

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

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| Title: | Agenda | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date: | Tuesday 16 May 2017 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Time: | 6.00 pm | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Venue: | Council Chamber District Offices College Heath Road Mildenhall | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Membership: | <p>Leader James Waters</p> <p>Deputy Leader Robin Millar</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>Councillor</u></td> <td><u>Portfolio</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Bowman</td> <td>Operations</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stephen Edwards</td> <td>Resources and Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andy Drummond</td> <td>Leisure and Culture</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robin Millar</td> <td>Families and Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lance Stanbury</td> <td>Planning and Growth</td> </tr> </table> | <u>Councillor</u> | <u>Portfolio</u> | David Bowman | Operations | Stephen Edwards | Resources and Performance | Andy Drummond | Leisure and Culture | Robin Millar | Families and Communities | Lance Stanbury | Planning and Growth |
| <u>Councillor</u> | <u>Portfolio</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| David Bowman | Operations | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stephen Edwards | Resources and Performance | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Andy Drummond | Leisure and Culture | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Robin Millar | Families and Communities | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lance Stanbury | Planning and Growth | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <i>The Constitution of the Cabinet is to be announced under Item 4. on the Agenda for the Annual Meeting of the Council to be held on 10 May 2017. As this Cabinet Agenda was prepared prior to the Annual Meeting of the Council, it reflects the Portfolio Holders and the Portfolios held immediately prior to the Annual Meeting.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation: | Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quorum: | Three Members | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Committee administrator: | Sharon Turner Democratic Services Officer (Cabinet) Tel: 01638 719237 Email: sharon.turner@westsuffolk.gov.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Public Information



Forest Heath
District Council

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|---|--|---|
| Venue: | District Offices College Heath Road Mildenhall Suffolk, IP28 7EY | Tel: 01638 719000 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk Web: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk |
| Access to agenda and reports before the meeting: | Copies of the agenda and reports are open for public inspection at the above address at least five clear days before the meeting. They are also available to view on our website. | |
| Attendance at meetings: | The District Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. | |
| Public speaking: | Members of the public who live or work in the District are invited to put one question or statement of not more than three minutes duration relating to items to be discussed in Part 1 of the agenda only. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply. A person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. There is an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chairman's discretion. | |
| Disabled access: | The public gallery is on the first floor and is accessible via stairs. There is not a lift but disabled seating is available at the back of the Council Chamber on the ground floor. Please see the Committee Administrator who will be able to help you. | |
| Induction loop: | An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. | |
| Recording of meetings: | The Council may record this meeting and permits members of the public and media to record or broadcast it as well (when the media and public are not lawfully excluded). Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Committee Administrator who will instruct that they are not included in the filming. | |

Agenda

Procedural Matters

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

1 - 4

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 April 2017 (attached).

Part 1 - Public

3. Open Forum

At each Cabinet meeting, up to 15 minutes shall be allocated for questions from and discussion with, non-Cabinet members. Members wishing to speak during this session should if possible, give notice in advance. Who speaks and for how long will be at the complete discretion of the person presiding.

4. Public Participation

Members of the public who live or work in the District are invited to put one question/statement of not more than three minutes duration relating to items to be discussed in Part 1 of the agenda only. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply.

A person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start.

There is an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chairman's discretion.

5. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 April 2017

5 - 10

Report No: **CAB/FH/17/020**

Chairman of the Committee: Simon Cole Lead Officer: Christine Brain

6. Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 28 March 2017

11 - 16

Report No: **CAB/FH/17/021**

Portfolio Holder: Stephen Edwards Lead Officer: Jill Korwin

| | Page No |
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| <p>7. Restructure Proposal for the Housing Options and Homelessness Team</p> <p>Report No: CAB/FH/17/022</p> <p>Portfolio Holders: Sara Mildmay-White (West Suffolk Lead for Housing) and Robin Millar Lead Officer: Davina Howes</p> | 17 - 30 |
| <p>8. Annual Review of Cabinet's Working Groups, Joint Committees/Panels and Other Groups</p> <p>Report No: CAB/FH/17/023</p> <p>Portfolio Holder: James Waters Lead Officers: Karen Points and Leah Mickleborough</p> | 31 - 58 |
| <p>9. Decisions Plan: May 2017 to May 2018</p> <p>Report No: CAB/FH/17/024</p> <p>To consider the most recently published version of the Cabinet's Decisions Plan Portfolio Holder: James Waters Lead Officer: Ian Gallin</p> | 59 - 74 |
| <p>10. Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs</p> <p>Report No: CAB/FH/17/025</p> <p>Portfolio Holder: Stephen Edwards Lead Officer: Rachael Mann</p> | 75 - 78 |
| <p>11. Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider whether the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of the following items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt categories of information as prescribed in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and indicated against each item and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p> | |

Part 2 - Exempt

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| <p>12. Exempt Appendix 1: Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs (paras 1 and 2)</p> <p>Exempt Appendix 1 to Report No: CAB/FH/17/025 Portfolio Holder: Stephen Edwards Lead Officer: Rachael Mann</p> <p><i>(This item is to be considered in private under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as it contains information relating to an individual(s) and information</i></p> | 79 - 80 |
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which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

(No representations have been received from members of the public regarding this item being held in private)

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Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on
Tuesday 4 April 2017 at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District**
Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman James Waters
Vice Chairman Robin Millar

David Bowman
Stephen Edwards

Lance Stanbury

By Invitation:

Ruth Bowman

(Vice Chairman of the Overview and
Scrutiny Committee)

299. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andy Drummond.

300. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2017 were unanimously confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

301. **Open Forum**

No Non-Cabinet Members in attendance wished to speak under this item.

302. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

303. **Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 16 March 2017 (Report No: CAB/FH/17/015)**

Councillor Ruth Bowman, Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented this report which informed the Cabinet of the following items which had been discussed by the Committee on 16 March 2017:

- (1) Annual Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance.
- (2) Decisions Plan: April 2017 to May 2017.
- (3) Work Programme Update.

Councillor Bowman also drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the content of Report No: CAB/FH/17/015, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

304. Core Strategy Single Issue Review (CS SIR) and Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) - Next Steps (Report No: CAB/FH/17/016)

Councillor Lance Stanbury, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth, presented this report which was formally requesting the Planning Inspector appointed to Examine in Public the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP), to make any necessary modifications to make the Plans 'sound' under Section 20 (7c) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Portfolio Holder explained that Planning Inspectors no longer make modifications unless specifically asked to do so by the Local Planning Authority. It was important that the Inspector be formally requested to do so, otherwise, if he found the Plan not to be sound, he would have no choice but to recommend that the Plan not be adopted and the Local Authority would have to start the Plan making process again. Therefore, to meet all the legal requirements and in accordance with paragraph 6.5 of the procedural practice in the Examination of Local Plans, a further resolution was requested under Section 20 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (26 April 2017)

That the Planning Inspector be requested to make any necessary main modifications under Section 20 (7c) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchases Act that he/she judges necessary, to make all submitted Local Plan documents 'sound'.

305. Development of a New Partnership Agreement with Abbeycroft Leisure (Report No: CAB/FH/17/017)

Councillor Robin Millar, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, presented this report, on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture (Councillor Andy Drummond), which sought approval for entering into a new Partnership Agreement with Abbeycroft Leisure Ltd.

This new Agreement had been developed in line with the previously approved principles and commitments of Cabinet and Council, as set out in Section 2 of Report No: CAB/FH/17/017 and, therefore, satisfactorily supported the objectives and priorities of the Council and Abbeycroft regarding the promotion of health and wellbeing by supporting people to engage in physical activity. As part of the new Agreement, Abbeycroft had also committed to deliver a zero management fee to the Council by 2025.

Whilst discussing this report, Councillor Millar also proposed that there should be an addition to Recommendation (2) of the report and that within the Performance Management Framework there should be an appropriate

indicator to measure the impact of Abbeycroft Leisure in the promotion of the role of community groups/the use of community sites in the provision of health and wellbeing.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (26 April 2017)

That:-

1. A new Partnership Agreement be entered into with Abbeycroft Leisure for a period of 15 years, with options to extend for 5 + 5 years, subject to the protections included in the Partnership Agreement.
2. The Partnership Agreement be finalised in line with Report No: CAB/FH/17/017 and the Heads of Terms attached at Appendix 1, subject to the inclusion of an additional indicator within the Performance Management Framework to measure the increase in participation at community events, run by other partners, but supported by Abbeycroft Leisure Ltd.

306. Establishing a Mechanism for Investing in our Growth Agenda (Report No: CAB/FH/17/018)

Councillors Lance Stanbury (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth) and Stephen Edwards (Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance) both presented this report which set out a proposed approach for establishing a mechanism for investing in the Council's growth agenda.

The Council had previously committed (with St Edmundsbury Borough Council) in its Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-2020, its intention to facilitate sustainable growth that benefitted its communities, including through investment, over the period of the strategy. This was in order to deliver the Council's growth objectives, as well as moving towards its goal of self-sufficiency.

As part of the February 2017 Budget and Council Tax Setting report, a £20m revolving capital investment fund was created as a pending item within the Council's capital programme, funded from external borrowing. Report No: CAB/FH/17/018 proposed an approach to govern that fund and the creation of a £1 million (plus £1m from SEBC) revenue reserve budget to facilitate the fund's next steps in delivering growth and investment opportunities in West Suffolk.

The Portfolio Holders explained that the creation of the revenue reserve budget, which was proposed to be funded through a reserve transfer from the Strategic Priorities and Medium Term Financial Strategy Reserve utilising existing delegations of the Assistant Director (Resources and Performance), would be used to support delivery of the capital fund on such items set out in Section 5 of the report.

The Cabinet recognised the vision and forward thinking of the proposals, which fully supported the Council's strategic priorities and themes of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-2021. Subject to the relevant checks

and balances as addressed in the report, the Cabinet agreed that the proposed governance would enable the Council to act more nimbly, swiftly and commercially to progress its growth agenda through the towns and rural areas of the District and West Suffolk.

Members also noted that further approval would be required on certain elements of the overall approach in relation to the development of an overarching investment strategy, which would be presented to Cabinet and Council in due course.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That:-

1. The strategic approach to investment planning (as outlined in Report No: CAB/FH/17/018 and at Section 3) and the development of an overarching investment strategy for Council approval in due course be supported and approved.
2. The principle of the Cabinet's role in the leadership and decision-making in relation to the investment fund (outlined in Report No: CAB/FH/17/018 and at Sections 4 and 5) be supported and approved.
3. The transfer from reserves as detailed in paragraph 5.2 and 5.3 of Report No: CAB/FH/17/018 for the creation of a £1m revenue budget to support the capital investment fund, be noted.
4. It be noted that prior to the adoption of the overarching investment strategy, referred at 1. above, the current constitutional decision mechanisms will continue to operate.

307. Decisions Plan: April 2017 to May 2017 (Report No: CAB/FH/17/019)

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/FH/17/019, which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period April 2017 to May 2017.

Members took the opportunity to review the intended forthcoming decisions of the Cabinet, however, no further information or amendments were requested on this occasion.

The Meeting concluded at 6.20 pm

Signed by:

Chairman

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

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| Title of Report: | Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 April 2017 | |
| Report No: | CAB/FH/17/020 | |
| Report to and date: | Cabinet | 16 May 2017 |
| Chairman of the Committee: | Councillor Simon Cole Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07974 443762 Email: simon.cole@forest-heath.gov.uk | |
| Lead Officer: | Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
| Purpose of report: | <p>On 20 April 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Annual Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities; (2) Monitoring Community Safety Activities Including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (3) West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points; (4) Review and Revision of the Constitution (Quarterly Report); (5) Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 4); and (6) Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group | |

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| Recommendation: | The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report CAB/FH/17/020, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. | | |
| Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i> | <i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only. | | |
| Consultation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | | |
| Alternative option(s): | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | | |
| Implications: | | | |
| <i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | |
| <i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | |
| <i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | |
| <i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | |
| <i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below | |
| Risk/opportunity assessment: | | <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i> | |
| Risk area | Inherent level of risk (before controls) | Controls | Residual risk (after controls) |
| See Reports listed under background papers below | | | |
| Wards affected: | | All Wards | |
| Background papers: | | Please see background papers, which are listed at the end of the report. | |
| Documents attached: | | None | |

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 Annual Presentation by the Portfolio Holder Families and Communities (Report No: OAS/FH/17/010 and Verbal)

1.1.1 The Committee was reminded that on 21 April 2016, the Committee received a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, setting out responsibilities covered under the planning and growth portfolio.

