

# Shadow Council



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday 17 July 2018</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Conference Chamber</b> <b>West Suffolk House</b> Western Way Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU
<b>Membership:</b>	<b>All Councillors</b>  You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Shadow Council to transact the business on the agenda set out below.    <b>Ian Gallin</b> <b>Chief Executive</b> <b>9 July 2018</b>
<b>Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:</b>	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.
<b>Quorum</b>	Twenty four Members
<b>Committee administrator:</b>	<b>Helen Hardinge / Claire Skoyles</b> Democratic Services Officers <b>Tel:</b> 01638 719363 / 01284 757176 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:helen.hardinge@westsuffolk.gov.uk">helen.hardinge@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a> / <a href="mailto:claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk">claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>



# Public Information



<b>Venue:</b>	<b>West Suffolk House</b> Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU	Tel: 01638 719237 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk">www.westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>Access to agenda and reports before the meeting:</b>	<p>Copies of the agenda and reports are open for public inspection at the above and following address:</p> <p><b>District Offices</b> <b>College Heath Road</b> Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 7EY</p> <p>at least five clear days before the meeting. They are also available to view on our website.</p>	
<b>Attendance at meetings:</b>	The West Suffolk Shadow 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.	
<b>Public participation:</b>	<p>Members of the public may ask questions of Members of the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) at ordinary meetings of the Shadow Council. 30 minutes will be set aside for persons in the public gallery who live or work in the West Suffolk area to ask questions about the work of the Shadow Council. 30 minutes will also be set aside for questions at extraordinary meetings of the Council, but must be limited to the business to be transacted at that meeting.</p> <p>A person who wishes to speak must register at least fifteen minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. This can be done online by sending the request to <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a> or telephoning 01284 757176 or in person by telling the committee administrator present at the meeting.</p> <p>Written questions, detailing the full question to be asked, may be submitted by members of the public to the Interim Monitoring Officer no later than 10.00 am on the previous working day to the meeting of the Council. Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a> Phone: 01284 757162</p>	
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<b>Induction loop:</b>	An Induction loop is available for meetings held in the Conference Chamber.	
<b>Recording of meetings:</b>	<p>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).</p> <p>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.</p>	
<b>Personal Information</b>	<p>Any personal information processed by Forest Heath District Council or St Edmundsbury Borough Council arising from a request to speak at a public meeting under the Localism Act 2011, will be protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information on how we do this and your rights in regards to your personal information and how to access it, visit our website: <a href="https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm">https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm</a> or call Customer Services: 01284 763233 and ask to speak to the Data Protection Officer.</p>	



# Agenda

## Procedural Matters

**Page No**

**1. Minutes**

**1 - 16**

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 30 May 2018 and 12 June 2018 (copies attached).

**2. Chairman's Announcements**

**3. Apologies for Absence**

To receive announcements (if any) from the Officer advising the Chairman (including apologies for absence)

**4. Declarations of Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda **no later than when that item is reached** and, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.

## Part 1 – Public

**5. Leader's Statement**

**17 - 18**

Paper No: **COU/SA/18/006**

**(Shadow Council Procedure Rules 8.1 – 8.3)** The Leader will provide a written statement summarising important developments and activities since the preceding meeting of the Shadow Council where these have arisen. These developments and activities will solely relate to the development of the Shadow Council, and matters related to the future West Suffolk Council.

Members may ask the Leader questions on the content of both his introductory remarks and the written statement itself.

A total of 30 minutes will be allowed for questions and responses. There will be a limit of five minutes for each question to be asked and answered. A supplementary question arising from the reply may be asked so long as the five minute limit is not exceeded.

**6. Public Participation**

**(Shadow Council Procedure Rules Section 6)** Members of the public who live or work in the West Suffolk area are invited to put one question of not more than five minutes duration about the work of the Shadow Council to members of the Shadow Executive.



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

*(Note: The maximum time to be set aside for this item is 30 minutes, but if all questions are dealt with sooner, or if there are no questions, the Shadow Council will proceed to the next business.*

*Each person may ask **one** question only. A total of **five minutes will be allowed for the question to be put and answered.** One further question will be allowed arising directly from the reply, **provided that the original time limit of five minutes is not exceeded.***

***Written questions** may be submitted by members of the public to the Interim Monitoring Officer **no later than 10.00 am on Monday 16 July 2018.** The written notification should **detail the full question** to be asked at the meeting of the Council.)\**

*\*For further information, see Public Information Sheet attached to this agenda.*

## **7. Referrals report of recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet)**

**19 - 82**

Report No: **COU/SA/18/007**

### **(A) Referrals from Shadow Executive (Cabinet): 10 July 2018**

*(The following referrals have been compiled before the meeting of the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) on 10 July 2018 and are based on the recommendations contained within the reports. Any amendments made by the Shadow Executive to the recommendations will be notified prior to the Shadow Council meeting)*

- 1 West Suffolk Council – Setting the Strategic Context for the Development of the 2019/2020 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plans  
**Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:**  
Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder
- 2 West Suffolk – Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/2020  
**Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:**  
Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder
- 3 West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums Changes  
**Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:**  
Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder



**8. Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) Draft Recommendations for new Electoral Arrangements for West Suffolk Council** **83 - 160**

Report No: **COU/SA/18/008**

**9. Urgent Questions on Notice**

The Shadow Council will consider any urgent questions on notice that were notified to the Interim Monitoring Officer by 11am on the day of the meeting.



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# First Meeting of Shadow Council



**Minutes of the First Meeting of Shadow Council held on  
Wednesday 30 May 2018 at 6.30 pm at the Conference Chamber, West  
Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU**

Present: **Councillors**

Chris Barker	Stephen Edwards	Colin Noble
Trevor Beckwith	Mary Evans	David Palmer
John Bloodworth	Robert Everitt	Clive Pollington
David Bowman	Susan Glossop	Alaric Pugh
Ruth Bowman J.P.	John Griffiths	Joanna Rayner
Sarah Broughton	Brian Harvey	Karen Richardson
Tony Brown	Diane Hind	Peter Ridgwell
Carol Bull	Beccy Hopfensperger	Barry Robbins
John Burns	Paul Hopfensperger	Andrew Smith
Rona Burt	Ian Houlder	Andrew Speed
Mike Chester	Victor Lukaniuk	Clive Springett
Patrick Chung	Carol Lynch	Sarah Stamp
Max Clarke	Christine Mason	Lance Stanbury
Terry Clements	Sara Mildmay-White	Peter Stevens
Jason Crooks	Robin Millar	Jim Thorndyke
Roger Dicker	David Nettleton	Frank Warby
Andy Drummond	Robert Nobbs	Patricia Warby

## 1. **Election of Chairman of the Shadow Council for 2018/2019**

This being the first meeting of the Shadow Council the Service Manager (Democratic Services) opened the meeting and asked for nominations for the Chairman for 2018/2019.

Councillor John Griffiths nominated Councillor Sarah Stamp as Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor Robin Millar.

Councillor Paul Hopfensperger made reference to 2018 marking 100 years since women in the UK were given the right to vote, in light of this he queried the use of the title "Chairman". In response, the Service Manager drew attention to agenda item 9 at which the Shadow Council Constitution was due to be considered.

There being no other nominations, the motion was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

**RESOLVED:**



That Councillor Sarah Stamp be elected Chairman of the Shadow Council for 2018/2019.

Councillor Stamp signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

## **2. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman addressed the meeting and gave thanks to Councillor John Griffiths for his nomination and to all present for electing her to be the Chairman of the Shadow Council.

Members were advised that it was exactly one year ago that both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Cabinets jointly resolved to consider and shape the future of local government in West Suffolk. One year later, to the day, and history was being made with the first Shadow Council meeting, as part of the transitional journey towards delivering the commitment made to create a single council for West Suffolk.

Prior to continuing with the items on the agenda, the Chairman also drew attention to the procedure rules that would be operated for the meeting.

## **3. Election of Vice Chairman of the Shadow Council for 2018/2019**

The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Shadow Council for 2018/2019.

Councillor Robin Millar nominated Councillor Brian Harvey as Vice Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor John Griffiths.

With there being no other nominations and with the vote being unanimous, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Brian Harvey be elected as Vice Chairman of the Shadow Council for 2018/2019.

Councillor Harvey then moved to sit alongside the Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **4. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ruth Allen, Michael Anderson, Simon Brown, Louis Busuttil, Simon Cole, Paula Fox, Wayne Hailstone, Margaret Marks, Louise Marston, Elaine McManus, Jane Midwood, David Roach, Nigel Roman, Richard Rout, Reg Silvester, Peter Thompson, Julia Wakelam, James Waters and Anthony Williams.

Councillors Andrew Appleby and Robin Pilley were also unable to attend the meeting.



## 5. **Appointment of Shadow Executive Members**

The Chairman advised that the first item of business was the appointment of the Shadow Executive Members.

The Shadow Executive would include the two persons who were the Leaders of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, accordingly Councillor John Griffiths as Leader of the Borough Council was invited to make his nominations.

In response, Councillor Griffiths nominated St Edmundsbury Borough Councillors Carol Bull, Robert Everitt, Ian Houlder, Sara Mildmay-White, Alaric Pugh, Jo Rayner and Peter Stevens.

The Chairman then called upon Councillor Robin Millar as Deputy Leader of the District Council to make his nominations on behalf of the Leader, Councillor James Waters.

And, in response, Councillor Millar nominated Forest Heath District Councillors David Bowman, Ruth Bowman, Andy Drummond, Stephen Edwards, Robin Millar and Lance Stanbury.

Councillor Sara Mildmay-White seconded all nominations made on behalf of both Authorities.

