



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

F132

Council **23 September 2014**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Report by Cllr Ian Houlder

This report covers the informal joint meeting of the Committee held on 23 July 2014.

Prior to the formal meeting, the Committee held an informal joint Overview and Scrutiny meeting with Members of Forest Heath District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. All Members of the Forest Heath District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend the Borough Offices in Bury St Edmunds to enable joint informal discussions to take place between the two authorities on the following three items, as follows:

1. Monitoring the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership

- 1.1 The Committee received its annual update on the progress of the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. The report updated Members on a number of individual projects the Community Safety Partnership had commissioned during 2013-2014, and the change to the future funding mechanisms. The report also represented the final monitoring / close-out report for the WSCSP as a commissioning body.
- 1.2 From April 2014, the WSCSP was no longer a commissioning body, but had an enabling and supportive role to the voluntary and community sector who could deliver against the priorities as well as a small number of statutory functions. The WSCSP was currently discussing how it would discharge these functions and a report on the future developments of the WSCSP would be presented to the Committee later in the year.
- 1.3 The Committee noted the work carried out by the Partnership during 2013-2014, and suggested that it would be helpful to have some facts and figures to back-up the list of projects commissioned by the WSCSP.

2. Draft West Suffolk Housing Strategy

- 2.1 The Committee received the Draft West Suffolk Housing Strategy (2015-2018), which set out the strategic direction and the actions that West

Suffolk would take to deliver the Strategy for current and future residents. These actions would directly contribute to the overall sense of community and wellbeing of West Suffolk. The aim was to enable the supply of new housing; making the best use of existing housing; and offering support or specialist housing to those who required it.

2.2 As part of the consultation process, which would conclude on 13 August 2014, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were asked to consider the contents of the Strategy and proposed actions and to make comments for changes and revisions, as appropriate. Members were reassured that all comments received would be incorporated into the final Strategy, which would be presented to each authority's Cabinets in September 2014.

2.3 The Committee scrutinised the Strategy in detail and made a number of suggestions to the Draft Strategy. Discussions were also held on the New Homes Bonus (NHBS) Scheme. Members were advised that the NHB allocations had been taken to earmarked reserves and its use was currently being considered as part of the delivering a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy and the delivery of the new Strategic Plan. Members felt that the money received from each new house built should go back into the community where the houses had been built and suggested that part of the NHB could be allocated to community facilities.

2.4 The Committee recommended to Cabinet that:

(1) The contents of the West Suffolk Housing Strategy (2015-2018) be approved, subject to the comments made during the joint informal discussions and other stakeholder comments, as part of the consultation process.

(2) Part of the New Homes Bonus be allocated to community facilities, and a report on the options for the use of the New Homes Bonus be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Quarter 1 Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications

3.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 requires that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis. In June 2010 it was agreed that this requirement should be fulfilled by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Monitoring Officer advised that in Quarter 1 no such surveillance had been authorised.

4. Work Programme Update

4.1 Members received an update on the current status of its work programme and noted that the Chairman of the Committee had agreed to a request for a progress report on Skyliner Way On-Street Parking, Bury St Edmunds to be presented to the Committee on 3 September 2014.