1.1.2 At this meeting, the portfolio holder for Families and Communities, Councillor Robin Millar, had been invited back to provide a follow-up presentation on his portfolio. Report No: OAS/FH/17/010, set out the focus for the follow-up presentation, which was to:

- Outline the main challenges faced since during the first year within your portfolio;
- Outline some key successes and any failures during the first year and any lessons learned:
- Set out the vision for the Operations Portfolio through to 2019 and were you on target to meet that vision.

1.1.3 Members discussed the presentation and asked questions of the Cabinet Member, to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on how the portfolio was integrating with outside services such as youth development and safeguarding work; the work of locality officers and recent staff turnover; and the need to evaluate what was being spent under the Families and Community Portfolio to better understand whether it was making a difference to communities and residents.

1.1.4 The Committee was informed that the Families and Communities Portfolio was influencing services beyond its control. It was a massive change in the way that councillors worked as they developed and became leaders in the wards they represented. It was a different way of working for local government.

1.1.5 It was then suggested by the Committee that a future member development session should be held so members could share with others how they were using their locality budgets, which the Cabinet Member agreed to progress.

1.1.6 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the presentation.

1.2 Monitoring Community Safety Activities including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (Report No: OAS/FH/17/011)

1.2.1 It is the duty of the Committee, as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee designated under the Police and Justice Act 2006, to scrutinise the work of the Partnership.

1.2.2 Over the past year the WSCSP continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by carrying out an annual assessment of crime, producing an annual plan and carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews, as required.

- 1.2.3 The Committee received and **noted** the update on the community safety activity in West Suffolk, including the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) from April 2016 to March 2017.
- 1.2.4 In May 2016, the WSCSP completed and published its partnership plan and project plan for identified community priorities for 2016-2017. Attached as Appendix A to the report, was the WSCSP project plan.
- 1.2.5 The report also set out the work of the Strong and Safe Communities Group; the multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Group and Public Space Protection Orders.
- 1.2.6 Members scrutinised the report and asked questions of officers, to which responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on officer time involved in community safety and the cash award received from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and gang violence. Discussions were also held on the numbers involved in anti-social behaviour. In response, officers informed the Committee that figures were referred to the Multi-Agency Group who looked at vulnerable cases of anti-social behaviour.

1.3 **West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points (Report No: OAS/FH/17/012)**

- 1.3.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/17/012, which asked members to review progress against the West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015-2018. Attached at Appendix A to the report was a detailed update on progress as at the end of December 2016, against 40 objectives. The remainder of the report summarised each of the headings, key achievements to date and work underway and highlighted challenges and external factors impacting on delivery.
- 1.3.2 Members considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions of the Lead Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Service Manager (Strategic Housing) who duly responded. In particular discussions were held on building housing to lifetime home standards; standards for space guidance; high density housing in rural areas; local lettings policies; the implications of housing on health, and the impact of universal credit.

The Committee was also informed that Member workshops would be arranged, in particular covering the welfare reform / universal credits.

- 1.3.3 The Committee agreed that it would be useful to continue having a Housing Strategy post 2018 when the current one ends, acknowledging that there was no legal requirement to have one.
- 1.3.4 It was **Resolved** that the Committee:
- (1) **Noted** the progress made to date against the actions arising from the West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015-2018;
 - (2) **Noted** the challenges facing delivery of the West Suffolk Housing Strategy; and

- (3) **Noted** an update would be presented to the Committee in early 2018 in order to monitor delivery in 2017.

1.4 **Review and Revision of the Constitution – Quarter 4 (Verbal)**

- 1.4.1 The Monitoring Officer provided a verbal update on revisions which had been made to the Constitution during the last quarter. These had mainly been changes made to the officer structure /amendments to job titles.
- 1.4.2 In the past the Committee received a report each quarter on minor changes which had been made. The Monitoring Officer was happy to carry on that process if the Committee found it useful, or it might wish to only receive updates when substantial change were being made to the Constitution.
- 1.4.3 The Committee considered the proposal and agreed that in future that it would only receive updates on substantial changes being made to the Constitution.

1.5 **Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 4) (Verbal)**

- 1.5.1 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.
- 1.5.2 The Committee was advised that in Quarter 4, no such surveillance had been authorised. The Committee was advised that surveillance powers were mainly used by the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) for carrying out benefits checks. It felt it would be useful to see how ARP was using the surveillance powers.
- 1.5.3 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** that the Monitoring Officer would provide the Committee with an update at its July 2017 meeting on surveillance authorisations carried out by the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP).

1.6 **Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group (Report No: OAS/FH/17/013)**

- 1.6.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/17/013, which provided an update on the current status of the Committee's Work Programme for 2017-2018.
- 1.6.2 The Committee **noted** that due to a General Election being held on 8 June, it's next meeting would be rescheduled to be held on Tuesday 6 June 2017, at 6pm in the Council Chamber.
- 1.6.3 The Committee was also asked to nominate two members with appropriate skills to sit on a "West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group". The purpose of the Information Strategy will be to seek to recognise the strategic value of information to the Council and to promote and facilitate good information management practice.

The Committee considered the requested made by the Service Manager (ICT) and **Resolved** to nominate Councillor Brian Harvey and Councillor Simon Cole to sit on the Joint Task and Finish Group with St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

2. Background Papers

- 2.1.1 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/010](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities
- 2.1.2 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/011](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Monitoring Community Safety Activities including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership
- 2.1.3 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/012](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points
- 2.1.4 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/013](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

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| Title of Report: | Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 28 March 2017 | |
| Report No: | CAB/FH/17/021 | |
| Report to and date: | Cabinet | 16 May 2017 |
| Portfolio holder: | Councillor Stephen Edwards Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 07904 389982 Email: stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk | |
| Lead officer: | Jill Korwin Director Tel: 01284 757252 Email: jill.korwin@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
| Purpose of report: | <p>On 28 March 2017 the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee considered the following substantive items of business:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Performance Report; (2) Welfare Reform Update; (3) Transformation Programme Update; (4) Forthcoming Issues; (5) Exempt Item: Risk Based Verification Policy Review Report – March 2017; and (6) Partnership Working through Section 101 Agreement. <p>This report is for information only. No decisions are required by the Cabinet.</p> | |
| Recommendation: | The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the content of Report No: CAB/FH/17/021 being the report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee. | |
| Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i> | <p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> | |

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| Consultation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Alternative option(s): | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Implications: | |
| Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' |
| Risk/opportunity assessment: See reports of ARP Joint Committee at link provided under 'Background papers' | <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i> |
| Ward(s) affected: | All Ward/s |
| Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i> | Breckland DC Website: 28 March 2017 |
| Documents attached: | None |

1. Key Issues

1.1 Performance Report (Agenda Item 5)

(a) Operational Performance

- 1.1.1 The Joint Committee had received and noted the Operational Performance Report as at 31 December 2016. The report details ARP's key achievements in respect of Benefits and Fraud Performance; Revenues Performance and Support Performance, including Automation of Outgoing Post; ICT upgrade and E-billing and Landlord Online Account. This detailed report can be viewed on Breckland District Council's website at:

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/s42779/ARP%20Strategic%20Managers%20Highlight%20report%20February%202017.pdf>

- 1.1.2 Benefits performance continues to meet profiled targets and is on course to achieve the majority of year end targets. Exceptions related to the operation of the full Universal Credit service by Waveney District Council; however its performance is improving considerably with new processes already in place to address its present difficulties. In respect of identifying and preventing fraud in four specific areas (as outlined in the report), year end targets were on track to be exceeded, which in turn leads to an increase in Council Tax income.

- 1.1.3 The Joint Committee had also noted the proposed changes to the way in which customers will be able to view their Council Tax, Business Rates, benefits payments and E-billing on the ARP website. E-billing and online accounts have already been introduced and customer sign-up numbers are increasing.

1.1.4 (b) Balanced Scorecard

Members had noted that with the exception of four, targets had been met by all partner authorities with the majority of indicators annotated green as at 31 December 2016, as shown on the Balanced Scorecard at:

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/s42778/ARP%20Balanced%20Scorecard%202016-17%20-%20Dec%202016.pdf>

- 1.1.5 The above report provides further information on indicators relevant to each partner authority, which are grouped under the following headings:

- (a) **Financial:** Collection, Budget Management
- (b) **Customer:** Customer Satisfaction, Channel Shift
- (c) **Internal Process:** Collection, Fraud
- (d) **Learning and Growth:** Performance Management

- 1.1.6 The targets for 2017/18 have been agreed by the Joint Committee.

1.1.7 (c) Financial Performance

In respect of the financial performance report, the Joint Committee had noted the position as at 31 January 2017, which showed a current underspend of £580,113 against budget. The reasons for the specific variances, which are largely due to employee underspends due to vacancies, postage and stationery efficiency savings, and higher than expected income from the Enforcement Agency, are contained in the report at:

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/s42748/ARP%20Management%20Accounts%20201617%20to%20JC.pdf>

1.1.8 The Enforcement Agency is continuing to exceed expectations with income presently achieving £319,000 higher than budget. This is reflected in the budget for future years.

1.1.9 An update had also been provided on committed expenditure for the Transformation Programme. If all identified expenditure goes through in 2016/2017, there will be £217,313 remaining of the original £501,026 in the Transformation Fund, with £98,196 unallocated.

1.1.10 In addition, Members had noted revised efficiency targets for 2017/2018 to 2019/2020.

1.2 Welfare Reform (Agenda Item 6)

1.2.1 The Joint Committee had received and noted an update on welfare reform, which included:

- (a) **Universal Credit:** The current position regarding the timeline to move to the live operation of the full service. Waveney District Council, who was already operating the full service (apart from Beccles) has been experiencing difficulties, particularly with processing Council Tax Support claims; however they were not alone in this. Measures and controls have been put in place to address the issues and mitigate the risk of performance against target. St Edmundsbury was expected to roll out the full service in October 2017, with Forest Heath following in September 2018.
- (b) **Discretionary Housing Payment:** Spend continues to be within the grant provided by the DWP, which is designed to help customers remain in their homes or to move to affordable and sustainable accommodation. The main area of expenditure continues to be to assist customers with rent shortfalls, in particular due to restrictions on Housing Benefit rent levels.
- (c) **Benefit Cap:** In November 2016, the maximum family income before the Benefit Cap applies reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£13,400 for single adults with no children). The number of ARP customers now affected ranges from 46 to 105 per partner council. The Benefit Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and the cost of temporary housing.

- (d) **Two Child Limit:** From April 2017, the DWP introduced legislation to restrict benefits to families having a third child from April 2017 to the two child rate. There are exceptions, such as multiple births. New claims for Universal Credit where an applicant has more than two children will be redirected to legacy benefits, i.e. housing benefit.
- (e) **Social Rented Sector Rent Restrictions:** The implementation of a cap on housing benefit and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates in the social rented sector has been delayed by a year, to April 2019.

1.3 **Transformation Programme (Agenda Item 7)**

- 1.3.1 The Joint Committee had received and noted an update on the Transformation Programme and its progress against the plan attached as Appendix 1 to that report.
- 1.3.2 The overarching purpose of the programme is to secure continued and improved delivery of excellent services to customers whilst creating efficiencies and savings at least equivalent to the estimated loss of government grant funding.
- 1.3.3 A part of the overall strategy also relates to achieving efficiencies in levels of staff required to process the work received which can then be used where trading opportunities are identified through the ARP trading company and where Members agree to business cases that may be brought from the commercial strand.
- 1.3.4 The transformation programme has three strands: Reduction in Avoidable Contact and Automation of Processes (Digital); Commercial, Partnership and Trading Opportunities; and Organisational Vision and Development.
- 1.3.5 Members had noted progress for each of the above and that it would be challenging to deliver all of the elements of the programme; however early indications have been extremely positive. It is expected that the investment fund will meet the requirements of the actions identified; however, if additional funds are needed then burdens funding received in 2016/17 and 2017/18 could be used upon the Operational Improvement Board authorising the expenditure.
- 1.3.6 Discussion had particularly been held on:
 - (a) the tremendous success of the Enforcement Agency, as reflected in the income generated; and
 - (b) progress in respect of ARP developing its trading arm.
- 1.3.7 A copy of the full report can be found on Breckland DC's website at:

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/s42780/Joint%20Committee%20Transformation%20Programme%20update%20Report.pdf>

Appendix 1

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/s42781/Ready%20%20Business%20Plan%20updated%2006.03.2017.pdf>

1.4 **Forthcoming Issues (Agenda Item 8)**

1.4.1 No issues had been reported on this occasion.

1.5 **Exempt Report (para 3): Risk Based Verification Policy Review – March 2017 (Agenda Item 11)**

1.5.1 Approval had been sought from the Joint Committee to the continuance of its Risk Based Verification Policy. It is required by the Department for Work and Pensions to be reviewed on an annual basis.