With there being no other nominations and with 50 voting for the motion and with 1 abstention, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That together with the Leaders of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, the following persons will form the Shadow Executive for 2018/2019:

Councillors Carol Bull, David Bowman, Ruth Bowman, Andy Drummond, Stephen Edwards, Robert Everitt, Ian Houlder, Sara Mildmay-White, Robin Millar, Alaric Pugh, Jo Rayner, Lance Stanbury and Peter Stevens.

## 6. **Election of the Leader of the Shadow Council**

The next item of business was to elect the Leader of the Shadow Council, the Chairman called upon Councillor Robin Millar to make a nomination on Councillor Waters' behalf.

Councillor Millar proposed that Councillor John Griffiths be elected Leader and this was duly seconded by Councillor Sara Mildmay-White.

With there being no other nominations and with 50 voting for the motion and with 1 abstention, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor John Griffiths be elected Leader of the West Suffolk Shadow Council.



7. **Election of the Deputy Leader of the Shadow Council**

The Chairman advised that the Shadow Council next needed to elect the Deputy Leader and called upon Councillor John Griffiths to make a nomination.

Councillor Griffiths proposed that Councillor James Waters be elected Deputy Leader and this was duly seconded by Councillor Robin Millar.

With there being no other nominations and with 50 voting for the motion and with 1 abstention, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor James Waters be elected Deputy Leader of the West Suffolk Shadow Council.

8. **Appointment of Statutory Officers (Report No: COU/SA/18/001)**

*(Prior to the consideration of this item the following West Suffolk Officers withdrew from the meeting; Ian Gallin, Rachael Mann and Leah Mickleborough.)*

Councillor John Griffiths was invited to present this item. Councillor Griffiths explained that all Councils were required to appoint three specific statutory Officers namely; the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

Accordingly, the Shadow Council was required to appoint Officers to these three posts on an interim basis until the new West Suffolk Council came into effect.

Councillor Griffiths therefore recommended that the current postholders (Ian Gallin – Chief Executive, Rachael Mann – Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) and Leah Mickleborough – Service Manager (Democratic Services)) be appointed to act as the statutory Officers for the Shadow Council and for West Suffolk Council.

Councillor Robin Millar seconded the nominations and took the opportunity to give thanks to the Officers concerned for all their work they had undertaken in order to have reached this point on the journey towards the single West Suffolk Council.

With there being no other nominations and with 50 voting for the motion and with 1 abstention, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That:-



1. Ian Gallin be appointed as the Interim Head of Paid Service for the Shadow West Suffolk Council and, from 1 April 2019, as the Head of Paid Service for West Suffolk Council;
2. Rachael Mann be appointed as the Interim Chief Finance Officer for the Shadow West Suffolk Council and, from 1 April 2019, as the Chief Finance Officer for West Suffolk Council; and
3. Leah Mickleborough be appointed as the Interim Monitoring Officer for the Shadow West Suffolk Council and, from 1 April 2019, as the Monitoring Officer for West Suffolk Council.

*(On conclusion of this item the Officers concerned rejoined the meeting.)*

9. **Shadow Council Constitution (Report No: COU/SA/18/002)**

Councillor Carol Bull, in her capacity as Chairman of the Future Governance Working Group, presented this item which sought adoption of the Shadow West Suffolk Council constitution.

Councillor Bull also gave thanks to the Joint Constitution Working Group for their valued work and input, under the chairmanship of Councillor David Nettleton, and moved the recommendation to adopt the constitution.

Councillor Ruth Bowman also spoke as Vice Chairman of the Future Governance Working Group and similarly gave thanks and seconded the motion.

Councillor Lance Stanbury addressed the meeting and spoke at length in support of the report. He highlighted what an historic decision the Shadow Council was making at its first meeting; the formalisation of the relationship between the two West Suffolk Councils after years of successful joint working.

Councillor Paul Hopfensperger also spoke and reiterated his point he raised earlier in the meeting with regard to the use of the title "Chairman" within the constitution. He proposed an amendment to the document in that all references to Chairman / Vice Chairman were replaced with Chair / Vice Chair. This amendment was duly seconded by Councillor Alaric Pugh.

Councillor David Nettleton explained that the Joint Constitution Working Group had already tasked Officers to remove any gender bias within constitution documents and this was currently being undertaken.

Councillor Ruth Bowman also stressed that a proper route was being taken in this respect and that the amendment that was proposed was too simplistic to capture the ongoing work.

Accordingly, in light of this information, Councillors Hopfensperger and Pugh withdrew their amendment.

Upon putting the original motion for approval to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was



**RESOLVED:**

That the Shadow West Suffolk Council constitution, attached as Appendix A to Report No COU/SA/18/002, be adopted.

10. **Appointment of Independent Persons**

Councillor David Bowman presented this item in his capacity as Chairman of the West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee.

Councillor Bowman explained that it was a requirement of the Localism Act for every council to appoint at least one Independent Person whose role it was to advise the council with regard to complaints that Councillors had breached the Code of Conduct.

It was therefore considered sensible to appoint Mr Arnold Barrow and Mrs Zoe Finn, who were the current joint Independent Persons for Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, to provide this function for the Shadow Council.

Councillor Bowman moved the motion and this was duly seconded by Councillor John Burns, as Vice Chairman of the West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee.

Upon being put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That Mr Arnold Barrow and Mrs Zoe Finn be appointed as the Shadow Council's Independent Persons in accordance with s28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a term of one year commencing 30 May 2018.

11. **Conclusion**

On conclusion of the meeting the Chairman reminded all Members present that the separate meetings of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils scheduled for 12 and 13 June 2018 had been cancelled. However, the next Shadow Council meeting would be taking place on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 6.30pm at West Suffolk House.

The meeting concluded at 6.55 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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# Shadow Council



**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Shadow Council** held on  
**Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 6.30 pm** at the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present: **Councillors**

**Chairman** Sarah Stamp

Ruth Allen	Robert Everitt	David Palmer
Chris Barker	Paula Fox	Alaric Pugh
Trevor Beckwith	Susan Glossop	Joanna Rayner
David Bowman	John Griffiths	Karen Richardson
Ruth Bowman J.P.	Wayne Hailstone	Peter Ridgwell
Sarah Broughton	Diane Hind	David Roach
Tony Brown	Beccy Hopfensperger	Nigel Roman
Carol Bull	Paul Hopfensperger	Richard Rout
John Burns	Ian Houlder	Andrew Smith
Rona Burt	Victor Lukaniuk	Andrew Speed
Louis Busuttil	Margaret Marks	Clive Springett
Mike Chester	Christine Mason	Lance Stanbury
Patrick Chung	Elaine McManus	Peter Stevens
Max Clarke	Jane Midwood	Jim Thorndyke
Terry Clements	Sara Mildmay-White	Julia Wakelam
Roger Dicker	Robin Millar	Frank Warby
Andy Drummond	David Nettleton	Patricia Warby
Stephen Edwards	Robert Nobbs	James Waters

## 12. **Chairman's Announcements**

Under this item, the Chairman invited Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Shadow Council, to speak.

Councillor Griffiths stated how it had been an honour and a privilege to have been elected Leader of the Shadow Council and he would work closely alongside Councillor James Waters, present Deputy Leader of the Shadow Council, to make West Suffolk an even better place to live, work and visit as the two councils continued in their journey towards the creation of West Suffolk Council.



He thanked councillors and staff for their contributions towards getting the Councils to this historic point in the transition process.

**13. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Anderson, John Bloodworth, Simon Cole, Jason Crooks, Mary Evans, Brian Harvey (Vice-Chairman), Robin Pilley, Clive Pollington and Anthony Williams.

Councillors Andrew Appleby, Simon Brown, Carol Lynch, Louise Marston, Colin Noble, Barry Robbins, Reg Silvester and Peter Thompson were also unable to attend the meeting.

**14. Declarations of Interests**

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

**15. Public Participation**

No members of the public in attendance had registered to speak.

**16. Referrals Report of Recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet)**

**(Report No: COU/SA/18/003)**

The Shadow Council considered the Referrals Report of Recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) contained within Report No: COU/SA/18/003.

**(A) Referrals from Shadow Executive (Cabinet) : 5 June 2018**

**1. Implementation Plan for the Creation of a New Council for West Suffolk**

Approval was sought for the Implementation Plan for the Creation of a New Council for West Suffolk.

The Implementation Plan, attached as Appendix A to the Shadow Executive report, outlined the plan for transferring Forest Heath District Council's (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council's (SEBC) functions and responsibilities to the new single district-level council for West Suffolk. It focused on the following areas:

- (a) the principles of implementation;
- (b) areas of decision making that the West Suffolk Shadow Council and West Suffolk Shadow Executive would be required to make; and
- (c) other key areas of implementation; and
- (d) programme governance.

Councillors Ruth Bowman and Carol Bull, FHDC and SEBC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the



Shadow Council, including reiterating the five key principles outlined in the Plan which would enable the implementation of the transition to the new West Suffolk Council.

The FHDC/SEBC shared services partnership had been established for several years which had generated significant savings during that period and it was recognised that the creation of a single West Suffolk Council was about much more than the financial position. However, at the Shadow Executive meeting, it was felt that clarification should be documented within the Implementation Plan regarding the annual and total amount of savings made during FHDC and SEBC's shared services partnership.

This amendment had been made under officers' existing delegated authority and was highlighted to the Shadow Council.

