



Council **23 September 2014**

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Report by Cllr Anne Gower ***Housing Portfolio***

Portfolio includes:

- Haverhill
- Strategic Housing
- Homelessness
- Social Care
- Gypsies and Travellers

1. Haverhill Community Development

- 1.1 The River of Life Church have been working with their advisory support and the locality officer in the pre-feasibility stage of the asset transfer process for the Chalkstone community centre and are now ready to progress with the development of a full business plan.
- 1.2 The 'Let's Read Haverhill' project has had an excellent response with more than 50 volunteers expressing an interest in helping Haverhill schools with extra reading sessions with pupils. The first meeting with all the volunteers will be at the library on the 28 August 2014 where there will be introductory session to the scheme.
- 1.3 Locality Budgets for Haverhill have been awarded to Haverhill Community Wellbeing Fund, Friends of Haverhill Library and Haverhill Rovers. The projects include support for the purchase of ultrasound equipment, handheld tablets for the library and training equipment to support Haverhill Rovers junior teams.

2. West Suffolk Housing Strategy

- 2.1 On 17 July 2014 we posted the draft West Suffolk Housing Strategy on both authorities' web sites and sent out copies to key stakeholders for consultation. In addition, workshops were held with stakeholders to discuss the draft and seek their views. Around 30 people attended the workshops and responses were received from 11 individuals/organisations.
- 2.2 The Housing Strategy Working Group met on 21 August 2014 to consider the responses received. In general terms, those who replied were largely in agreement with the content and emphasis of the draft strategy, though some

felt certain points could be reinforced. Amendments have been incorporated into the draft which will now be submitted to Cabinet on 16 September 2014 for recommendation to full Council.

3. Affordable Housing Event

- 3.1 Following the Affordable Housing Event in June, the Strategy and Enabling Team are working with Planning to organise a briefing session to bring together Housing, Planning, Legal and our Registered Providers to improve everyone's understanding around the negotiations of S106 agreements and how we can all work together to help streamline the process. This briefing session is due to take place during October.
- 3.2 The intention is to help accelerate the process of negotiating S106 agreements and to have a standard form with model clauses. These clauses will not be applicable to every development. Any agreed changes will support the review of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning document.

4. Homelessness

- 4.1 The number of homeless households that the Council is accommodating in Bed & Breakfast remains at between 8 and 12, and is likely to remain at this level until there is an increase in provision of temporary accommodation.
- 4.2 The Council has recently purchased a House in Multiple Occupation in Lake Avenue, Bury St Edmunds to use as temporary accommodation which will provide five rooms for single homeless people that the Council otherwise would accommodate in Bed & Breakfast. In addition the Council has entered into a pilot with Havebury Housing to use up to 10 properties in Bury for temporary accommodation use.
- 4.3 The Council also recently completed the sale of 10 Well Street for £249,999. This was a property formally leased to Co-Op Homes and used as temporary accommodation. The receipt from the sale will go into the council's capital funding reserve.
- 4.4 A review of homelessness in the Borough has been undertaken and its results will be used to inform the forthcoming West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy document. This will come before Council in February 2015. The review has looked to identify what future level of need there will be to provide accommodation and services for homeless households and then the Homelessness Strategy will look to address those needs.

5. Home Link Statistics

- 5.1 The number of applicants in Bands A & B remains at over 700 reflecting the high demand for affordable housing in the Borough (see Appendix A)

6. Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.1 A countywide group is looking at the identification of three 8 pitch short stay stopping sites in Suffolk. The intention had originally been to consult the public on the seven potential sites that had been identified, with one of these being in St Edmundsbury. However, following a number of landowners coming forward with other potential sites and early feedback from councillors and residents, the decision was taken to halt the current process to enable it to be reconsidered.

7. House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Guidance & Standards

- 7.1 Further to my last report, the Councils have aligned their current approaches, standards and fees into one Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) document, to ensure consistency in how we enforce these requirements across West Suffolk. HMOs provide important accommodation for our residents, if managed properly with suitable and safe standards.
- 7.2 We will be consulting over the next few weeks, followed by approval and implementation at the end of 2014.

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APPENDIX A

Home-Link Statistics	SEBC	FHDC	SEBC	FHDC	SEBC	FHDC	SEBC	FHDC	SEBC	FHDC	SEBC	FHDC
Date	01-Mar-14		01-Apr-14		01-May-14		01-Jun-14		01-Jul-14		01-Aug-14	
Band A	205	79	200	81	203	56	241	60	249	67	267	71
Band B	440	321	455	340	451	348	463	361	467	376	474	370
Band C	427	343	440	338	441	339	448	335	465	354	471	361
Band D	522	370	540	384	560	393	578	397	601	406	603	417
Band D*	28	10	26	10	28	10	28	8	28	8	29	10
Total	1622	1123	1661	1153	1683	1146	1758	1161	1810	1211	1844	1229
Homeseecker	1104	788	1138	811	1176	812	1230	822	1261	856	1292	868
Transfer	516	355	521	342	503	333	524	339	539	354	538	361
1 Bedroom	828	602	852	614	848	608	891	610	908	641	931	638
2 Bedroom	580	382	595	395	612	396	634	405	657	421	667	439
3 Bedroom	150	109	151	112	154	109	165	115	178	114	179	113
4 Bedroom	50	27	52	29	55	28	54	26	54	28	52	31
5 Bedroom	12	3	10	3	11	4	12	4	11	6	12	7
Single	673	457	686	465	689	474	729	475	743	500	762	502
Couple	243	190	259	195	254	179	268	191	269	202	277	205
Family with children	672	443	683	462	701	458	721	462	755	476	759	490
Other household types	34	33	35	31	39	35	40	33	43	33	46	32
Statutory Homeless	41	13	43	14	52	13	63	9	65	11	66	8
Homeless Prevention	62	36	67	42	57	41	59	44	61	45	59	44
Homeless Other	38	5	40	5	37	3	37	6	42	9	42	13
Over 65s	211	147	216	153	207	143	220	145	224	156	227	158