1.5.2 The policy is provided to ensure that the Local Authorities within ARP fulfil their statutory requirements and operate a strict regime of preventing fraud and error entering the system whilst continuing with live caseload intervention.

1.5.3 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED that the recommendations, as listed in the exempt report, be approved.**

1.6 **Exempt Report (para 3): Partnership Working through Section 101 Agreement (Agenda Item 12)**

1.6.1 Approval had been sought from the Joint Committee in respect of whether ARP should proceed with a proposal to deliver revenues and benefits services for another district council through a Section 101 Agreement. The district council in question had previously approached ARP regarding this matter.

1.6.2 Having considered the implications as set out in the exempt report, the Joint Committee **RESOLVED not to proceed with the proposal.**

2. Minutes

2.1 For further information on the discussions held at the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee meeting on 28 March 2017, the draft minutes of the meeting may be viewed on Breckland District Council's website at the following link:

<http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/q4019/Printed%20minutes%2028th-Mar-2017%2010.00%20Anglia%20Revenues%20and%20Benefits%20Partnership%20Joint%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------|
| Title of Report: | Restructure Proposal for the Housing Options and Homelessness Team | |
| Report No: | CAB/FH/17/022 | |
| Report to and dates: | Cabinet | 16 May 2017 |
| Portfolio holders: | <p>Councillor Sara Mildmay-White West Suffolk Lead for Housing Tel: 01359 270580 Email: sara.mildmay-white@stedsbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Councillor Robin Millar Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities Tel: 07545 423782 Email: robin.millar@forest-heath.gov.uk</p> | |
| Lead officer: | <p>Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) Tel: 01284 757070 Email: davina.howes@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p> | |
| Purpose of report: | To consider and approve the additional staffing resources required to meet the requirements of the new Homelessness Reduction Act and the impact of other welfare reforms, funded from the Flexible Homelessness Reduction Grant. | |
| Recommendation: | <p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that, Cabinet:</p> <p>(1) Note the additional statutory duties which will be in place as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act;</p> <p>(2) Agree that the service be restructured and that an additional 6.8 FTE staff are required to meet the new statutory duties; and</p> <p>(3) Agree that the funding of the additional</p> | |

| | |
|--|---|
| | posts be secured from the Flexible Homelessness Reduction Grant. |
| <p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p> | <p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(a) <i>A key decision means an executive decision which, pending any further guidance from the Secretary of State, is likely to:</i></p> <p>(i) <i>be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area in the Borough/District.</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>result in any new expenditure, income or savings of more than £50,000 in relation to the Council's revenue budget or capital programme;</i></p> |
| <p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p> | |
| <p>Consultation:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has been carried out with Leadership Team and Portfolio Holder for Housing. Best practice advice has been sought and lessons learnt from the experience of similar legislation enacted in Wales in 2014. |
| <p>Alternative option(s):</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Councils could choose not to increase its staffing and/or retain its current structure. However, it is felt that the status quo is not fit for purpose in terms of the new demands imposed by the Homelessness Reduction Act and other welfare reforms. |
| <p>Implications:</p> | |
| <p><i>Are there any financial implications?</i> <i>If yes, please give details</i></p> | <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of the additional staff across West Suffolk in 2017/18 is £230,354 (allocated as £80,624 for Forest Heath District Council and £149,730 for St Edmundsbury). The government has made funding available for homelessness prevention in the form of a Flexible Homelessness Reduction Grant. For West Suffolk Councils the total funding for 2017/18 is £228,970. Further information is contained in section three of this report. |
| <p><i>Are there any staffing implications?</i> <i>If yes, please give details</i></p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing staff will be given the opportunity to express a |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | <p>preference for new roles within the team as a result of the new proposed structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If approved, these additional resources would result in 6.8 FTE staff being added to the establishment. | |
| <p>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional cost of IT and phone equipment. | | |
| <p>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Homelessness Reduction Act will bring in a substantial number of new statutory duties. | | |
| <p>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</p> | <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No implications arising directly from this restructure. However, staff will need to be aware of the new housing statutory duties and how they complement the councils' statutory equality duties. Refresher equality training for staff will be required. | | |
| <p>Risk/opportunity assessment:</p> | | <p><i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i></p> | |
| <p>Risk area</p> | <p>Inherent level of risk (before controls)</p> | <p>Controls</p> | <p>Residual risk (after controls)</p> |
| <p>Insufficient number of staff to meet existing and increasing demand</p> | <p>High*</p> | <p>Ensure that the councils recruit candidates with the right skills set and abilities.</p> | <p>Medium</p> |
| <p>Staff are unfamiliar with the new requirements of the Act which could lead to increase in reviews and legal challenges</p> | <p>High</p> | <p>Implement a comprehensive training programme for all existing and new staff prior to the statutory duties coming into force.</p> | <p>Medium</p> |
| <p>Ward(s) affected:</p> | | <p>All Wards</p> | |
| <p>Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i></p> | | <p>None</p> | |
| <p>Documents attached:</p> | | <p>Appendix A: Existing Staff Structure Appendix B: Proposed New Structure</p> | |

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This report outlines the proposed restructure of the Housing Options and Homelessness Team, including the requirement for additional posts to meet new statutory requirements.

1.1.2 This restructure has been prompted by a number of factors, including:

- i. a number of **staff changes** and the urgent requirement to fill vacant posts;
- ii. the need to have a robust service which can respond to forthcoming significant legislative changes, particularly the **Homelessness Reduction Act**;
- iii. recognition that changes to **Universal Credit (UC)** will have a real impact on tenants and landlords across West Suffolk;
- iv. reduction in the number of **Housing Related Support** funded beds, anticipated changes to housing support funding from 2018 and continual changes to the **welfare system**;
- v. a review of the councils' **landlord liaison** activities; and
- vi. feedback from the **Housing Peer Review**.

1.1.3 Whilst we have data to understand the existing level of demand faced by the service, it is difficult to predict with accuracy what the impact of the new Homelessness Reduction Act might be. Figures have been predicted by the government based on the experience in Wales where similar legislation is already in place. Similarly, when assessing the implications of the extension of UC (to St Edmundsbury in October 2017, and Forest Heath in November 2018) we can only consider the impact that this has had elsewhere in the country. At this point we can only state that the service will be facing increasing demands as a result of these two significant changes but are unable to predict, with accuracy, what this increase might be.

1.1.4 It should be noted that this restructure forms part of a wider improvement action plan for the team. Ensuring that we have sufficient staffing resources to manage demand is only one part of what is needed. The team's improvement action plan details improvement in a number of key issues to ensure that the team is as efficient and effective as possible and focusses its work on prevention, including: (i) policies and processes; (ii) linkages and interaction with customer services, including channel shift; (iii) increasing lobbying and communication; and (iv) improved partnership working.

1.1.5 The driver for this improvement plan, and the restructure, is to ensure that the service provides robust advice and prevention and supports people at an early stage before they find themselves in difficulties. This approach complements the councils' Families and Communities Strategy.

1.2 Factors influencing a restructure

1.2.1 Before detailing the proposed new structure for the team, it is important to expand in more detail the factors outlined in paragraph 1.1.2 above.

1.2.2 *i. Staff changes and ability to recruit and retain*

The service has faced significant changes in the past few years. In 2016, staff turnover in the housing team (wider team, not just housing options) was 18.92%. This compares with 8.74% for the rest of the organisation.

1.2.3 In addition to high staff turnover rate, during 2016 there were four maternity absences in Housing Options. As a result, temporary cover arrangements were put in place, which included moving less experienced staff within the team and backfilling using secondments, as well as bringing in short term temporary agency cover (which in itself created a number of HR and management issues).

1.2.4 It has proven difficult at times to recruit to posts given that a level of experience and knowledge is required particularly when making statutory decisions. There is little in the way of more junior roles within the team, thereby we are not able to develop from within. At the same time, senior staff have limited capacity and are unable to provide the level of training and support which would be expected.

1.2.5 Given the above, there is a need to avoid, insofar as possible, temporary arrangements which lead to further instability and disruption.

1.2.6 *ii. Homelessness Reduction Act*

The Homelessness Reduction Act has gained Royal Assent and is likely to come into force some time between January and April 2018. This Act will confer a number of new duties on councils. Whilst the government has promised an additional £61million over two years to help councils start to intervene earlier, it is not clear how much will be awarded to West Suffolk councils.

1.2.7 The Homelessness Reduction Act will require the councils to:

- (i) start assessing someone at risk of being made homeless 56 days before losing their home (currently 28 days);
- (ii) offer every applicant a personalised housing plan;
- (iii) offer a full Advice and Options assessment; and
- (iv) identify all applicants at risk of homelessness and attempt to engage those applicants – thereby becoming a proactive rather than reactive service and
- (v) offer all applicants temporary accommodation at the point of expiry of notice. There is an expectation that councils will have a private sector offer and the ability to step in and assist financially, whether that be to reduce arrears or help with costs of new accommodation. A new duty to co-operate gives partner agencies a duty to assist in advising and co-operating with councils whilst we try to prevent homelessness. We must ensure robust partnerships in place and those relationships are managed.

1.2.8 The impact of the Act and the implications for West Suffolk are still being assessed. Lessons are being learnt from the experience in Wales where similar legislation was introduced in 2014 and this has been considered when developing this restructure proposal. Professional housing organisations are suggesting that councils need to increase staffing capacity specifically in the

following areas:

- (i) advice and prevention;
- (ii) landlord liaison;
- (iii) debt and money management;
- (vi) undertaking reviews which, as a result of the new Act, can be requested at all stages, not just the final decision; and
- (v) finding accommodation.

1.2.9 Nationally the number of people being defined as homeless has increased since 2010. In 2015/16, some 115,000 households applied to their council for homelessness assistance, 11% more than in 2010/11. Of those, 58,000 were accepted as homeless and in "priority need", 6% up on the year before. The table below show the homelessness figures for both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury, showing an increase of 9.5%. At this stage, the government is anticipating that, as a result of the new duties in the Act, there will be a 30% to 40% increase in caseload and rights to review are likely to increase by 50%. It is not expected that councils will see a decrease in homeless acceptances until year three.

Homelessness acceptances

| Authority | 2015 | 2016 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| St Edmundsbury | 214 | 203 |
| Forest Heath | 114 | 143 |
| | 328 | 346 |

1.2.10 The rise in homelessness has been attributed to the long-term failure to ensure a sufficient supply of affordable housing. Other significant factors include the increase in homelessness arising from the termination of assured shorthold tenancies in the private rented sector, and Housing Benefit restrictions introduced since 2010 which have made it difficult for claimants to secure housing at rents which Housing Benefit will cover (see below for more information regarding the impact of welfare reform).

1.2.11 The national figures in the past year have shown that the number of homelessness acceptances has increased by 10% with rough sleeping increasing by 30%. In terms of rough sleeping in West Suffolk we have seen an increase in reported rough sleepers from 11 in 2015 to 21 in 2016. We continue to receive new rough sleeper alerts via StreetLink with ten so far received as at March 2017.

1.2.12 *iii. Impact of Universal Credit*

UC will be rolled out to all new claimants from October 2017 in St Edmundsbury and from November 2018 in Forest Heath (it is currently only in place for single non-householders so the impact has been minimal thus far). Experience from elsewhere in the country shows that households in receipt of UC are much more likely to be in arrears and also have, on average, larger levels of arrears than tenants in general. This is due to the fact that there is a six week wait for payments and claimants receive one payment directly and have to pay all bills (including rent) from this payment.