Shadow Council also noted that the Shadow Executive had agreed the Central Implementation Team, as outlined in paragraph 16 of Appendix A, whose role was to assist the Shadow Executive in delivering the Implementation Plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Trevor Beckwith regarding the transfer of heritage assets to the new West Suffolk Council and whether there was an inventory for the paintings etc, including those stored at West Stow, and whether this was available to see, Shadow Council was informed that Councillor Beckwith would be provided with a written response following the meeting. This would subsequently be provided for all Members' perusal.

On the motion of Councillor Ruth Bowman, seconded by Councillor Carol Bull, and duly carried it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the Implementation Plan attached at Appendix A to Report No: EXC/SA/18/001, be agreed.

**17. West Suffolk Council: Councillor Remuneration**

**(Report No: COU/SA/18/004)**

The Shadow Council considered the above report, which sought approval for proposals to developing a Members' remuneration scheme for the new West Suffolk Council.

The West Suffolk (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 required the Shadow Council to formulate a Scheme of Members' Allowances. This Scheme would then be recommended to the new West Suffolk Council to adopt when it would begin to meet after 1 April 2019.

Councillors Ruth Bowman and Carol Bull, FHDC and SEBC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Shadow Council, including that the supporting case for proposing a future council size of 64 Members highlighted the need to continue to build on the existing Families and Communities Strategy, which emphasised the role of councillors as community leaders and enablers.



The future Scheme of Members' Allowances for West Suffolk would be set against this backdrop; but would also need to bear in mind the evolving nature of an entirely new Council, whereby committee and leadership roles subject to Special Responsibility Allowances were to be defined, and public expectations on the levels of remuneration that were appropriate for democratically elected individuals.

Before adopting any Scheme of Allowances, the Shadow Council was required to form an Independent Panel, which would prepare recommendations on the level of remuneration, allowances and expenses for Councillors. A minimum of three persons must sit on the Panel and the remit and requirements of that Panel was summarised in Section 3 of the report, which included appointing a non-voting advisor to the Panel who would act as a conduit between officers, elected Members and the Panel. The process for appointing Panel members was set out in Section 4 of the report, which included the formation of a Selection Panel, which would comprise the existing Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils' Portfolio Holders for Future Governance, a Member who was not part of the majority political group; a West Suffolk Director; the interim Monitoring Officer and the Shadow Council's independent persons (on the condition that they did not wish to be members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).)

Attached to the report were the following appendices:

Appendix A: Proposed Terms of Reference for the IRP

Appendix B: Person Specification for IRP members

Appendix C: Person Specification for the Panel advisor

Councillor Ruth Bowman then explained that Councillor David Nettleton had put himself forward as the non-majority group Member to sit on the Selection Panel for the IRP and that she wished to correct a minor typographical error in Recommendation (2) listed in the report. The second recommendation would therefore now be amended to read:

*'That the West Suffolk Shadow Council nominates Councillor David Nettleton as a Member who is not part of the majority group, to serve on the Selection Panel for the Independent Remuneration Panel.'*

Councillor Ruth Bowman proposed approval of Recommendations (1) and (3) contained in the report, together with the amended Recommendation (2) above. This proposal was duly seconded by Councillor Carol Bull.

During the debate Councillor David Nettleton proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IRP, which was duly seconded by Councillor Julia Wakelam. Whilst acknowledging that the IRP was required by legislation to comprise a minimum of three members, he did not agree that the West Suffolk IRP should comprise "up to four members..." as defined in the proposed ToR. Councillor Nettleton reasoned that the Selection Panel should be able to sensibly decide a reasonable number to comprise the IRP, particularly if it was difficult to select a maximum of four suitable candidates from an exceptional pool of applicants.



The relevant sentence in the ToR at Appendix A would therefore be amended to read:

*"The panel shall be made up of ~~up to four~~ **a minimum of three** members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council."*

A debate was held on the amendment and upon being put to the vote was carried. The amendment was therefore incorporated into the substantive motion so that Recommendation (3) read:

*'That the West Suffolk Shadow Council agrees the terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel in Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/004, as amended to incorporate the following revision to the section entitled 'Membership of the Panel':*

*The panel shall be made up of a minimum of three members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council.'*

The debate continued on the substantive motion. In response to a question, Shadow Council was informed that the proposed independent advisor to the IRP would receive an allowance of £100 per meeting attended, plus travelling expenses of up to 45p per mile, which was the same as would be received by panel members, as outlined in the proposed Terms of Reference.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote, was duly carried and it was

**RESOLVED:**

That:

- (1) the process for appointing members of the West Suffolk Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of Report No: COU/SA/18/004, be agreed;
- (2) Councillor David Nettleton be nominated as a Member who is not part of the majority group, to serve on the Selection Panel for the Independent Remuneration Panel; and
- (3) the terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel in Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/004, be agreed, as amended to incorporate the following revision to the section entitled 'Membership of the Panel':

*'The panel shall be made up of a minimum of three members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council.'*

*(Councillor David Roach joined the meeting at 6.46 pm during the consideration of this item.)*



## 18. **Civic Leadership Review**

### **(Report No: COU/SA/18/005)**

The Shadow Council considered the above report, which sought approval for the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for a working group which would be tasked with reviewing the future of Civic Leadership within West Suffolk.

In April 2018, Forest Heath District (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils' (SEBC) Leaders announced that a specific working group would be established to review the future of Civic Leadership in West Suffolk.

Councillors Carol Bull and Ruth Bowman, SEBC and FHDC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Shadow Council, including that Civic Leadership was wider than one individual and was concerned with how:

- residents engaged with and understood the Council;
- the Council demonstrated the support for its communities right across the new district area;
- the Council encouraged civic pride in its area and promoted local democracy; and
- Civic Leadership supported the aims and ambitions of the Council.

The proposed new Civic Leadership Working Group would help advise the Council on the priorities for its future Civic Leadership, and evaluate how the Council should reward and recognise the outstanding contributions that individuals and organisations made to civic life within West Suffolk. Specific focus would be given to matters summarised in paragraph 1.3 of the report.

Subject to the views of the Working Group on how their work should progress, it was envisaged that the review should be concluded by autumn 2018, with a report subsequently being presented to the Shadow Council on their findings.

The composition of the Working Group was set out in the proposed ToR. Membership would be appointed following this meeting under the existing delegated authority of the interim Monitoring Officer, on the nominations of the existing FHDC and SEBC Group Leaders.

Councillor Carol Bull proposed approval of the recommendation contained in the report. This proposal was duly seconded by Councillor Ruth Bowman.

During the debate, Councillor Trevor Beckwith proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix A to the report, in respect of the proposed composition of the Working Group. Where it had specified that at least one member of the Group each from FHDC and SEBC must be a former Chairman or Mayor (as applicable), Councillor Beckwith wished to also specify that at least one member of the Group each from FHDC and SEBC must not be a former Chairman or Mayor (as applicable). This amendment to the substantive motion was duly seconded by Councillor Paul Hopfensperger; however, upon being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated.



The majority of Members present supported the proposed remit and Terms of Reference of the Civic Leadership Working Group, recognising the need to engage with the public and other stakeholders about civic life and its relevance and importance to the community, whilst promoting the brand of West Suffolk.

In response to questions from Councillor Terry Clements regarding the operation of the Future Governance Steering Group; and from Councillor David Nettleton regarding the procedural rules and voting mechanism should a proposal to apply for Borough Status be presented to a meeting of the Shadow Council in due course; the Shadow Council was informed that written responses would be provided following the meeting. These would subsequently be provided for all Members' perusal.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote, was duly carried and it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the terms of reference for the Civic Leadership Working Group, attached as Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/005, be approved.

19. **Urgent Questions on Notice**

No urgent questions on notice had been received.

The Meeting concluded at 7.16 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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# Shadow Council



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Leader's Statement</b>	
<b>Paper No:</b>	<b>COU/SA/18/006</b>	
<b>Paper to and date:</b>	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Documents attached:</b>	<b>None</b>	

## Civic Leadership

The engagement period on looking at what Civic Leadership should be for the new West Suffolk Council has started. This gives our communities, businesses and local organisations the chance to shape what Civic Leadership should be for our new council in the future. I would urge all here to make sure they have their say and encourage our local residents to do so too. From the beginning both James and I, as well as portfolio holders Councillors Bowman and Bull, have stressed that Civic Leadership plays a vital role in supporting and promoting our area and local organisations. It is also demonstrated not just by the Chair, Chairman or Mayor but all of us.

However, I wanted to take the opportunity to applaud the Civic Leadership our authorities showed for Armed Forces Day. West Suffolk hosted the celebrations for the County, something we were proud to do not least because armed forces personnel have lived or been based in West Suffolk for centuries and of course are our friends and neighbours now. I know the Chairman of Forest Heath District Council and the Mayor of St Edmundsbury Borough Council have always maintained close ties with our armed forces and both are regular guests at local military events. These latest Armed Forces Day events were unprecedented across the country and a great example of how we work together to generate civic pride in West Suffolk and the wider County. I am sure you will join me in thanking all those involved.

## Ward Boundaries

Proposals for the new ward boundaries for West Suffolk Council are due to be discussed today. These are the proposals put forward by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England who will have the ultimate decision. After much engagement we have passed on the various options, issues and concerns our communities suggested locally. Everyone in West Suffolk still has the opportunity to make their views known and their opinion carries the same weight as anyone else who replies to the consultation.



Therefore, no matter what the outcome of our discussions on the paper today I would encourage you to respond directly to the Commission. Indeed, we should also advise our parish and town councils, residents and community groups to make their views known if they wish to.

