to assess the state of the current building but alongside this we have also had a dialogue with NCA to identify our shared aims. Having identified and agreed the broad aims the Council and NCA will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to capture those aims and move forward with the aim of securing community facilities on the Howard estate for the future.

3. Families and Communities Strategy

3.1 I have been working on this strategy with my Forest Heath counterpart, Cllr Robin Millar. The strategy, which is going before the scrutiny committees of both councils, recognises that the traditional model of delivering services to communities cannot be sustained in the form it has previously existed. The strategy outlines an approach which puts us all as ward members at the heart of engaging with our communities. It is based on a model of asset-based community development where the emphasis is on what a community already has, whether this is buildings, community groups or individuals who have active in the community (all of which count as assets), and seeks to work with them on the issues where they are motivated to take action locally. The Councils role becomes one of enabler and facilitator, rather than direct provider and long term funder. The Strategy is based on a preventative approach which aims to build strong families and communities which can support local residents when they encounter problems. After Scrutiny and Cabinet discussion full Council will be asked to adopt the strategy. I would encourage all Councillors to take the opportunity to read the strategy which is available as part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee papers for the 4 December meeting.

4. BurySound

4.1 After taking a break in 2012, the competition was back in 2013 and is now organised by a group of volunteers, supported by officers. Twenty groups from across West Suffolk took part in the competition and with the ages of those competing range from 14 upwards. The heats were held at a smaller venue and the Apex was reserved for the final. With over 360 people attending the final it was a great event which saw a local band, Keys, win the competition.