- 1.2.13 National studies have shown that in total a very high proportion (86% in September 2016) of those receiving UC are in arrears, compared to less than one third (39%) of tenants not receiving UC. Average arrears have increased to £615 for tenants on UC, almost double the average of £321 in March 2016. The most common reasons for arrears were the six-week wait for the first UC payment, including the seven day waiting period, and DWP failing to promptly notify landlords of tenant claiming UC. More locally Lowestoft has a full service in operation and a number of concerns have been identified and the same pattern has emerged relating to increased arrears.
- 1.2.14 UC is therefore going to impact on the housing service in a number of ways including: (i) more support required to be given to tenants to manage their rent; (ii) more time needing to be given to private and social landlords to ensure that they retain UC tenants, or continue to accept them in the first place; (iii) more time negotiating with landlords when a tenant is in arrears; and (iv) time will need to be allocated to chasing the council debt/payments, i.e temporary accommodation funding currently paid to the council from housing benefit will need to be sourced from the tenant directly or arrangements made with DWP to request payment directly, which will be difficult to manage particularly for short term placements.
- 1.2.15 *iii. Housing related support and welfare reform*

Suffolk County Council has recently completed a re-tender process for its Housing Related Support (HRS) provision. This money is used to fund accommodation-based services for single homeless adults to work collaboratively across Suffolk to provide accommodation and housing support to enable vulnerable people aged 18 and above to gain or regain the necessary skills to enable them to live independently and participate in their community. West Suffolk has experienced a reduction of adult HRS funded beds and young people's beds (with the definition of young people being reduced from 24 years old to 21). Whilst the providers of young people's beds are confident that they will not be evicting, the level of service they will be offering will be reduced. This reduction will result in less provision and options available, along with a reduced provider choice.

- 1.2.16 In addition to the introduction of UC, there continues to be changes to the welfare system which impact on residents and are likely to increase the demand on the Housing Team, including, but not restricted to:
- There is a four-year freeze to Local Housing Allowance rates for four years from 2016-17 to 2019-20.
 - Child Tax Credit (CTC) changed from April 2017, with support provided through CTC will be limited to two children. Any subsequent children born after April 2017 will not be eligible for further support. The 'family element' of £545 per year will be abolished. Families with one or more children born before April 2017 will continue to get the family element but new claims after this date will not.
 - From April 2017, the government removed the automatic entitlement to housing support for 18-21 year olds. The principle being that young people in the benefit system should face the same choices as other young people who go out to work but cannot afford the leave the

parental home. The number of young people affected will be small in the short-term but will increase with UC roll out.

1.2.17 *iv. Review of the councils' landlord liaison activities*

This restructure proposal takes into account the fact that capacity is required within the team to support and liaise with private landlords as there is insufficient social housing in which to discharge our statutory duties. The councils currently have a temporary post within its team whose role is to manage the Lettings Partnership. The contract for this post will end in September. It is vital that the councils have a supply of private sector landlords who are willing to have tenants in receipt of benefits. This will become all the more critical with the introduction of UC direct payments to tenants. Experience elsewhere in the country shows there is an increasing reluctance amongst private landlords to take UC customers given that they no longer receive direct payment (unless a direct payment agreement is arranged). Future grant funding from the government will, in part, depend on our ability to discharge our duties into the private rented sector. It is therefore vital that we have a strong landlord liaison function.

1.2.18 *Feedback from Housing Peer Review*

This restructure proposal takes into account the key findings from the Housing Peer Review which was carried out in November 2016. The review was carried out by the National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) which supports local authorities to deliver improved early intervention and prevention focused housing options services. Whilst overall the review was positive about the service provided, there are a number of areas for improvement which are needed, including:

- a. A review of the Homelessness Strategy to reflect the need for additional provisions for Rough Sleepers.
- b. Review Housing Options service structure to meet emerging challenges, including greater emphasis on prevention / relief as per Homelessness Reduction Act.
- c. Ensure that there is sufficient staff supervision and support arrangements are in place. Include regular case file checking for quality assurance.
- d. Develop and implement a consistent service offer and process to all applicants which includes confirming advice given in writing.
- e. Look to offer additional Homeless prevention options including: floating support, mediation, access to the private rented sector, social housing options and access to supported accommodation through an identified pathways approach.
- f. Officers need sufficient time to prepare for interviews and follow up to prepare personalised Housing Plans (new statutory requirement), this includes having sufficient time to provide follow up paperwork and

recording information on case files.

- g. Ability to carry out home visits to assess applications.

2. Overview of existing and proposed structures

- 2.1 Appendix A illustrates the existing structure and Appendix B illustrates the proposed new structure and a summary is shown in the table below. The purpose of the structure is to ensure that more capacity is available to focus on prevention with the creation of an Advice and Prevention Team. A solutions team will be created to ensure the councils' have effective liaison with landlords and can also provide welfare/budgeting support to customers to ensure they retain tenancies.
- 2.2 There is not anticipated to be any cost of change associated with this restructure. It is estimated that the total additional staffing costs to deliver this structure is **£230,354 including all employer costs** subject to final job evaluation of the posts. It is proposed staffing costs are funded on the basis of the 35% Forest Heath District Council and 65% St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Summary table

| Existing resources | Proposed resources |
|--|---|
| 1 FTE – Service Manager Band H | 1 FTE – Service Manager Band H |
| 2 FTE - Team Leaders Band F (1 FTE vacant) | 3.0 FTE – Team Leaders Band F (1.0 FTE – Choice Based Lettings) (1.0 FTE – Solutions) (1.0 FTE – Advice and Prevention) |
| 7.42 FTE – Housing Options/Homelessness Officers Band E | 11.62 FTE – Band E officers (2.2 FTE – Assessors) (7.42 FTE – Advice and Prevention) (1 FTE – Welfare) (1 FTE - Landlord Liaison) |
| 1 FTE – Lettings Co-ordinator Band E (funded until September 2017) | Retain until September only. Landlord liaison duties to be passed to newly created Landlord Liaison Post (included above) |
| 1 FTE – Accommodation Officer Band D | 1 FTE – Accommodation Officer Band D 1 FTE – CBL assistant Band D 0.60 FTE - Income Recovery Officer – Band D |
| | 1 FTE – Rough Sleeper Worker Band E (paid for by DCLG for two years, but included here for completeness) |
| 0.68 FTE – Business Admin Band C | 0.68 FTE – Business Admin Officer Band C |
| Total posts: 13.1 FTE | Total posts: 19.90 However 1.0 is funded through the DCLG Rough Sleeper Grant until 2019 |
| | Total Increase: 6.80 FTE £230,354* |

*Based rates on the new salary rates that come in to effect on 1 April 17

which include a 1% cost of living increase.

3. Funding the new structure

3.1 On 16 March 2017 DCLG announced a new Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. This grant replaces the DWP Temporary Accommodation Management Fee from 1 April 2017. Under the existing system, funding could only be used when a household is already homeless, rather than being used to prevent this happening in the first place. Funding for this was paid directly to landlords and with the only funding being allocated to St Edmundsbury of £9,000.

3.2 The new Flexible Homelessness Support Grant is paid directly to the councils. The grant is ringfenced for an initial two year period and during that time may only be used to prevent or deal with homelessness. The government has made it clear that it expects councils to use this grant to fund a wider range of homelessness services, for example employing homelessness prevention officers to work with people who are at risk of losing their homes. The funding formula is linked to the number of prevention and relief cases achieved by securing a private rented sector tenancy. Hence it is important that we retain a landlord liaison function (see more details in the section below) to secure future government funding.

3.3 Funding allocations have been announced for the next two years with funding for 2019/20 announced later this year. Funding has been awarded to Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury as follows:

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| Forest Heath | £98,502 | £111,538 |
| St Edmundsbury | £130,468 | £147,734 |

3.4 It is therefore suggested that this grant is used to fund the restructure with the detail as follows:

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| SEBC | | | | |
| Additional salary cost due to restructure | 149,730 | 151,227 | 152,740 | 154,267 |
| Funded from: | | | | |
| - Flexible Homelessness Support Grant | (130,468) | (147,735) | (147,735) | - |
| - Universal Credit funding from DWP | (19,262) | (3,492) | (5,005) | (154,267) |
| | - | - | - | - |
| FHDC | | | | |
| Additional salary cost due to restructure | 80,624 | 81,430 | 82,245 | 83,067 |
| Funded from: | | | | |
| - Flexible Homelessness Support Grant | (80,624) | (81,430) | (82,245) | (77,279) |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------|
| - Universal Credit funding from DWP | - | - | - | (5,788) |
| | - | - | - | - |

3.5 It should be noted that in addition to the new grant mentioned above, each council receives £49,000 per year to fund homelessness prevention. This money is used in full at both authorities.

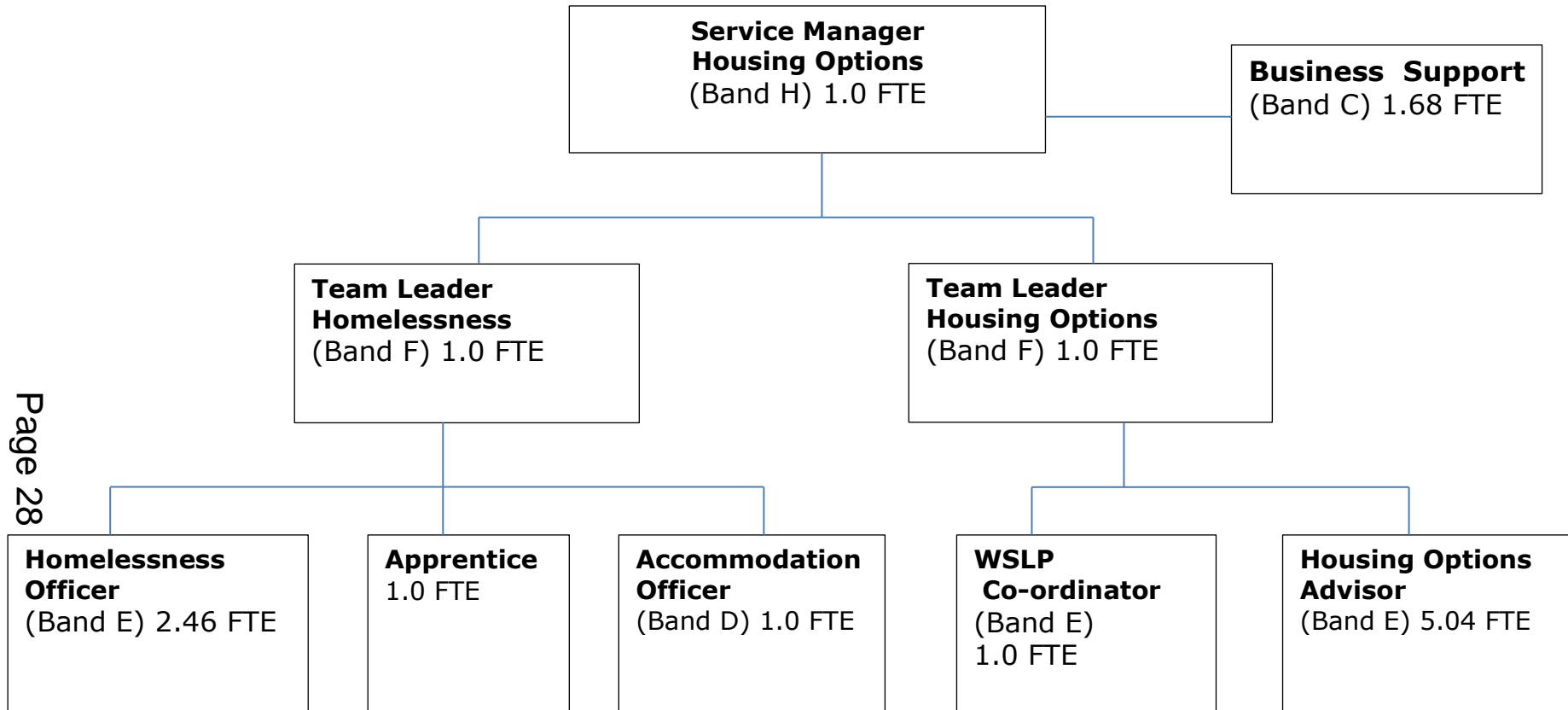
3.6 Announcements have already been made that the government will be making available an additional £61 million to help introduce the Homeless Reduction Act. However, it is not likely that West Suffolk will be a significant beneficiary of this funding. Nor do we know how long this funding will be provided.