### **Strategic Priorities**

We are also set to discuss later a number of technical papers that ultimately support the ambition and priorities we have. Our Resources and Performance portfolio holders will speak more on this later in the debate. But I wanted to emphasise one of the reasons we are creating the new West Suffolk Council is to do things in better or different ways to (not just a bigger council doing the same things the same way). This is part of the transformational journey we have been on and the Medium Term Financial Strategy supports the delivery the vision and priorities we agreed for the new West Suffolk Council in the Strategic Framework. It is these principles that should help drive the prosperity and investment that we want to see continue across the whole of West Suffolk for the communities and businesses we serve.

**Councillor John Griffiths**  
**Leader of the West Suffolk Shadow Council**



# Shadow Council



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Referrals Report of Recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet)</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>COU/SA/18/007</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Documents attached:</b>	<p><b>Appendix 1:</b> Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Report No: EXC/SA/18/002 'West Suffolk Council – Setting the Strategic Context for the Development of the 2019/2020 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plans'</p> <p><b>Appendix 2:</b> Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Report No: EXC/SA/18/003 'West Suffolk – Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/2020'</p> <p><b>Appendix 3:</b> Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Report No: EXC/SA/18/004 'West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums Changes'</p>	

## (A) Referral from Shadow Executive (Cabinet): 10 July 2018

*(These referrals have been compiled before the meeting of the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) on 10 July 2018 and are based on the recommendations contained within the reports listed below (as shown in **bold and italics**). Any amendments made by the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) to the recommendations within this report will be notified prior to the Shadow Council meeting)*

### **1. West Suffolk Council – Setting the Strategic Context for the Development of the 2019/2020 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plans**

**Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:**  
*Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder*

**[Report No: EXC/SA/18/002;](#)**  
**[Appendix A;](#)**  
**[Appendix B](#)**



**RECOMMENDED that:**

- 1) The West Suffolk Strategic Framework (subject to rebranding; wording changes from "councils" to "council" and other consequential amendments, which will be completed by Officers) as its Strategic Framework from 1 April 2019, be adopted.**
- 2) Both the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy, contained at Appendix A and West Suffolk Capital Strategy contained at Appendix B to Report No: EXC/SA/18/002 as its strategic financial framework from 1 April 2019, be adopted.**
- 3) The key principles and approach for the development of the 2019-2020 budget and medium term financial plans for West Suffolk Council as set out in Section 3 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/002, be supported, including the consideration of a further report (setting out the proposed approach to achieve these principles) to the Joint Informal Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 25 July 2018.**

- 1.1 This report sets out the strategic context (proposed principles, approach and timescales) for the development of the 2019/2020 budget and medium term financial plans for the new West Suffolk Council from 1 April 2019. The Shadow Executive (Cabinet) is being asked to resolve that:

*That both Leaders should write to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on behalf of the West Suffolk Shadow Executive, confirming West Suffolk Councils plans, taking into account our implementation plan five key principles for a seven year council tax harmonisation period.*

*and to recommend to the Shadow Council that:*

- 1) The West Suffolk Strategic Framework (subject to rebranding; wording changes from "councils" to "council" and other consequential amendments, which will be completed by Officers) as its Strategic Framework from 1 April 2019, be adopted.*
- 2) Both the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy, contained at Appendix A and West Suffolk Capital Strategy contained at Appendix B to Report No: EXC/SA/18/002 as its strategic financial framework from 1 April 2019, be adopted.*
- 3) The key principles and approach for the development of the 2019-2020 budget and medium term financial plans for West Suffolk Council as set out in Section 3 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/002, be supported, including the consideration of a further report (setting out the proposed approach to achieve these principles) to the Joint Informal Performance and Audit and Scrutiny Committees on 25 July 2018.*



- 1.2 For ease of reference, the full Shadow Executive (Cabinet) report and its Appendices are attached to this referrals report. If the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) makes any changes to the recommendation to Shadow Council printed in the report, these will be despatched to Members prior to the meeting and published on the Councils' website accordingly.
- 1.3 Whilst being attached to this report, Members may also view the full report and its Appendices on the Councils' website via the above links.

## **2. West Suffolk – Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/2020**

**Shadow Executive (Cabinet)**

**Members:**

*Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder*

**Report No:**

**EXC/SA/18/003;**

**Appendix A**

*(Due to the size and technical nature of Appendix A, this is not attached to this referrals report, but can be viewed via the link above)*

### **RECOMMENDED:**

***That the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for West Suffolk be approved, to take effect from 1 April 2019 as attached at Appendix A and as detailed in Section 5 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/003.***

- 2.1 This report sets out the proposed West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) to take effect from 1 April 2019.
- 2.2 For ease of reference, the full Shadow Executive (Cabinet) report is attached to this referrals report. If the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) makes any changes to the recommendation to Shadow Council printed in the report, this will be despatched to Members prior to the meeting and published on the Councils' website accordingly.
- 2.3 Whilst being attached to this report, Members may also view the full report on the Councils' website via the above links. Due to the size and technical nature of Appendix A, this has not been attached, but can be viewed via the link above.

## **3. West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums Changes**

**Shadow Executive (Cabinet)**

**Members:**

*Cllrs Stephen Edwards and Ian Houlder*

**Report No:**

**EXC/SA/18/004**

### **RECOMMENDED that:**

***1) The West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Second Homes set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004, from 1st April 2019, be approved.***



**2) The West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Empty Property Reliefs as set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004, from 1st April 2019, be approved.**

**3) Subject to the coming into force of legislation accordingly on 1 April 2019, an additional 50% Council Tax premium on long term properties raising the current premium to 200% as set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004, be approved.**

- 3.1 This report sets out the proposed West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes (including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums) from 1 April 2019.
- 3.2 For ease of reference, the full Shadow Executive (Cabinet) report is attached to this referrals report. If the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) makes any changes to the recommendation to Shadow Council printed in the report, this will be despatched to Members prior to the meeting and published on the Councils' website accordingly.
- 3.3 Whilst being attached to this report, Members may also view the full report on the Councils' website via the above links.



# Shadow Executive (Cabinet)



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>West Suffolk Council – Setting the Strategic Context for the Development of the 2019/2020 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plans</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EXC/SA/18/002</b>	
<b>Report to and dates:</b>	<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet)</b>	10 July 2018
	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:</b>	Stephen Edwards <b>Tel:</b> 07904 389982 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk">stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk</a>	Ian Houlder <b>Tel:</b> 07970 729435 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ian.houlder@stedsbcc.gov.uk">ian.houlder@stedsbcc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Lead officers:</b>	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) <b>Tel:</b> 01638 719245 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk">rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	Ben Smith Programme Manager – Single Council Implementation <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757101 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ben.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk">ben.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	This paper sets out the strategic context (proposed principles, approach and timescales) for the development of the 2019/20 budget and medium term financial plans as we head in to the new West Suffolk Council from 1 April 2019.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Subject to the approval of Shadow Council, the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) is recommended to:</b>  <b>1) Adopt the West Suffolk Strategic Framework (subject to rebranding; wording changes from “councils” to “council” and other consequential amendments, which will be completed by Officers) as its Strategic Framework from 1 April 2019.</b>	



	<p><b>2) Adopt both the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy, contained at Appendix A and West Suffolk Capital Strategy contained at Appendix B to Report No: EXC/SA/18/002 as its strategic financial framework from 1 April 2019.</b></p> <p><b>3) Support the key principles and approach for the development of the 2019-2020 budget and medium term financial plans for West Suffolk Council as set out in Section 3 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/002, including the consideration of a further report (setting out the proposed approach to achieve these principles) to the Joint Informal Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 25 July 2018.</b></p> <p><b>The Shadow Executive (Cabinet) is recommended to:</b></p> <p><b>4) Agree that both Leaders should write to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on behalf of the West Suffolk Shadow Executive, confirming West Suffolk Councils plans, taking into account our implementation plan five key principles for a seven year council tax harmonisation period.</b></p>
<p><b>Key Decision:</b></p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> 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 type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within <b>48 hours</b> and cannot be actioned until <b>five clear working days of the publication of the decision</b> have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
<p><b>Consultation:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement in the 2019-20 budget and medium term planning process will take place across the various service areas.</li> <li>Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will receive regular update reports on the process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Alternative option(s):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None applicable</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implications:</b></p>	
<p><i>Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As set out in the report.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None as a result of this paper other than through engagement in the proposed budget process</li> </ul>



Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None as a result of this paper</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Shadow Council has a legal obligation to set a balanced budget for 2019-20 and to set out its medium term financial plans</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality impact assessments will be undertaken where relevant to individual budget areas/proposals</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
Shadow Council don't adopt the strategic context resulting in the misallocation of financial resources for service delivery	Low	No significant changes are proposed to the already shared strategic context. Seek early adoption of the strategic framework and medium term financial strategy (MTFS) for West Suffolk Council	Low
The principles and approach set out in this paper are not supported resulting in unclear budget process and its outcome	Low	Seek early adoption of the 2019-20 budget process principles and approach. Engage with the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.	Low
An appraisal of the risks associated with the 2019-20 Budget and MTFS will be considered as part of the formal budget reports in February 2019.			
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All wards	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		<a href="#">EXC/SA/18/001 12 June 2018 Shadow Council - Implementation Plan</a>  <a href="#">CAB.SE.17.070 St Eds Council December 2017 - Item 7</a> – Strategic Framework 2018-2020  <a href="#">CAB.FH.17.064 Forest Heath Council - Item 5</a> – Strategic Framework 2018-2020	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		<b>Appendix A</b> – West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-2021 <b>Appendix B</b> – West Suffolk Capital Strategy 2019-2021	



