

LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL – 15TH FEBRUARY 2010

Agenda Item 11 (i)

LEADER: Cllr Graham Butland

LEADER PORTFOLIO: Overall Vision and Strategic Direction

Portfolio covers:-

- Strategic Partnerships – National, Regional, County and District
- External Relationships (including PR and reputation)
- Local Strategic Partnership
- Corporate Governance

REPORT COVERS ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD COMMENCING 4TH DECEMBER 2009 AND ENDING 3RD FEBRUARY 2010

1. **East of England Regional Assembly - Executive Committee 29 January 2010**

I attended the final meeting of the EERA Executive before the Regional Assembly is abolished on 31 March. The final meeting of the full Assembly will take place on Friday 12th March.

The Executive noted progress on the preparation of the Annual report for 2009/10. It also agreed that the assets and liabilities of the Assembly should be transferred to EERA's successor body, the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA). EERA operates from Flempton House near Bury St Edmunds. The building, which is valued at £530k, is held in trust on behalf of the 37 local authorities which subscribed to its purchase and refurbishment in 1990 through interest free loans. Braintree District Council loaned £10k. The current loan book totals £296k. The net value of the building is therefore £234k. Projected cash balances total £670k producing total assets of £904k.

There will be potential liabilities in respect of redundancies and early payment of pension resulting from redundancy of £722k. This is the theoretical maxima and will be subject to the number of EERA staff who are able to be matched to posts in the new organisation.

2. **East of England Local Government Association Assembly - 29 January 2010**

This meeting agreed the Business Plan of the new organisation for 2010/11 which has to be submitted to access Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) funding. EELGA, as the Leaders' Board in the East of England, is jointly responsible with the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) for leading the development and implementation of the Single Regional Strategy. The plan will have to be negotiated with GO East.

The Assembly also considered its member, staffing and organisational arrangements. It was agreed that there should be minimal changes from the existing EERA arrangements until after the General Election.

3. **Meeting of Essex Council Leaders**

I attended a meeting of the Leaders of Councils in Essex at County Hall on 21 January. The main purpose of the meeting was to consider ways in which authorities could work together to achieve more cost effective services. There was general agreement amongst the leaders that further work should be done. A small officer group consisting of the Deputy Chief Executive of

Essex County Council and the Chief Executives of Braintree DC, Castle Point BC, and Basildon DC will progress the matter and report back to the next meeting due to be held in early March.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING:

Leader of the Council – Cllr Graham Butland Tel 01376 345681