4. Service outcomes and improvements

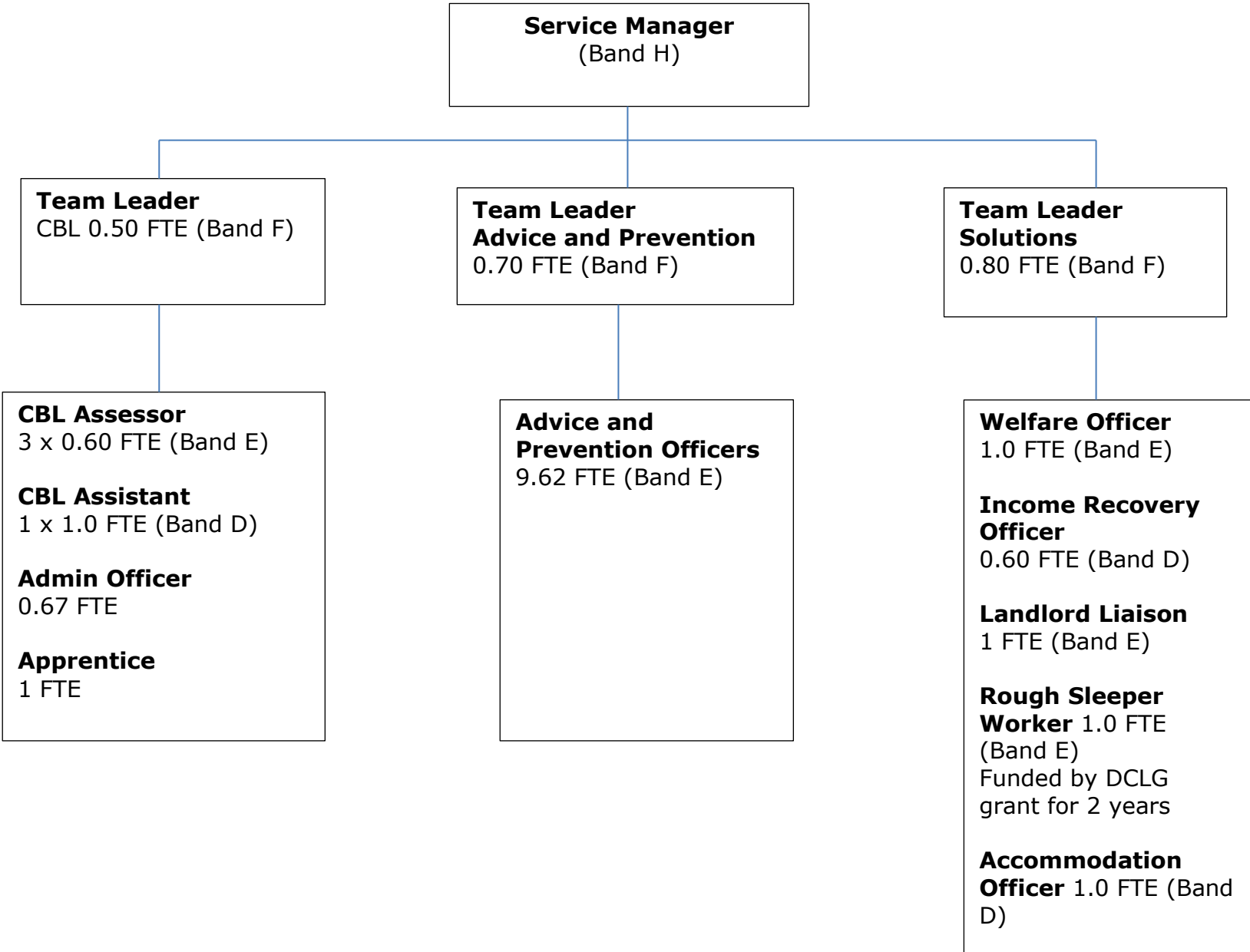
4.1 It is hoped that the proposed new staffing structure as outlined in this report, will provide the following:

- i. more resource to help deal with the demands expected over the next 12-18 months, these include new statutory duties as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act, a reduction in housing costs available to 18-21 year olds, Universal Credit full rollout, tax credit caps, reduction in HRS funding along with changes to the funding option to HRS accommodation, changes to the temporary accommodation subsidy and the.
- ii. bespoke and targeted specialist services in house, specifically landlord liaison and welfare support;
- iii. and capacity to deliver the improvements identified by the Gold Standard Peer Review (target in the West Suffolk Housing Strategy) with a view to successfully completing the local challenges.

Appendix A: Existing Staff Structure



Appendix B: Proposed new structure



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Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------|
| Title of Report: | Annual Review and Appointment of the Cabinet's Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels and Other Groups | |
| Report No: | CAB/FH/17/023 | |
| Report to and date: | Cabinet | 16 May 2017 |
| Portfolio holder: | Councillor James Waters Leader of the Council Tel: 07771 621038 Email: james.waters@forest-heath.gov.uk | |
| Lead officers: | Karen Points Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services) Tel: 01284 757015 Email: karen.points@westsuffolk.gov.uk Leah Mickleborough Service Manager (Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer Tel: 01284 757162 Email: leah.mickleborough@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
| Purpose of report: | <p>The Cabinet is requested to review the membership and Terms of Reference of its Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels and other Groups for the year 2017/2018.</p> <p>The existing Terms of Reference (ToR) for each body are contained in Appendices A to E inclusive.</p> <p>Recommendations are contained within appropriate Sections of this report and further summarised in the recommendations listed below.</p> | |

Recommendation:

It is RECOMMENDED:

Current Cabinet Working Group: Forest Heath District Council Membership only

(1) That:

- (a) The Local Plan Working Group continues to operate at the present time in accordance with its current Terms of Reference, as detailed in Appendix A to Report No CAB/FH/17/023.**
- (b) The future direction of the Local Plan Working Group, as outlined in Section 1.2.2 of Report No CAB/FH/17/023, be noted.**

Current Joint Panels and Steering Group: Joint Membership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council

(2) That the West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group continues to operate in accordance with its amended Terms of Reference contained in Appendix B to Report No: CAB/FH/17/023.

(3) That:

- (a) The West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel be disbanded.**
- (b) Relevant updates be provided to all councillors on emergency planning matters via the intranet and e-mail as required, and to use normal Cabinet or scrutiny mechanisms to input to, and adopt, any work by the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel.**

(4) That:

- (a) The West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel continue to operate in accordance with their current Terms of Reference contained in Appendices D and E to Report No: CAB/FH/17/023 respectively.**
- (b) Periodical meetings of the Joint Panels continue to be scheduled as and when required, but with regard to the discussion outlined in Section 1.3.16.**

Political Balance

(5) That:

- (a) The Service Manager (Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer be requested to exercise their existing delegated authority to re-appoint or appoint as applicable, Members and Substitute Members to the Local Plan Working Group, West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group, West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel for 2017/2018, on the nominations of the Group Leaders.**

- (b) Such re-appointments/appointments be made on the basis of political balance requirements, where applicable and identified in Report No CAB/FH/17/023.**

Joint Committees: Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee

- (6) That the Service Manager (Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer be requested to exercise their existing delegated authority to re-appoint or appoint as applicable, one full Cabinet Member and two Substitute Cabinet Members to the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee for 2017/2018, on the nomination of the Leader of the Council.**

Other Informal Working Groups

(7) That:

- (a) The Cabinet's existing informal Working Groups be retained as indicated in Section 1.6.2 of Report No: CAB/FH/17/023.**

- (b) Provided that resources are available to support them, further informal task-and-finish working groups continue to be established to consider specific issues as required throughout 2017/2018.**

Re-appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies

- (8) The Members stated in Section 1.7.2 of Report No: CAB/FH/17/023 be re-appointed as 'Observers' to the respective outside bodies listed and to NOTE the Leader or ex-**

| | | officio appointments to the project or partnership groups listed in Section 1.7.3. | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i> | | <i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i> | | | |
| Consultation: | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has been undertaken with the Leadership Team, Portfolio Holders and other Cabinet Members. | |
| Alternative option(s): | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to undertake a review. However it is considered sensible to review the purpose and remit of the Cabinet's Working Groups, Joint Committees/Panels and other Groups to ensure that they remain productive and in line with the Council's strategic priorities. | |
| Implications: | | | |
| <i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i> | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review has been undertaken within existing resources. Any changes required as a result of the review will also be borne from existing budgets. | |
| <i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i> | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i> | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i> | | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Sections 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 below | |
| <i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i> | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Risk/opportunity assessment: | | <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i> | |
| Risk area | Inherent level of risk (before controls) | Controls | Residual risk (after controls) |
| Opportunities for joint working are missed | Medium | Consider the creation of joint committees, panels and working parties wherever possible. | Low |
| Duplication of effort between member bodies | Medium | Carry out an annual review of working parties, etc, to ensure that they are all still relevant and adding value and do not cross over with the activities or | Low |

| | | | |
|--|------|---|--------|
| | | other bodies eg scrutiny committees or task and finish groups. | |
| The number of meetings and reviews cannot be accommodated with available member and officer time and resources. | High | Carry out an annual review to disband any groups no longer required and to optimise frequency of meetings. Keep under constant review. | Medium |
| Ward(s) affected: | | All Wards | |
| Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i> | | None | |
| Documents attached: | | Terms of Reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A – Local Plan Working Group • Appendix B – West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group • Appendix C – West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel • Appendix D – West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel • Appendix E – West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel | |

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Under Article 6 (The Cabinet) (paragraph 6.6.2) of the Council's Constitution, it states that:

"The Cabinet may carry out its functions:

d. by delegating power to a joint committee, area committee or another local authority".

1.1.2 Under Article 10 (Joint Arrangements and Working Groups) of the Council's Constitution, it states that:-

"10.2 Joint Arrangements

10.2.3 the Cabinet may only appoint Cabinet Members to a joint committee and those Members need not reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole."

"10.3 Working Groups

10.3.1 The Council, Cabinet or Committees may appoint from time to time such working groups as they think fit, including joint working groups with St Edmundsbury Borough Council...."

1.1.3 Under the arrangements for the administration of a Leader/Cabinet political management structure, the following Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels and other Groups, either report to the Cabinet or exercise Executive functions:

- (a) Exercise Executive functions on behalf of the Cabinet
 - Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee
- (b) Report to the Cabinet
 - Local Plan Working Group
 - West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel
 - West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel
 - West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group
 - West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel
 - Other informal working groups, as detailed in Section 1.6 below

1.1.4 The Cabinet is requested to review the membership and the terms of reference for its Working Group, Joint Committees/Panels and other Groups for the year 2017/2018 as set out below.

1.2 Current Cabinet Working Group: District Council Membership only

1.2.1 The following Cabinet Working Group currently operates in accordance with Appendix A attached:

| FHDC Working Group | Members | Terms of Reference |
|---|----------------|---------------------------|
| Local Plan Working Group <i>(Membership is appointed with regard to the political balance – see Section 1.4 below)</i> | 9 | Appendix A |

1.2.2 As the Council’s Local Plan is not due to be adopted until the end of 2017, it is recommended that the Local Plan Working Group (LPWG) continues to remain in operation and meetings be arranged, if and when, substantive business dictates. Following adoption of the Local Plan it would then be the intention for the Working Group to be disbanded as its primary purpose would no longer be required.

1.2.3 Due to the diminished workload of the St Edmundsbury Borough Council’s (SEBC) Sustainable Development Working Party (SDWP), the SEBC Cabinet are being recommended that this Working Party be disbanded, as common joint growth objectives and developing of planning policies are already being taken through the West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group. It is also considered that this Steering Group should take on all of the current responsibilities of the SDWP and the LPWG (including the individual Council specific items such as Masterplans etc.) (see Sections 1.3.2 to 1.3.7 and Appendix B for proposed revised Terms of Reference for the West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group).

1.2.4 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

(a) The Local Plan Working Group continues to operate at the present time in accordance with its current Terms of Reference, as detailed in Appendix A.

(b) The future direction of the Local Plan Working Group, as outlined in Section 1.2.2, be noted.

1.3 **Current Joint Panels and Steering Group: Joint Membership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council**

1.3.1 The following Joint Panels and Steering Group have been established with St Edmundsbury Borough Council:

| Joint Panels and Steering Group | District Council Members | Substitutes | Terms of Reference |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group <i>(Membership is appointed with regard to the political balance – see Section 1.4 below)</i> | 6 | 2 | Appendix B |
| West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel | 4 | 1 | Appendix C |
| West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel | 3 | 1 | Appendix D |
| West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel | 3 | 2 | Appendix E |

1.3.2 **West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group**

1.3.3 This Steering Group has further developed its role in 2016/2017, particularly given its close association with all three West Suffolk Strategic Priorities and its flexibility to be able to co-opt external representatives to assist it with specific issues or to provide particular areas of expertise. Amongst other items, the following joint West Suffolk topics are currently scheduled for the Steering Group's future work programme in 2017/2018:

- Consideration of Government Consultations
- Monitoring delivery of the West Suffolk Six Point Plan for Jobs and Growth
- Progress update on Suffolk Planning and Infrastructure Framework (SPIF)
- Progress updates on highways, transport and other infrastructure proposals and aspirations
- Progress updates on emerging and adopted masterplans
- Progress updates on strategic developments
- Developer/Skills/Employer/Public Sector relationships and other partner collaborations on specific planning and growth projects
- Sector programme updates
- Progress updates on delivery of commercial/business land and premises
- Update on RAF Mildenhall/RAF Lakenheath
- Development of West Suffolk Local Plan

1.3.4 An example of the Group's role was when it considered the contents of the Government's Housing White Paper, 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market' in February and March 2017. The White Paper sets out a broad range of improvements that Government plans to introduce to help reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes. In order to implement the vision set out in the White Paper, the Government is consulting on a range of changes to planning policy and legislation needed to implement the proposals. Consideration by the Steering Group on the strategic and operational impact of the proposals on West Suffolk provided a significant contribution to the Councils' response to this important consultation. The Group's input into the shaping of the consultation response was therefore of particular value.