## 1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

- 1.1 The West Suffolk Shadow Council, at its meeting of 12 June 2018, agreed the Single Council Implementation Plan (Report no. EXC/SA/18/001) which outlines how the functions and responsibilities of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils will transfer to the West Suffolk Council on 1 April 2019.
- 1.2 The Shadow Councils' responsibilities (detailed in the agreed implementation plan) include the adoption of policy and strategy and to set a budget precept (i.e. Council Tax level) for West Suffolk Council to operate from 1 April 2019.
- 1.3 This report sets out the strategy context against which the 2019-20 Budget and medium term financial plans are proposed to be developed between now and the formal council tax and budget adoption meeting of the Shadow Council in February 2019.
- 1.4 The proposed principles and approach, set out in the paper, for the development of the 2019-20 Budget and medium term financial plans, seek to align to the already established implementation plan's five key principles, set out below for ease of reference:
  - We will ensure West Suffolk Council is fully empowered to discharge all of its powers and functions on 1 April 2019;
  - We are not expecting the creation to impact on service delivery. Where there is an impact we will aim to minimise the impact on our residents, communities, businesses, service users and other local stakeholders and partners;
  - Policies will be harmonised in a way that enables West Suffolk Council to operate with a clear purpose;
  - We will not take avoidable decisions that would constrain or restrict the operation of West Suffolk Council; and
  - We will focus on delivering the commitments made in our business case

## 2. The Strategic Context

- 2.1 At their December 2017 Council meetings, both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils adopted the 2018-2020 West Suffolk Strategic Framework which sets out our vision and what both councils aim to achieve together, with our partners, local businesses, communities and residents.
- 2.2 In summary, the document contains the:
  - (a) **West Suffolk councils' vision:** *Supporting and investing in our west Suffolk communities and businesses to encourage and manage ambitious growth in prosperity and quality of life for all;*
  - (b) **Strategic priorities:**
    - *Growth in West Suffolk's economy for the benefit of all our residents and UK plc.*
    - *Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active.*
    - *Increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk in both our towns and rural areas.*



- (c) **Projects and actions to support the priorities:** projects and actions already underway as well as those that have been agreed but not yet started; and
- (d) **Ways of working:** how the West Suffolk councils will work together in taking forward the ambitious set of projects and activities, in order to support improvements in quality of life in West Suffolk.
- 2.3 It was also envisaged, given its recent development and adoption in December 2017, that the 2018-20 West Suffolk Strategic Framework would set the strategic direction for the new single council for West Suffolk. The framework is also aligned with the councils' business case that was submitted to the Secretary of State in autumn 2017.
- 2.4 Subject to rebranding; wording changes from "councils" to "council" and other consequential amendments, which will be completed by Officers, it is proposed that the Shadow Council formally adopts the West Suffolk Strategic Framework as its Strategic Framework for 2019-20, setting the strategic direction of the new West Suffolk Council and therefore the allocation of its resources from 1 April 2019.
- 2.5 The West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2020, assesses and evaluates the financial resources we expect to have and our expenditure in order to deliver our strategic priorities. Our current joint strategy for managing the councils' finances for 2016-20 is based on six key themes, representing our response to the ongoing financial challenges and opportunities surrounding local government.
- 2.6 In summary, these six themes are:
- Aligning resources to West Suffolk's strategic framework and essential services;
  - Continuation of the shared service agenda and transformation of service delivery;
  - Behaving more commercially;
  - Considering new funding models (e.g. acting as an investor);
  - Encouraging the use of digital forms for customer access; and
  - Taking advantage of new forms of local government finance (e.g. business rate retention).
- 2.7 The narrative of the current West Suffolk MTFS document warranted some updating, particularly around the national and local financial context (for example the introduction of the now 75% Business Rates Retention scheme in 2020). As such Officers have included at Appendix A an updated MTFS document (the detailed numbers to be included will flow out of the 2019-20 budget process) for Members' consideration and adoption as the new West Suffolk Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy from 1 April 2019.
- 2.8 From April 2018 (a transitional period for adoption was allowed), all local authorities are required to adopt a Capital Strategy. West Suffolk Councils at their February 2018 Council meetings adopted an early draft of a West Suffolk Capital Strategy which is an integral part of a council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Appendix B provides an updated Capital Strategy (the detailed numbers to be included will flow out of the 2019-20 budget process) for



Members' consideration and adoption as the new West Suffolk Council's Capital Strategy from 1 April 2019. This strategy may need to be updated further following the issue of any guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

- 2.9 It is worth noting that as part of good financial planning (councils are also required to prepare for, as a minimum, a three year financial planning period), the West Suffolk Council in February 2019 will be asked to set a balanced budget for 2019-20 (its statutory obligation), alongside a medium term financial plan for the period 2020-2023. Until such time as the new West Suffolk Council adopts any revised longer term strategic and financial frameworks and strategies, that financial plan will assume the continuation of both the West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-20 and the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-20 (supported by the capital strategy).
- 2.10 The Strategic Framework and MTFS are both supported and underpinned by a number of further strategies, policies and guidance – which will create the overall policy and budget framework for the new West Suffolk Council. Where these strategies, policies and guidance are joint across Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury, it is proposed that these will simply be 'rolled over' into the new Council. The exact process for achieving this is subject to confirmation within the emerging 'consequential' Parliamentary Order which deals with finance, staffing and other matters. A small number of policies remain separate for the two councils and require harmonisation before 1 April 2019. These will each have their own alignment process and timeframes as part of the detail behind the agreed implementation plan.

### **3. Principles for approaching the 2019-20 Budget process**

- 3.1 The approach to setting the 2019/20 budget along with the medium term financial plans for West Suffolk Council is proposed to follow the below principles;
- The 2019-20 budget and medium term plans will continue to follow the West Suffolk Councils Strategic Framework (three priorities) and Medium Term Financial Strategy (six themes) – section 2 above gives details.
  - The process will take into account the agreed Single Council Business Case in respect of saving proposals and Council Tax harmonisation
  - A simple approach will be followed where, unless there is good reason to do so differently (see next section on review areas), a 1+1=2 approach will be taken (i.e., the two current budgets are added together to form the West Suffolk Council budget)
  - The approach will seek to achieve a minimum 2 year balanced budget for 2019-2021 and will provide confidence in achieving a balanced longer term position
  - The approach will take the opportunity to consider overall Single Council Financial Resilience in our approach (which may include some external support, i.e. CIPFA)



- The process will continue to communicate the overall West Suffolk financial challenges and opportunities through the medium term financial strategy to Leadership Team, staff, cabinet and all councillors
- 3.2 Recognising the key role the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees both play in the development of a sustainable budget for the West Suffolk Councils, it is suggested that the approach to achieve these principles is developed and agreed by that Joint Informal Committee in the first instance. Therefore a report setting out a proposed approach to the 2019-20 Budget and medium term plans, following the above principles, is planned to be considered and scrutinised by the Joint Informal meeting of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees at their July 2018 meeting(s).
- 3.3 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has asked that the Shadow Executive formally writes to the ministry setting out its plans for the harmonisation of council tax levels across a new West Suffolk Council in order to assist their development of the necessary legislative order. Both Councils agreed as part of the single council business case that a 7 year harmonisation period would be requested and therefore no further discussion on this matter is required. Members should continue to note that it will ultimately be down to the new West Suffolk Council to formally resolve its Council tax level(s) each year, from 1 April 2019 – with the West Suffolk Shadow Council setting the first year council tax level (therefore precept) for 2019-2020.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the West Suffolk Shadow Executive support both the Leader and Deputy Leader (the Leaders) in writing to MHCLG on behalf of the West Suffolk Shadow Executive confirming West Suffolk Council's plans for a 7 year council tax harmonisation period whilst also taking into account our implementation plan five key principles.

#### **4. Timetable**

- 4.1 The high level timetable below is proposed for setting the 2019/20 budget along with the medium term financial plans for the West Suffolk Council.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
Shadow Council – consider the Shadow Executive recommendations from this report	17 July 2018
PASC report(s) – setting out a proposed approach to the 2019-20 Budget and medium term plans	25 July 2018
Budget preparations following agreed approach	July – January 2019
PASC report(s) – delivering a sustainable budget update report	27 September 2018
PASC report(s) – delivering a sustainable budget update report	28 November 2018
PASC report(s) – delivering a sustainable budget update report	31 January 2019
Member Development Session(s) and briefing(s) – MTFS	January- February 2019
Shadow Executive – 2019-20 Budget and Council	5 February 2019



Tax setting report	
Shadow Council - 2019-20 Budget and Council Tax setting report	19 February 2019
West Suffolk budget – implementation/go live date	1 April 2019





# Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019-21

***NOTE: THE SUMMARY OF OUR FINANCIAL POSITION SECTION WILL BE COMPLETED AS PART OF THE 2019-20 BUDGET SETTING PROCESS (CONCLUDED IN FEBRUARY 2019), ALONG WITH ALL REFERENCED APPENDICES AND TABLES.***



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**FOREWORD FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS OF THE COUNCILS  
(SUBJECT TO FURTHER UPDATES UNTIL FEBRUARY 2019 DETAILED  
BUDGET ADOPTION).**

We are delighted to introduce the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2019-21. West Suffolk continues to collaborate with other public sector organisations across the full range of our services and programmes of activity. This reduces costs for local residents and also simplifies public sector structures in the west of Suffolk.

Working more efficiently as a new Single Council, through transforming services, moving to digital forms of communication, behaving more commercially and a range of other initiatives, will continue to be at the heart of West Suffolk's approach over the next few years. But this will not be enough to meet the financial challenges we are facing as a result of changes in the economy and the way in which local government is financed. As we explain in more detail in this document, 2020-21 will see fundamental changes to the local government finance system. These will require councils to be even more reliant on generating growth in our local areas, as opposed to receiving support from central government. We welcome the opportunity to take control of our own destiny in this way. And we will also be working with Government and other councils to ensure that the necessary checks and balances remain in place so that we can continue to support local families and communities.