1.3.5 In addition and to place further emphasis on the future significance of this Steering Group, it is expected that all common West Suffolk planning policies across the two districts will be developed via this Group with a view to creating a new West Suffolk Local Plan (see Section 1.2.3).

1.3.6 As it has been identified that the remit of the WSJGSG is developing in significance, the following other issues have been identified to be considered as part of this review:

- (a) membership of the WSJGSG, which as part of its existing Terms of Reference has regard to the political balance, to be appropriately reviewed by Group Leaders;
- (b) following consideration by the Steering Group, matters requiring a decision will be recommended to Cabinet (and Council, where appropriate) in the normal manner. Reports for information, the purpose of which will be to provide a brief summary to Cabinet of the outcomes from the Group, are also proposed to be included on the next available Cabinet agenda following each meeting of the Steering

Group;

- (c) for monitoring purposes, that future West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group agendas should include its Work Programme as a 'Standing Item';
- (d) the frequency of the meetings, to take into account the increased workload of the Group moving forward (see Section 1.3.2); and
- (e) the times/days of meetings (currently set at Tuesdays: 10.00 am) and whether to move these to late afternoon/early evening to take account of the public interest that this Group is expected to attract, moving forward.

Together with other amendments to reflect the proposed disbanding of the SEBC Sustainable Development Working Party and the FHDC Local Plan Working Group, the proposals outlined in (b), (c) and (d) above have been incorporated into its Terms of Reference, as shown in Appendix B attached.

1.3.7 It is **RECOMMENDED** that the **West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group continues to operate in accordance with its amended Terms of Reference contained in Appendix B.**

1.3.8 **West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel**

1.3.9 This Joint Panel considers matters relating to emergency planning policy and implementation, and has not met since February 2015. At the last of these reviews in 2016 it was specifically noted that, even on a bi-annual cycle, meetings of this Panel would not often be required and key information would be circulated electronically instead.

1.3.10 Emergency planning in Suffolk is co-ordinated by the Joint Emergency Planning Unit, which is funded by all eight local authorities. To support this arrangement there is also a Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel, which has the role to:

- Act as a link with each council's administration to allow joint debate of civil protection issues, both current and emerging, that affect Suffolk.
- Develop common approaches to civil protection strategy and policy, including elected member emergency preparedness training and exercising.
- Represent agreed changes in civil protection direction and policy, as appropriate, in each council's administrative process to embed/gain agreement for any change.
- Consider recommendations from Suffolk Policy Review activity on civil protection capability.
- Agree Suffolk civil protection inputs to any Local Area Agreement (or equivalent)

1.3.11 Membership of the Suffolk Panel comprises the lead councillor in each authority for emergency planning i.e. the Portfolio Holder. For this reason, it is now unusual for Suffolk councils to have their own local emergency planning meetings. However, it is also still recognised that engaging all 72

district councillors in West Suffolk on emergency planning is important and, for this reason:

1.3.12 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

(1) the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel, be disbanded; but

(2) relevant updates be provided to all councillors on emergency planning matters via the intranet and e-mail as required, and to use normal Cabinet or scrutiny mechanisms to input to, and adopt, any work by the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel.

1.3.13 **West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel**

1.3.14 It is suggested that the West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel continue to operate to consider policy matters for recommending to Cabinet/Council for approval, in accordance with the remit of each Panel's Terms of Reference.

1.3.15 Where recommendations to Cabinet and/or Council are not required, the greater use of electronic means is exercised to keep Members informed of issues that would usually be noted by these Joint Panels. With greater emphasis now placed on Members' use of electronic devices, such information can be accessed more easily by e-mail, or within dedicated areas on the West Suffolk intranet. This practice has been exercised in previous years, however the importance of maintaining positive face-to-face engagement between employer (council) and employee (staff) representatives on both of these Panels is recognised.

1.3.16 It is therefore suggested that this arrangement continues to operate for 2017/2018. However, subject to the agreement of the relevant Chairman of each of the Joint Panels, this does not preclude Members suggesting that meetings be convened to discuss a specific topic that may arise from information provided electronically.

1.3.17 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

(a) The West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel continue to operate in accordance with their current Terms of Reference contained in Appendices D and E respectively.

(b) Periodical meetings of the Joint Panels continue to be scheduled as and when required, but with regard to the discussion outlined in Section 1.3.16.

1.4 **Political Balance**

1.4.1 The formula for the allocation of seats to the political groups of the Council will not be approved until the Annual Meeting of Council on 10 May 2017. It

is therefore suggested that the allocation of seats to the Working Group/Steering Group that have historically been calculated with regard to the political balance be considered following this meeting and re-appointments/appointments made under delegation, as reflected in the following recommendation.

1.4.2 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

- (a) **The Service Manager (Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer be requested to exercise their existing delegated authority to re-appoint or appoint as applicable, Members and Substitute Members to the Local Plan Working Group, West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group, West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel and the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel for 2017/2018, on the nominations of Group Leaders.**
- (b) **Such re-appointments/appointments be made on the basis of political balance requirements, where applicable and identified in Report No CAB/FH/17/023.**

1.5 **Joint Committees**

1.5.1 To comply with the Constitution, the Council's Joint Committees exercise executive functions on behalf of the Cabinet. Forest Heath District Council's membership of the Joint Committees indicated in Section 1.5.2 below is therefore required to comprise Cabinet Members:

| Joint Committee | FHDC Full Members | FHDC Substitutes |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee | 1 | 2 |

1.5.2 **Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee**

Following agreement in December 2015 by each of the seven Councils represented on the Partnership (Forest Heath District Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council), the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee now comprises one Member and two Substitutes appointed from each of the partner Councils represented, with the option for one of the Substitutes to attend and take part in debate (but not vote).

1.5.3 This has since had a positive impact on the functionality of the Joint Committee.

1.5.4 It is **RECOMMENDED** that **the Service Manager (Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer be requested to exercise their existing delegated authority to re-appoint or appoint as applicable, one full Cabinet Member and two Substitute Cabinet Members to the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee for 2017/2018, on the nomination of the Leader of the Council.**

1.6. **Other Informal Working Groups**

1.6.1 The Cabinet also sets up from time to time informal Member/Officer Working Groups to consider specific issues usually on a task-and-finish basis and often as joint groups with St Edmundsbury Borough Council. These groups make recommendations directly to Cabinet or the appropriate Committee in the form of reports and it is proposed that the practice of setting up such informal groups to look at specific issues should continue as required, provided there are resources available to support them.

1.6.2 In relation to the groups currently operating, the situation going into 2017/2018 is as follows:

- (a) **Joint Member Development Group:** This is a joint group with St Edmundsbury Borough Council which was established in December 2012 as an informal group to contribute to and support member development opportunities. It has met reasonably frequently in 2016/2017 and has recently been reviewing the current member development programme and exploring alternative means of delivery to encourage greater engagement. **Retain.**

1.6.3 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

(a) The Cabinet's existing informal Working Groups be retained as indicated in Section 1.6.2.

(b) Provided that resources are available to support them, further informal task-and-finish working groups continue to be established to consider specific issues as required throughout 2017/2018.

1.7 **Re-appointment of representatives to outside bodies**

1.7.1 The Council is required by the Constitution at each Annual Meeting to:

- (1) Receive, or arrange the delegation of, nominations of Councillors to serve on any outside body for which a new appointment or re-appointment is required; and
- (2) Appoint to those outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Cabinet.

1.7.2 Council has delegated the appointment or re-appointment of 'Observers' to the Cabinet. The following Members are currently appointed by the District Council as 'Observers' to the following outside bodies:

- (a) Home of Horseracing Trust: Councillor Andy Drummond (*supported by Councillor Chris Barker*)
- (b) National Horseracing Museum: Councillor Andy Drummond (*supported by Councillor Chris Barker*)

- 1.7.3 The Leader, or a substitute appointed by the Leader, also represents the Cabinet on the informal partnership group which examines the 'One Public Estate' programme in West Suffolk (the West Suffolk Property Board). This is an ex-officio appointment, as the partnership arrangements require the Leaders of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council to attend.
- 1.7.4 Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to re-appoint the Members stated in Section 1.7.2 above, as 'Observers' to the respective outside bodies listed and to **NOTE THE** Leader or ex-officio appointments to the project or partnership groups listed in Section 1.7.3.

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Local Plan Working Group: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

1. To consider the appropriate issues and to advise the Cabinet in relation to the Local Plan Review process, with the aim of producing an appropriate Local Plan (and related documentation).

Membership

2. To comprise nine Members – politically balanced.

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West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group: Proposed Amended Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

1. To consider and advise the Cabinets of Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) on:
 - (a) creating the conditions to encourage and support sustainable growth across the whole of the West Suffolk area;
 - (b) (i) common planning policy affecting both districts;
(ii) planning policy specifically associated with the individual districts
 - (c) (i) common strategic housing policy affecting both districts
(ii) strategic housing policy specifically associated with the individual districts;
 - (de) the strategic investment in infrastructure, transportation and highway matters that are of more than local significance ;and
 - (ede) monitoring the delivery of the West Suffolk Six Point Plan for Jobs and Growth;
 - (fe)- the formulation of a West Suffolk Local Plan for Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough; and
 - (gf) environmental management issues
2. Recommendations to Cabinet (and Council, where appropriate) for a decision to be made, will be reported in the normal manner. ~~Reports for information, providing an update on the work of the Steering Group, will be included on each Council's next available Cabinet agenda following a meeting of the Steering Group.~~ Reports for information, the purpose of which will be to provide a brief summary to Cabinet of the outcomes from the Group, will be included on the next available Cabinet agenda, following each meeting of the Steering Group;
3. Agendas will include the Work Programme of the Steering Group as a 'Standing Item', The content of the Work Programme to be agreed by the Chairman and

[Vice Chairman and the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Growth and Housing, prior to inclusion within the agenda papers.](#)

42. The Steering Group comprises 12 Members, six from each Council. The Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship will rotate annually between the two Councils.
53. Membership of the Steering Group to be politically balanced, and each Council must ensure that its Development Control Committee, [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#), ~~and planning policy bodies (the Local Plan Working Group in the case of FHDC and the Sustainable Development Working Party in the case of SEBC)~~, [FHDC's Local Plan Working Group \(whilst it remains in operation\)](#), are represented, alongside Members of the two Cabinets.
64. ~~Two Substitute Members be appointed to each 'side' of the Group in accordance with the political balance of each authority. Two Substitute Members to be appointed by each local authority, having regard to the political balance of each authority.~~
75. The quorum of the Steering Group be specifically defined as three Councillors from each Council (six in total).
86. The Group is given the flexibility to directly co-opt up to two voting or non-voting external representatives to its membership, in such a manner as it sees fit.
97. Meetings will be governed by normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in both Councils.
108. Frequency of meetings ~~will would initially~~ be [quarterly every other month](#), but this [will](#) be reviewed in the light of workload.
11. [Meetings will be held on Mondays at 4.30 pm unless otherwise agreed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Venues for meetings to alternate between FHDC's District Offices and SEBC's offices at West Suffolk House, unless an alternative venue is agreed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.](#)

Version approved by SEBC's Cabinet: ~~11 February 2014 (minute 95 refers)~~ [TBC](#)

Version approved by FHDC's Cabinet: ~~18 February 2014 (minute 897 refers)~~ [TBC](#)

West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel: Terms of Reference

1. The Panel's membership will be drawn from both Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC).
2. The Panel will consider both Authorities' emergency preparedness arrangements and who can provide guidance to support the development of executive action by officers of both Authorities in times of emergency:
 - 2.1 To provide a group of Members who can develop an enhanced level of understanding of emergency planning issues.
 - 2.2 To provide a forum for the discussion of emergency preparedness issues.
 - 2.3 To provide policy guidance on emergency planning arrangements to ensure alignment with corporate policies and direction.
 - 2.4 To provide a link with other Members to promote resilience within communities
 - 2.5 To be authorised by both Cabinets to make recommendations directly to the Emergency Planning Officer on means to promote both emergency preparedness and community resilience within existing policies and budgets.
 - 2.6 To make recommendations to both FHDC and SEBC's Cabinets about policies and actions required to develop and maintain effective emergency preparedness arrangements and ensure that the authorities can support the emergency services and communities during emergencies.
 - 2.7 To assist both FHDC and SEBC's Cabinets with the dissemination of information to other members during an emergency.

- 2.8 At the discretion of the Chairman, in the event that either:
- (a) an emergency event arises which affects the area of either authority, or
 - (b) the risk of an emergency that affects the area of either authority is assessed as significant by Suffolk County Council's Head of Emergency Planning, an extraordinary meeting of the Panel may be called.

3. Membership

- 3.1 To comprise eight members, four from each Authority.
- 3.2 Each authority may nominate one Substitute Member who may attend in the absence of any Member of their Authorities.
- 3.3 A quorum will be three, with at least one Member present from each Authority.
- 3.4 At the discretion of the Chairman, Members of either Council who are not Members of the Panel may be invited to attend/speak.

4. Chairmanship

- 4.1 The Panel will elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from its membership. The Vice-Chairman will be from the opposite authority to the Chairman.
- 4.2 Except if agreed otherwise, the Chairmanship will rotate between the two Authorities on a two yearly basis (i.e. four programmed meetings).

5. Meetings

- 5.1 Meetings will be hosted alternately at the Offices of the two Councils, unless an alternative location is agreed by the Panel.

6. Meeting Frequency

- 6.1 Every six months, or as appropriate.

*(*Note: This meeting is not governed by the normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in the Council. Therefore these meetings are not open to attendance by the public).*

West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel: Terms of Reference

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Panel's membership will be drawn from Councillors and staff of both Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC).
- 1.2 The Panel will consider both authorities' health and safety arrangements and provide guidance to support the development of executive action by officers of both authorities, including policy guidance.
- 1.3 To provide a group of Members who can develop an enhanced level of understanding of health and safety matters.
- 1.4 To make recommendations to the Cabinets and/or officers of both authorities about policies and actions required to develop and maintain effective health and safety arrangements.

2. Constitution

- 2.1 The West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel shall comprise 12 Members. Three Councillors from both Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC), to be the 'employers' side'. Six members of staff from across the two authorities to be the 'employees' side', drawn from the officer Joint Health and Safety Group.
- 2.2 A substitute Member from each authority on the Employer's side and two substitutes from the Employees' side to provide a total of six full Members and two Substitute Members on each 'Side' shall be permitted.
- 2.3 It shall be the Health and Safety Manager's duty to attend and advise the Panel.
- 2.4 The Panel shall appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from its Members. When the Chairman is a Member of one side of the Panel, the Vice-Chairman shall be a Member of the other side.

- 2.5 The Panel may invite attendance of any person whose particular knowledge or experience may assist the Panel in its considerations. Such attendance shall be in a consultative capacity and only for the period during which the relevant subject is under consideration.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1 The Panel shall keep under review all matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the Councils' employees, and to the protection of other persons against risks arising out of the work activities of the employees and of persons working under contract.
- 3.2 To review and monitor the Joint Health and Safety Policy and recommend amendments to the Officers and/or Cabinet of both authorities in accordance with their respective schemes of delegation. Specifically, the Panel will work directly with the Health and Safety Manager to review and implement revisions to the operational instructions and annexes contained in Part 5 of the Policy ("Arrangements") under his/her delegated authority to make such changes.
- 3.3 Without prejudice to the foregoing terms, items for particular consideration may include:-
- (a) the study of accidents and diseases, and in particular those notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive;
 - (b) considering and making recommendations in respect of items submitted by the staff Joint Health and Safety Group;
 - (c) consideration of reports and information from the Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive;
 - (d) consideration of reports submitted by Safety Representatives;
 - (e) the development of safety procedures and safe systems of work;
 - (f) recommending and monitoring the effectiveness of employee safety training;
 - (g) the presentation of publicity on safety matters; and
 - (h) inspecting or arranging for an inspection of any particular area or activity.

4. Arrangements and Procedures

- 4.1 Meetings shall normally be held three times a year but, exceptionally, the Chairman may decide, after consultation with the Health and Safety Manager, to convene an extraordinary meeting at any time or to cancel a scheduled meeting due to lack of business to transact. Meetings to alternate between a venue in SEBC and FHDC or as agreed by the Panel.
- 4.2 Agendas shall be prepared by the Democratic Services Section, after discussion with the Health and Safety Manager, and shall be made available at least five days before the meeting.

- 4.3 The quorum for the Joint Health and Safety Panel shall be four, comprising at least two employee representatives, and two Members, one from each authority.
- 4.4 Voting shall be by a show of hands and simple majority.
- 4.5 The report from the Joint Health and Safety Panel to the respective Cabinets shall be by way of presentation of the minutes or in a format agreed by the Cabinet.

*(*Note: This meeting is not governed by the normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in the Council. Therefore these meetings are not open to attendance by the public).*

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West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel: Terms of Reference

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Panel's membership will be drawn from Councillors and staff of both Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC). The definition of 'staff' includes all groups of employees covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.
- 1.2 The Panel will consider both Authorities' staffing arrangements and provide a regular forum to secure the largest measure of agreement between the Councils as employers and Trade Union employees regarding matters directly affecting employment by the Councils.
- 1.3 To provide a group of Members who can develop an enhanced level of understanding on staffing matters.
- 1.4 To make recommendations to the Cabinets of both authorities about policies and actions required to develop and maintain effective employee/employer arrangements.

2. Constitution

- 2.1 The Joint Staff Consultative Panel shall comprise 12 Members. Three Councillors from both FHDC and SEBC, which desirably reflects the political balance of each Council, to be the 'employers' side.
- 2.2 Six members of staff from across the two Authorities to be the 'Employees' Side', nominated by the Trade Unions recognised by the Authorities in accordance with the formula set out below:-
 - (a) employee representatives appointed by each of the Trade Unions recognised by the Authorities should be on a proportional basis to the total number of employees within the individual union compared to the total Trade Union membership; and
 - (b) each Trade Union recognised by the Authority shall have a minimum of one seat.

- 2.3 The Trade Unions recognised by the Authorities shall represent all Council employees. This will include raising issues on behalf of non-Trade Union members, should they be requested.
- 2.4 In the event of any failure to appoint/elect the number of representatives provided for by this Constitution, such failure to appoint/elect shall not invalidate the decisions of the Panel.
- 2.5 Two Substitute Members shall be permitted from each Authority on the 'Employers' Side' and four Substitutes shall be permitted from the 'Employees' Side' to provide a total of six full Members and four substitute Members on each 'Side'.
- 2.6 It shall be the duty of a senior Human Resource Officer to attend and advise the Panel.
- 2.7 The Panel shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from its Members. When the Chairman is a Member of one Side of the Panel, the Vice-Chairman shall be a Member of the other Side. The Chairman of the Panel shall be rotated on an annual basis between the Employees' and Employers' side. The Chairman of the meeting shall not have a casting vote.
- 2.8 The Panel may invite attendance by any person whose particular knowledge or experience may assist the Panel in its considerations. Such attendance shall be in a consultative capacity and only for the period during which the relevant subject is under consideration. In addition, the Employee side may arrange for the attendance of a Trade Union official at any meeting of the Panel, subject to the prior agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1 To establish and maintain methods of negotiation and consultation, to consult on matters affecting the employment of all groups of employees of the Councils, with a genuine commitment to seek consensus and enter into agreements, as appropriate.
- 3.2 These matters may include such subjects as:-
 - (a) application or implementation of National Agreements;
 - (b) application or implementation of Local Agreements or local conditions of service;
 - (c) productivity or performance arrangements;
 - (d) issues referred to the Panel by the Trade Unions as provided for by the formal 'Consultation Procedures' (Employment Restructuring & Redundancy);
 - (e) working conditions;
 - (f) welfare and health of employees;
 - (g) personnel procedures including recruitment, sickness, discipline and handling of grievances and redundancies;
 - (h) training & development of employees;
 - (i) equality issues; and

- (j) any issue referred to the Joint Staff Consultative Panel by the Cabinets.
- 3.3 Issues affecting individuals (e.g. pay, discipline) are excluded from consideration unless they represent matters of principle which are of general application to employees.
- 4. Authority of the Panel**
- 4.1 Decisions of the Joint Staff Consultative Panel shall be in accordance with the voting arrangements set out in paragraph 5.4 below and shall be subject to the approval of the Cabinets, as provided for by the Councils' Schemes of Delegation.
- 5. Arrangements and Procedures**
- 5.1 Meetings shall normally be held quarterly but, exceptionally, the Chairman may decide, after consultation with a Senior Human Resources Officer to convene an extraordinary meeting at any time or to cancel a scheduled meeting due to lack of business to transact. Meetings to alternate between a venue in SEBC and FHDC or as agreed by the Panel.
- 5.2 Agendas shall be prepared by the appropriate Committee Services Section, after discussion with a Senior Human Resources Officer, Chairman and Vice Chairman, and shall be circulated at least five working days before the meeting.
- 5.3 The quorum for the Joint Staff Consultative Panel shall be four, comprising at least two Employee representatives and two Members, one from each Authority.
- 5.4 Voting shall be by a show of hands and simple majority. No motion shall be regarded as carried unless it has been approved by a majority of Employer representatives and a majority of Employee representatives present and voting.
- 5.5 The report from the Joint Staff Consultative Panel to the respective Cabinets shall be by way of presentation of the minutes/draft minutes or by way of a brief report in a format agreed by the Cabinet.
- 5.6 If the Panel is unable to agree and no local settlement can be achieved, the matter may be referred by either side to the Cabinets.

*(*Note: This meeting is not governed by the normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in the Council. Therefore these meetings are not open to attendance by the public).*

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Forest Heath District Council

Report No: CAB/FH/17/024

Decisions Plan

Key Decisions and other executive decisions to be considered

Date: 1 May 2017 to 31 May 2018

Publication Date: 13 April 2017

The following plan shows both the key decisions and other decisions/matters taken in private, that the Cabinet, Joint Committees or Officers under delegated authority, are intending to take up to 31 May 2018. This table is updated on a monthly rolling basis and provides at least 28 clear days' notice of the consideration of any key decisions and of the taking of any items in private.

Executive decisions are taken at public meetings of the Cabinet and by other bodies provided with executive decision-making powers. Some decisions and items may be taken in private during the parts of the meeting at which the public may be excluded, when it is likely that confidential or exempt information may be disclosed. This is indicated on the relevant meeting agenda and in the '*Reason for taking the item in private*' column relevant to each item detailed on the plan.

Members of the public may wish to:

- make enquiries in respect of any of the intended decisions listed below;
- receive copies of any of the documents in the public domain listed below;
- receive copies of any other documents in the public domain relevant to those matters listed below which may be submitted to the decision taker; or
- make representations in relation to why meetings to consider the listed items intended for consideration in private should be open to the public.

In all instances, contact should be made with the named Officer in the first instance, either on the telephone number listed against their name, or via email using the format firstname.surname@westsuffolk.gov.uk or via Forest Heath District Council, District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP28 7EY.