Our strategy for managing the council's finances from 1 April 2019 will continue to be based on the six principles we adopted under the previous shared MTFS and which are set out in this document.

Our aim in all of this is to continue to support and invest in our West Suffolk communities and businesses to encourage and manage ambitious growth in prosperity and quality of life for all – the vision we have set out in our West Suffolk Strategic Framework for 2018-20. Working towards this vision, and achieving the priorities and actions that support it, will need to be done in partnership with a wide range of other organisations, communities, families and individuals. The next few years will therefore be characterised by ongoing collaboration; more joining-up of our services around individuals; and in some cases, the devolution of powers to a more local level. All of these new ways of working will require new funding arrangements or structures, but we are confident that we can build on our strong track record of sound financial management in the past to meet the new, and even more demanding challenges of the future.

**Councillor Stephen Edwards**

Portfolio Holder for Resources  
and Performance  
Forest Heath District &  
West Suffolk Council

**Councillor Ian Houlder**

Portfolio Holder for Resources  
and Performance  
St Edmundsbury Borough &  
West Suffolk Council



**PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides a high-level assessment of the financial resources required to deliver West Suffolk's strategic priorities and essential services over the next few years. It considers how the council can provide these resources within the anticipated financial context.

Like all local authorities, West Suffolk's MTFS is influenced by national government policy, funding and spending announcements. The government's spending plans continue to evolve, at the time of publication of the MTFS, highlights include:

- The main grant (revenue support grant - RSG) to local government will be phased out by 2019-20, with 2019-20 being the final year of the 4-year settlement deal that was accepted by 97% of councils, including West Suffolk's, in return for publishing efficiency plans.
- Government will be looking at fair and affordable options surrounding 'negative' RSG that occurs in 2019 to 2020, and will formally consult on proposals ahead of the 2019-20 settlement.
- The New Homes Bonus baseline will be maintained at 0.4%.
- Council tax and business rates are forecast to grow in cash terms based on the Office for Budget Responsibility's forecast for local authority self-financed expenditure. Local government spending is forecast to be higher in cash terms by 2019-20 than in 2015.
- Consultation will continue in 2019 on changes to the local government finance system to pave the way for the implementation of 75% business rate retention by 2020-21. Including a review of local authorities' needs and resources to enable a new funding system to be devised.
- The next business rates revaluation would be brought forward one year to 2021. Following the previous announcement on more frequent revaluations, this means that three-yearly revaluations could take effect in 2024.
- The government will allow local authorities to spend up to 100% of their fixed asset/capital receipts on the revenue costs of reform projects.
- The council tax referendum level (the level at which council tax can be increased) is currently set in line with inflation at 3% or £5, whichever is the higher amount. In addition, local authorities with responsibility for social care (e.g. Suffolk County Council) may levy a precept to spend exclusively on adult social care.
- Ten additional business retention rates pilots for 2018-19 – for areas of varying sizes and location – have been confirmed. The Suffolk pilot scheme is one of these ten confirmed pilots. Suffolk and the other pilots, will keep 100% of growth in business rates, which will stay in communities and be spent on local priorities.
- Introduction of the National Living Wage, to reach 60% of average salaries by 2020.

The latest local government spending announcements can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/local-government-spending>



**NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT****The economy**

Growth and employment continues to perform broadly as expected according to the government's independent forecasters, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR). The latest data (March 2018) show real GDP growth slowing from 1.9 per cent in 2016 to 1.7 per cent in 2017 (and to 1.4 per cent in the year to the fourth quarter of 2017).

There has been the continued strengthening of advanced economies around the world. The International Monetary Fund's January 2018 forecast update included upward revisions to 2018 and 2019 GDP growth in the United States, the euro area, Japan and Canada, which has led the OBR to raise their forecast for UK export market growth. On the other hand, the vote to leave the European Union appears to have slowed the economy, but by less than expected immediately after the referendum – thanks in part to the willingness of consumers to maintain spending by reducing their saving.

Despite this global tailwind, the OBR still expect UK GDP growth to continue to ease – to 1.5 per cent in 2018 and 1.3 per cent in 2019, before picking up slowly over the remaining years of the 5 year forecast. This reflects the OBR current assumption that the economy is operating a little above its potential – reflecting signals from a variety of business surveys and early indications of pay settlements growth in 2018 – and the expectations of monetary policy tightening priced into financial markets.

CPI inflation reached 3.1 per cent in November 2017, which the OBR expect to have been its local peak. The OBR assume that the unwinding of last year's sterling-driven rise in import prices will bring inflation down to around 2 per cent relatively quickly and that it will remain close to that level – the government's inflation target.

The OBR continue to expect employment growth to slow over the next five years from the strong rates seen in much of the post-crisis period. This reflects their view that unemployment is currently just below its sustainable rate and that the ageing of the population will place downward pressure on the overall participation rate.

The OBR forecasts continue to be based on broad-brush assumptions about the economy and public finances after the UK's exit from the EU, pending a meaningful basis upon which to predict the precise end-point of the Brexit negotiations. One area where sufficient clarity is now available to be more specific relates to the financial settlement – the 'divorce bill' – that the UK will pay after leaving the EU on 29 March 2019. The December 2017 joint report by the UK and EU negotiators detailed the components of this settlement. The



## **Appendix 1 (Appendix A)**

Treasury estimated at the time that it would amount to £35 billion to £39 billion. Using assumptions consistent with our central economic and fiscal forecasts, we estimate the settlement would cost £37.1 billion, with around 75 per cent falling due within the OBR's five-year forecast period

### **Government borrowing and spending**

The Government's intention to reduce the UK's current budget deficit and level of debt, through public spending control, continues to be well documented, through its recent Spending Review and Budget announcements.

Borrowing is forecast to continue falling from 2018-19 onwards, with the deficit dropping below 2 per cent of GDP for 2018-19 and below 1 per cent of GDP in the final year of the forecast (2019-20).

### **Changes to local government financing**

Over the last few years, a number of local government financing mechanisms have become embedded in the Councils' overall funding framework. For example:

- a share of business rates growth is now retained locally by the councils, and by a Suffolk "pool";
- the councils set council tax discounts locally, rather than eligible residents receiving council tax benefit;
- the New Homes Bonus; and
- the funding of Disabled Facilities Grants from the Better Care Fund.

It is expected that each of these mechanisms will continue in 2019-20 and beyond, although each is subject to further changes by central government.

Local government is now funded from four main taxation/finance settlement sources; council tax, revenue support grant, new homes bonus and a share of business rates income. Council tax income continues to be the main source of funding, in total value, for local authorities. Council Tax income represents around 12% of West Suffolk's annual income.

Of particular interest in the recent government's spending announcements in this area are:

- The previous main revenue support grant to local government will be phased out by 2019-20
- The New Homes Bonus (now based on a 4 year payment, from the previous 6 years) growth baseline will be maintained at 0.4% but continues to be under review.
- Consultation will continue in 2019 on changes to the local government finance system to pave the way for the implementation of 75% business



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rate retention by 2020-21. Including a review of local authorities' needs and resources to enable a new funding system to be devised.

- The council tax referendum level (the level at which council tax can be increased) is currently set in line with inflation at 3% or £5, whichever is the higher amount.

The changes to local government finance form part of the government's devolution agenda, by reducing local authorities' reliance on central government, and encouraging greater self-sufficiency. West Suffolk continues to work with other authorities in East Anglia to consider the longer term implications of these changes for the future shape of local government and economic growth in the region.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

West Suffolk Councils financial position is based on our financial circumstances, local demand and opportunities. The 'summary of our financial positions' section of this document details our financial standing. The following section provides an overview of the local context in which the Council operates.

#### **The local economy**

##### **1) Economic growth**

Our geographical position means while we are very much part of the county of Suffolk, we are also part of the wider Cambridge economy and the A14 and A11 transport links tie us into the wider geography of East Anglia for key issues.

We play a significant part in the Cambridge Housing Sub-Region as well as the New Anglia LEP and the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough LEP. Councillors recognise the opportunities this creates and are committed to maximising them but there is also recognition that this proximity brings challenges as well, including high house prices and rental levels alongside demand for housing that is not being supplied within the Cambridge area.

##### **2) Better housing**

West Suffolk is facing increasing demands for housing both in the public and private sectors. There is a need to ensure housing is affordable whether to rent or buy, which is challenging in an area with historically low wages and pressures on house rental prices. We recognise the need not only for more homes but also a range of different types of housing suitable for the varying needs for our growing and ageing population as well as homes to suit local demand from first time buyers, those that are retiring, and sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

##### **3) Families and communities**

When measured at the local authority level, the population of West Suffolk appear to be relatively affluent, and experiencing lower levels of deprivation and social upheaval than many other parts of the country. However, this overall



picture masks pockets of real deprivation in certain wards and a wider lack of social mobility.

### **Increase in service demands**

West Suffolk serves a population of 177,400 across a predominantly rural area in the heart of East Anglia.

The 2001 Census showed that the number of residents over 65 in West Suffolk was slightly below the national average. Improved health and wellbeing has shown an increase in ageing population both nationally and in West Suffolk. The 2011 census showed percentage of over 65s in West Suffolk had risen to 17.97%; this is now above the national average and projected to increase. Many older people bring a wealth of experience and skills which they are willing to share voluntarily throughout their retirement, and these opportunities need to be developed. Some older people need extensive support to continue living independent lives and this inevitably creates pressures on all public sector services.

West Suffolk has also experienced a period of sustained increase in demand for some of the key services it provides to the most vulnerable members of the community, particularly within housing and our homelessness service.

West Suffolk faces challenges around closing the gaps in educational attainment across the area. While some schools are performing well, some still face challenges in raising educational attainment.

Education is just one element of the complex social issues which have significant rural deprivation impacts on how we fund and deliver council services. As well as individual families, there are a number of neighbourhoods in West Suffolk where communities are experiencing real difficulties on a day-to-day basis. Many of the issues facing our residents today are not picked up in statistical analyses, such as loneliness and isolation, a lack of practical support, or mental health problems.

At the same time, our residents expect the public sector to match, or exceed, service levels delivered by the private sector. Council tax is the only visible tax – others are hidden, for example, in VAT on purchases or through pay as you earn (PAYE) deductions from salaries. People expect value for their council tax and prompt, professional and seamless services. The new customer service arrangements are transforming our delivery but need resourcing for support systems, such as an efficient, easily accessible and transactional website where people can access services any time of day.



**Challenges and opportunities within the changing local government financing regime**

The Government's new arrangements for funding local government present local authorities with a higher degree of uncertainty and risk than the previous arrangements. On the other hand, local authorities are now more able to control the level of funding they receive, due to the links to new commercial or housing development that they encourage and incentivise in their local areas. This presents West Suffolk with both challenges and opportunities as the new arrangements bed down.

**Funding reductions**

West Suffolk has already faced significant cuts in Government funding with revenue support grant (£4.3m in 2014-15) being phased out completely by 2020.

A sustainable future for West Suffolk in the face of funding cuts and spending pressures is dependent upon continuing to change the way we think about funding local government and how we manage the system.



### RESPONDING TO THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

West Suffolk Council's response to the financial challenges and opportunities are based on six key themes. These themes were developed for the previous MTFS and will continue from 1 April 2019, as they represent an appropriate response to the ongoing financial situation:

1. Aligning resources to West Suffolk's strategic framework and essential services;
2. Continuation of the shared service agenda and transformation of service delivery;
3. Behaving more commercially;
4. Considering new funding models (e.g. acting as an investor);
5. Encouraging the use of digital forms for customer access; and
6. Taking advantage of new forms of local government finance (e.g. business rate retention).

#### **1. Aligning resources to the West Suffolk strategic framework and essential services**

Continuing in this MTFS, is the approach of allocating resources in line with the priorities set out in the West Suffolk Strategic framework 2018-2020, which is available here

[https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/policies\\_strategies\\_and\\_plans/strategic\\_framework.cfm?aud=council](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/policies_strategies_and_plans/strategic_framework.cfm?aud=council), and essential services. This theme helps to identify areas of West Suffolk's work which could either be scaled back or where (either individually or together) further opportunities for the generation of income could be pursued. The budget-setting process focuses on these non-priority areas, and challenges whether West Suffolk should continue with the activities either at all, or in their current form, in order to ensure they provided value for money to council taxpayers.

The links to the changing role of local government from direct provision and reaction to enabling and preventing, as part our Families and Communities Strategy for West Suffolk, will also start to inform the allocation of the individual council's available resources. The strategy builds from two key assumptions.

- Changing needs – challenging definitions of poverty and deprivation and also the presumption of public services' role as meeting needs rather than developing and working with the assets within communities.
- Preventing and reducing demand – there are fewer resources and a history of rising demands on public services; we cannot resolve this challenge by trying to do the same things with less money.



**2. Continuation of the shared service agenda and transformation of service delivery**

The shared service agenda has already delivered in excess of £4 million per year in savings for West Suffolk which is in addition to other local savings. The creation of a new single West Suffolk Council adds a further £850k per year savings and efficiencies to this success. West Suffolk shares a number of services with neighbouring councils including HR and ICT support to the Anglia Revenue Partnership and legal support services with Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils and will continue to explore further opportunity for sharing services where appropriate.

A number of Business Process Re-engineering reviews were carried out during 2016-19 and the recommendations from these continue to be implemented. In particular, these reviews have resulted in the further integration of customer facing systems (e.g. customer records management) with back-office systems, to allow customers to complete transactions online. Business Process Re-engineering reviews will also continue to be carried out in 2019-20 to ensure further streamlining and efficiencies can be achieved.

The Business Partner model will continue to be operated through the MTFS period, whereby corporate or support services provide specialist support and expertise to all service areas and project teams.

West Suffolk is involved in a programme of Suffolk-wide working, supported by funding from central Government, through the Transformation Challenge Award. This work aims to integrate work by public sector partners across the Suffolk "system" so as to improve the lives of Suffolk residents and achieve savings for council tax payers. As well as working with those within the public sector "system", we are also continuing to work in partnership with local communities, enabling them to support themselves.

The Councils are also working with partners to maximise the opportunities offered by the Government's devolution agenda for example by working in partnership with the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and considering where responsibilities best sit within the Suffolk "system".

**3. Behaving more commercially**

Over the last few years more commercial behaviours have begun to be embedded in key parts of the councils' work, with implications for the councils' finances. On the one hand, a number of savings have been achieved as a result of more business-like behaviours, and on the other hand, significant additional income has been generated in some service areas. Behaving more commercially will therefore continue to be a key theme running through the work needed to deliver our outcomes and a sustainable MTFS.



### 4. Being an 'investing authority' and considering new funding models

The West Suffolk council will continue its work on being an "investing authority" over the period 2019-21. The West Suffolk councils have had a long tradition of investing in their communities in support of the delivery of their strategic priorities, in particular to aid economic growth across West Suffolk.

Depleting capital and revenue reserves and increased pressure on external funding mean that the Council will need to consider investing away from the traditional funding models such as using their own reserves. Instead focus is now on the use of:

- making loans, securing the return of the council's funds;
- joint ventures, sharing the investment required; or
- borrowing, introducing new funds into West Suffolk.

The financing of the chosen funding model itself is a challenge, with limited reserve balances available in the medium to longer term. In order to generate new cash into the authorities and to enable our continued ambition of being an 'investing authority' means that borrowing, in order to create new cash, is something that West Suffolk is willing to consider, in appropriate circumstances.

There are ample precedents which demonstrate that prudential borrowing has become a valuable tool for local government to achieve its strategic objectives. The use of unsupported borrowing (no security to a particular council asset) is both flexible and relatively straightforward.

With this in mind and as borrowing is likely over the medium to long term for both authorities, it is considered prudent to assess each investment opportunity/project on the basis of borrowing and its cost, assessing each project on an equal playing field regardless of their timings within the MTFS or the funding model used.

There are two annual costs associated with borrowing:

- servicing the debt – the interest payable on the loan; and
- repayment of the loan/capital – effectively through a minimum revenue provision (MRP) into the revenue account.

At the time of writing this plan, these costs would be in the region of 2.81% interest (based on a Public Works Loan Board –PWLb, rate over 25 years) and 4% MRP, and therefore in order to assess each project on a level playing field a target 10% internal rate of return (IRR) will be set in order to cover the cost of borrowing (loan rate to be determined). Naturally a change in interest rate or MRP rate would change the target rate of IRR.

The choice of funding model for each investment opportunity/project will be based on its individual merits, financial return/costs including the comparison to



## **Appendix 1 (Appendix A)**

the agreed target internal rate of return and overall risk exposure, considered as part of each business case. Any decision to invest or borrow would be subject to full scrutiny by councillors, through the usual democratic process.

### **5. Encouraging the use of digital forms for customer access**

The ongoing implementation of our Customer Access Strategy is also an important part of our next phase of development and is inextricably linked to the need for commercial thinking and wider savings programme. The single customer support team created in 2013 continues to embed the benefits of both integrated first-point-of-contact support and promoting channel shift.

There will always be some customers who cannot or do not want to access our services online – whether because they have limited access to the internet, or because they are unfamiliar with this technology. These customers will always be able to reach us in the traditional way. Our goal, though, is to encourage those people who can do their business with us online to do so.

In addition to making customer contact easier to handle, this solution can automate many of the duplicated tasks council employees normally perform when handling customer contact, thereby reducing call times and improving the quality of service.

### **6. Taking advantage of new forms of local government finance (e.g. business rate retention)**

During the period covered by the MTFS, the new forms of local government finance will continue to be the key sources of income for councils. West Suffolk will therefore take the opportunity, through its service delivery and other MTFS themes mainly 'behaving more commercially' and being an 'investing authority', to grow our own funding through a strong, and growing, local economy alongside the skills, infrastructure and housing to sustain it.



**OUR APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

The councils regularly engage with residents, businesses, community groups and interest groups through a range of consultation mechanisms. Sometimes these are formal exercises, for example, public consultations or public meetings, and sometimes they are more informal, for example, focus groups, community engagement within localities and stakeholder liaison on a topic by topic basis. Our overall aim is to carry out timely and proportionate consultation that is available in an accessible format for everyone who wants to give us their views on a particular matter. Details of current and closed consultations by the councils are available here:

<http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/consultations/>



## SUMMARY OF OUR FINANCIAL POSITIONS

### REVENUE STRATEGY AND BUDGET SUMMARY

The approach taken to financial management over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- keeping council tax low and at an affordable level;
- delivering the necessary savings and income generating activities to continue to live within our means;
- continuously improving efficiency by transforming the ways of working;
- making prudent budget provisions for the replacement of key service delivery assets such as waste freighters, ICT systems;
- ensure that the financial strategy is not reliant on contributions from working balances; and
- maximising revenue from our assets.