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 16/05/17 | <p>Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts detailed in the exempt Appendices.</p> | Paragraphs 1 and 2 | (KD) | Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with exempt appendices |
| 16/05/17 | <p>Annual Review of Cabinet's Working Groups, Joint Committees/Panels and Other Groups</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider an annual review of its Working Groups, Joint Committees/Panels and other Groups.</p> | Not applicable | (D) | Cabinet | James Waters Leader of the Council 07771 621038 | Karen Points Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services) 01284 757015 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet |
| 16/05/17 | <p>Leisure Opportunities in Newmarket</p> <p>Following the publication of the Forest Heath Retail and Leisure Study 2016, the Cabinet will be asked</p> | Exempt Appendix: Paragraph 3 | (D) | Cabinet | Lance Stanbury Planning and Growth 07970 947704 | Jill Korwin Director 01284 757252 | All Saints; Severals; St Mary's | Report to Cabinet |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| | to consider opportunities to enhance the leisure offer in Newmarket. | | | | | | | |
| 16/05/17 | <p>Housing Options and Homelessness Team Resources and Structure</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to approve the additional staff resources for the Housing Options and Homelessness Team, funded from the DCLG's Flexible Homelessness Support Grant.</p> | Not applicable | (KD) | Cabinet | <p>Sara Mildmay-White West Suffolk Lead for Housing 01359 270580 sara.mildmay-white@stedsbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Robin Millar Families and Communities 07545 423795</p> | <p>Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) 01284 757070</p> | All Wards | Report to Cabinet |
| 20/06/17 | <p>Renewable Energy Provision for the Mildenhall Hub</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider a standalone business case for, and investment in, the provision of renewable energy technology at the Mildenhall hub (in</p> | Paragraph 3 | (KD) | Cabinet | <p>James Waters Leader of the Council 07771 621038</p> | <p>Peter Gudde Acting Head of Regulatory Services 01284 757042</p> | Great Heath; Market | Report to Cabinet |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|----------------|--|
| | accordance with the authority delegated to Cabinet by Council on 22 February 2017) | | | | | | | |
| 20/06/17 | West Suffolk Annual Report 2016/2017 Following scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet will be asked to consider the West Suffolk Annual Report 2016/2017, which has been jointly produced with St Edmundsbury Borough Council. | Not applicable | (D) | Cabinet | James Waters Leader of the Council 07771 621038 | Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) 01284 757070 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| 20/06/17 | West Suffolk Community Energy Plan - Update 2016/2017 Following previous approval given for a capital allocation of a rent-a-roof solar scheme for business, which was subsequently extended to support other specific | Not applicable | (D) | Cabinet | Lance Stanbury Planning and Growth 07970 947704 | Peter Gudde Acting Head of Regulatory Services 01284 757042 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | investment schemes, the Cabinet will be asked to consider extending this allocation further to cover energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes delivering similar financial and environmental returns. | | | | | | | |
| 20/06/17 | <p>Leisure Investment Fund: Consideration of Business Case for Investment</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider a detailed proposal for investment in the Council owned leisure facilities at Newmarket Leisure Centre and at Brandon Leisure Centre, to deliver a revenue saving to the Council and enhanced user experience.</p> | Exempt Appendix: Paragraph 3 | (KD) | Cabinet | Andy Drummond Leisure and Culture 01638 666888 | Jill Korwin Director | All Saints; Severals; St Mary's and Brandon East; Brandon West | Report to Cabinet |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|---|-----------------------|---|
| 20/06/17 | <p>Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to approve a new discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme, which will include the methodology and financial implications. This proposes to be a joint scheme with St Edmundsbury Borough Council.</p> | Not applicable | (D) | Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 Joanne Howlett Service Manager (Finance and Performance) 01284 757264 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet |
| 12/09/17 | <p>Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts detailed in the exempt Appendices.</p> | Paragraphs 1 and 2 | (KD) | Forest Heath Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with exempt Appendices |
| 24/10/17 | <p>West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/12/17 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|----------------|--|
| | to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee in respect of seeking approval for the West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance. This has been jointly produced with St Edmundsbury Borough Council and will be subject to approval of full Council. | | | | | | | Committee to Cabinet and Council |
| 24/10/17 | <p>Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2018/2019</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2018/2019.</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/12/17 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|----------------|---|
| 14/11/17 | <p>Overarching Strategy for Facilitating Growth and Investment</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, approval of an overarching strategy for the facilitation of growth and investment by the West Suffolk Councils. This will be considered at a joint meeting with St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Cabinet and will also have been subject to scrutiny by both Councils' Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/12/17 | Cabinet/ Council | <p>Lance Stanbury Planning and Growth 07970 947704</p> <p>Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982</p> | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with recommendations to Council |
| 12/12/17 (deferred from 16/05/17) | <p>West Suffolk Information Strategy</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommend to full Council, approval of a West Suffolk</p> | Not applicable | (D) | Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | <p>Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245</p> <p>Kevin Taylor Service Manager (ICT) 01284 757230</p> | All Wards | Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|---|----------------|--|
| | Information Strategy, which had been jointly produced with St Edmundsbury Borough Council. | | | | | | | |
| 12/12/17 | <p>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes 2018/2019</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider proposals for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes for 2018/2019, prior to seeking its approval by Council.</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/12/17 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with recommendations to Council |
| 12/12/17 | <p>Tax Base for Council Tax Setting Purposes 2018/2019</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the Tax Base for Council Tax Setting Purposes for 2018/2019, prior to seeking its approval by Council.</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/12/17 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) Tel: 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with recommendations to Council |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|--|-----------------------|--|
| 12/12/17 | <p>Applications for Community Chest Funding 2018/2019</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider applications for the Community Chest funding for 2018/2019.</p> | Not applicable | (KD) Applications for the 2019/2020 year and beyond are also subject to the budget setting process | Cabinet | Robin Millar Families and Communities 07545 423795 | Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) Tel: 01284 757070 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet |
| 12/12/17 | <p>Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts detailed in the exempt Appendices.</p> | Paragraphs 1 and 2 | (KD) | Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with exempt Appendices |
| 13/02/18 | <p>Treasury Management Report 2017-2018 - Investment Activity (April to December 2017)</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, the approval of the</p> | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/02/18 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|---|-----------------------|--|
| | Treasury Management Report 2017-2018 which summarised the investment activity for the period 1 April to 31 December 2017. | | | | | | | |
| 13/02/18 | Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2018/2019 and Treasury Management Code of Practice The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council the approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2018/2019, which must be undertaken before the start of each financial year. | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/02/18 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council |
| 13/02/18 | Budget and Council Tax Setting 2018/2019 The Cabinet will be asked to consider the proposals | Not applicable | (R) - Council 20/02/18 | Cabinet/ Council | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with recommendations to Council |

| Expected Decision Date | Subject and Purpose of Decision | Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs) | Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions) | Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership) | Portfolio Holder Contact Details | Lead Officer Contact Details | Wards Affected | Documents to be submitted |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|----------------|---|
| | for the 2018/2019 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, prior to its approval by Council. This report includes the Minimum Revenues Provision (MRP) Policy and Prudential Indicators. | | | | | | | |
| 03/04/18 | <p>Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts detailed in the exempt Appendices.</p> | Paragraphs 1 and 2 | (KD) | Cabinet | Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance 07904 389982 | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245 | All Wards | Report to Cabinet, with exempt Appendices |

NOTE 1: DEFINITIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: RELEVANT PARAGRAPHS

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

The public may be excluded from all or part of the meeting during the consideration of items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information defined in Schedule 12(A) of the Act, as follows:

PART 1

DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
Information which reveals that the authority proposes –
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

In accordance with Section 100A(3) (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

Confidential information is also not for public access, but the difference between this and exempt information is that a Government department, legal opinion or the court has prohibited its disclosure in the public domain. Should confidential information require consideration in private, this will be detailed in this Decisions Plan.

NOTE 2: KEY DECISION DEFINITIONS

Key decisions are:

- (a) A key decision means an executive decision which, pending any further guidance from the Secretary of State, is likely to:
 - (i) Be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area in the Borough/District; or
 - (ii) Result in any new expenditure, income or savings of more than £50,000 in relation to the Council's revenue budget or capital programme.
 - (iii) Comprise or include the making, approval or publication of a draft or final scheme which may require, either directly or in the event of objections, the approval of a Minister of the Crown.
- b) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive procedure rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

NOTE 3: MEMBERSHIP OF BODIES MAKING KEY DECISIONS

(a) Membership of the Cabinet and their Portfolios:

| <u>Cabinet Member</u> | <u>Portfolio</u> |
|-----------------------|--|
| James Waters | Leader of the Council; |
| Robin Millar | Deputy Leader of the Council; Families and Communities |
| David Bowman | Operations |
| Andy Drummond | Leisure and Culture |
| Stephen Edwards | Resources and Performance |
| Lance Stanbury | Planning and Growth |

(b) Membership of the Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee (Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Forest Heath District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Waveney District Council (Membership amended from 1 December 2015 to one Member/two Substitutes per Authority)

| Full Breckland Cabinet Member | Full East Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet Member | Full Fenland District Council Cabinet Member | Full Forest Heath District Council Cabinet Member | Full Suffolk Coastal District Council Cabinet Member | Full St Edmundsbury Borough Council Cabinet Member | Full Waveney District Council Cabinet Member |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Cllr Pablo Dimoglou | Cllr David Ambrose-Smith | Cllr Chris Seaton | Cllr Stephen Edwards | Cllr Richard Kerry | Cllr Ian Houlder | Cllr Mike Barnard |
| Substitute Breckland Cabinet Members | Substitute East Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet Members | Substitute Fenland District Council Cabinet Members | Substitute Forest Heath District Council Cabinet Members | Substitute Suffolk Coastal District Council Cabinet Members | Substitute St Edmundsbury Borough Council Cabinet Members | Substitute Waveney District Council Cabinet Members |
| Cllr Michael Wassell | Cllr Lis Every | Cllr John Clark | Cllr James Waters | Cllr Geoff Holdcroft | Cllr Sara Mildmay-White | Cllr Sue Allen |
| Cllr Ellen Jolly | Cllr Julia Huffer | Cllr Will Sutton | Cllr David Bowman | Cllr Ray Herring | Cllr Robert Everitt | Cllr Letitia Smith |

Karen Points
 Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services)
 Date: 13 April 2017

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Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

| | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| Title of Report: | Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs | |
| Report No: | CAB/FH/17/025 | |
| Report to and date: | Cabinet | 16 May 2017 |
| Portfolio holder: | Councillor Stephen Edwards Resources and Performance Tel: 07904 389982 Email: stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk | |
| Lead officer: | Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) Tel: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
| Purpose of report: | To consider the current revenue collection performance and to consider writing off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices. | |
| Recommendation: | The write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt Appendix to this report be approved, as follows: 1. Exempt Appendix 1: Business Rates totalling £21,477.32 | |
| Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i> | <i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i> | | |
| Consultation: | Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance have been consulted with on the proposed write-offs. | |
| Alternative option(s): | See paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 | |
| Implications: | | |
| <i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • See paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 | |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • | |
| Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • | |
| Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details | | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> The recovery procedures followed have been previously agreed; writing off uncollectable debt allows staff to focus recovery action on debt which is recoverable. | |
| Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details | | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of predetermined recovery procedures ensures that everybody is treated consistently. • Failure to collect any debt impacts on either the levels of service provision or the levels of charges. • All available remedies are used to recover the debt before write off is considered. • The provision of services by the Council applies to everyone in the area. | |
| Risk/opportunity assessment: | | <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i> | |
| Risk area | Inherent level of risk (before controls) | Controls | Residual risk (after controls) |
| | Low/Medium/ High* | | Low/Medium/ High* |
| Debts are written off which could have been collected. | Medium | Extensive recovery procedures are in place to ensure that all possible mechanisms are exhausted before a debt is written off. | Low |
| Ward(s) affected: | | All wards will be affected | |
| Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i> | | None | |
| Documents attached: | | 1. Exempt – Appendix 1– Business Rates totalling £21,477.32 | |

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

- 1.1 The Revenues Section collects outstanding debts in accordance with either statutory guidelines or Council agreed procedures.
- 1.2 When all these procedures have been exhausted the outstanding debt is written off using the delegated authority of the Head of Resources and Performance for debts up to £2,499.99 or by Cabinet for debts over £2,500.00.
- 1.3 It is best practice to monitor the recovery procedures for outstanding debts regularly and, when appropriate, write off irrecoverable debts.
- 1.4 Provision for irrecoverable debts is included both in the Collection Fund and the General Fund and writing off debts that are known to be irrecoverable ensures that staff are focussed on achieving good collection levels in respect of the recoverable debt.

2. Alternative options

- 2.1 The Council currently uses the services of the ARP Enforcement Agency to assist in the collection of business rates and Council Tax and also has on line tracing facilities. It is not considered appropriate to pass the debts onto another agency.
- 2.2 It should be noted that in the event that a written-off debt become recoverable, the amount is written back on, and enforcement procedures are re-established. This might happen, for example, if someone has gone away with no trace, and then they are unexpectedly 'found' again, through whatever route.

3. Financial implications and collection performance

- 3.1 Provision is made in the accounts for non recovery but the total amounts to be written off are as follows with full details shown in Exempt Appendix 1.
- 3.2 As at 31 March 2017, the total National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of Forest Heath District Council (as the billing Authority) is £24m per annum. The collection rate as at 31 March 2017 was 98.66% against a profiled target of 98.22%.
- 3.3 As at 31 March 2017, the total Council Tax billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of Forest Heath District Council (includes the County, Police and Parish precept elements) is just over £27.5m per annum. The collection rate as at 31 March 2017 was 97.04% against a profiled target of 97.05%.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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