### Key budget assumptions within the MTFS

There are limitations on the degree to which West Suffolk can identify all of the potential changes within its medium term financial projections. It is important to remember that these financial models have been produced within a dynamic financial environment and that they will be subject to significant change over time. However the revenue position as currently forecast is summarised below in table 1 and detailed further in Appendix 1

#### Table 1: Annual savings

***[Table to be inserted as part of detailed budget process]***

West Suffolk's medium term financial projections include the following key budget assumptions, detailed in table 2 below. Budget assumptions continue to be reviewed as more accurate information becomes available.

#### Table 2 : Key assumptions in the MTFS

***[Table to be inserted as part of detailed budget process]***

### General Fund balance

West Suffolk is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the authority. The reserves we hold can be classified as either working balances – known as the general fund balance, or as specific reserves which are earmarked for a particular purpose – known as earmarked reserves.

West Suffolk holds a general fund balance as a contingency to cover the cost of unexpected expenditure or events during the year. West Suffolk's policy regarding the level of general fund is as follows, to hold a balance of:



- £**TBC**m for West Suffolk Council.

This amounts equate to approximately **TBC**% of net expenditure at the 2019/20 budget level.

### Earmarked Reserves levels

West Suffolk holds earmarked reserves, which are earmarked for a particular purpose and are set aside in order to meet known or predicted future expenditure in relation to that purpose. The planned use of working balances over the period covered by this strategy is shown in Appendix 3.

Based on existing contributions the levels of earmarked reserves at the end of **TBC** are expected to be as follows:

- £**TBC**m for West Suffolk.

West Suffolk Council makes prudent budget provisions for the replacement of key service delivery assets. Table 3 below summarises these annual provisions within the revenue budgets.

### Table 3: Annual revenue provisions

***[Table to be inserted as part of detailed budget process]***

### Investment Framework

With the emphasis on 'investing' in key strategic projects to support the delivery of our priorities, it is important that West Suffolk sets out its approach to considering each project on its own merits alongside a set of desired collective 'investing' programme outcomes. This is particularly important when set against the backdrop of continued financial challenges for local government associated with medium to long term funding uncertainties.

In **TBC** West Suffolk adopted a the West Suffolk Investment Framework which sets out the desired collective 'investing' programme outcomes to support staff and members throughout the initial development stages to the decision making stages of our key strategic projects, particularly those that require the Councils to invest.

The Investment Framework also supports the Council's compliance with its capital strategy and 'The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Code)' and sets out the links with a number of the Council's strategic documents and policies including its Treasury Management Strategy and Code of Practice.



### Treasury management

West Suffolk's capital and revenue budget plans inform the development of its Treasury Management Strategy, which is agreed annually as part of its budget setting report. The Treasury Management Annual Strategy details; who the Council can invest with and the maximum amount that can be invested, alongside the Council's borrowing requirements and sources. The Strategy can be found on the council's website ***(West Suffolk Strategy under development - link to be provided at the end of the MTFS)***.

### Risk management

In setting the revenue and capital budgets, West Suffolk takes account of the known key financial risks that may affect its plans. In addition, the impacts of varying key assumptions in the medium term financial strategy are modelled to assess the sensitivity of the indicative budget figures, as detailed at Appendix 5 ***[TBC]***. This informs decisions about the level of working balances needed to provide assurance as to the robustness of the budget estimates.

As West Suffolk changes direction, begins to operate in new ways and seeks new opportunities, the type of decisions we are now having to make will feel unfamiliar, more complex and could carry greater risks. For example, the council's increasing focus on investment and on new delivery vehicles requires decisions that bring new risks and opportunities into play.

***[TBC]*** West Suffolk adopted a positive approach to risk (link provided at the end of the MTFS) based on seven core principles as detailed below. Our approach considers risk on a case by case basis and is documented at all stages.

- A positive approach;
- Contextual decision making;
- Informed risk-taking;
- Proportionate;
- Decision risks vs delivery risks;
- A documented approach; and
- Continuous improvement



## CAPITAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET SUMMARY

### Summary position

The Capital Strategy, attached at **attachment X** sets out the Council's approach to the allocation of capital resources. Appendix 2 shows the 10 year planned capital expenditure for 2019/20 to 2028/29, together with information on the funding of that expenditure (i.e. grants and contributions, use of earmarked revenue reserves and usable capital receipts reserve).

The Capital Strategy is supported by the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Plan (**West Suffolk Strategy under development - link to be provided at the end of the MTFS**) which includes an objective to optimise the Council's land and property portfolio through proactive estate management and effective corporate arrangements for the acquisition and disposal of land and property assets.

During 2018/19, the capital programme has been reviewed taking into account both the strategic framework and priorities for West Suffolk detailed in its Strategic Framework, and the six key themes of the Council's response to the challenges and opportunities highlighted within this MTFS.

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance and matters relating to the affordability of the Capital Programme are detailed in Appendix 4.

### Capital Receipts

An essential part of the funding arrangements for the capital programme is the disposal of surplus assets. The Council has an agreed programme of asset disposals (**West Suffolk Strategy under development - link to be provided at the end of the MTFS**). Table 4 is a summary estimate of the likely level of income from asset disposals over the period 2019/20 to 2028/29.

#### Table 4: Estimated income from asset disposals 2019/20 to 2028/29

**[Table to be inserted as part of detailed budget process]**

### Capital Reserves

Following the transfer of the local authority housing stocks, the West Suffolk council have previously had extensive capital programmes covering the last 10-15 years. These programmes have predominately been funded from the Councils' housing stock transfer capital receipt or through the use of new capital receipts from the sale of other Council assets. Table 5 is a summary estimate of the likely level of capital reserve balance over the period 2019/20 to 2028/29.



**Table 5: Estimated capital reserve balance 2019/20 to 2028/29**

***[Table to be inserted as part of detailed budget process]***

**Capital Investment – Alternative sources of funding**

The West Suffolk Councils have a long tradition of investing in their communities.

Depleting capital and revenue reserves and increased pressure on external funding pots mean that West Suffolk will have to consider funding options away from the traditional investment methods. Instead focus is now on the use of;

- making loans, securing the return of the Councils' funds;
- joint ventures, sharing the investment required; or
- borrowing, introducing new funds into the Council.

Investment opportunities will be subject to a business case and risk assessment to ensure that the decision to implement the project is sound and that the Council can afford the long terms implications of each project. With this in mind, each business case that comes forward will make reference to a target 10% internal rate of return in order to cover the potential cost of borrowing.



### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

#### **Actuarial valuation**

An independent report of the financial position of the Pension Fund that is carried out by an actuary every three years. Reviews the Pension Fund assets and liabilities as at the date of the valuation and the results of which, including recommended employer's contribution rates, the Actuary reports to the Council.

#### **Baseline funding level**

The amount of a local authority's start-up funding allocation which is provided through the local share of the estimated business rates aggregate (England) at the outset of the scheme as forecast by the Government. It forms the baseline against which tariffs and top-ups will be calculated.

#### **Budget Requirement**

The Council's revenue budget on general fund services after deducting funding streams such as fees and charges and any funding from reserves. (Excluding Council Tax, RSG, New Homes Bonus and Business Rates).

#### **Business rate retention scheme**

The Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced by Government from April 2013 is intended to provide incentives for local authorities to drive economic growth, as the authorities will be able to retain a share of the growth that is generated in business rates revenue in their areas, as opposed to the previous system where all business rates revenues are held centrally.

Under the scheme local authorities were also allowed to form pools for the purposes of business rates retention. Both West Suffolk authorities signed up along with the other Suffolk Authorities and the County Council to be designated as a Suffolk pool from April 2013.

In 2018 the Government announced ten new 100% business rate pilot schemes, the Suffolk authorities were successful in being one of those pilots.

#### **Capital expenditure**

Spending on assets that have a lasting value, for example, land, buildings and large items of equipment such as vehicles. Can also be indirect expenditure in the form of grants to other persons or bodies.

#### **Capital Programme**

Councils plan of future spending on capital projects such as buying land, buildings, vehicles and equipment.



### **Capital Receipts**

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets. Capital receipts can be used to finance new capital expenditure but cannot be used to finance revenue expenditure.

### **CIPFA**

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. One of the UK accountancy institutes. Uniquely, CIPFA specialise in the public sector. Consequently CIPFA holds the responsibility for setting accounting standards for local government.

### **Collection fund**

A statutory account maintained by the council recording the amounts collected from council tax and Business Rates and from which it pays the precept to the major precepting authorities.

### **Collection Fund surplus (or deficit)**

If the Council collects more or less than it expected at the start of the financial year, the surplus or deficit is shared with the major precepting authorities - Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Police Authority.

### **Contingency**

Money set-aside centrally in the Council's base budget to meet the cost of unforeseen items of expenditure, such as higher than expected inflation or new responsibilities.

### **Council Tax Base**

The Council Tax base for a Council is used in the calculation of council tax and is equal to the number of Band D equivalent properties. To work this out, the Council counts the number of properties in each band and works what this equates to in terms of Band D equivalent properties. The band proportions are expressed in ninths and are specified in the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

### **General Fund Balance**

The main unallocated reserve of the Council, set aside to meet any unforeseen pressures.

### **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

GDP is defined as the value of all goods and services produced within the overall economy.

### **Gross expenditure**

The total cost of providing the Council's services, before deducting income from Government grants, or fees and charges for services.



### **Individual authority business rates baseline**

Derived by apportioning the billing authority business rates baseline between billing and major precepting authorities on the basis of major precepting authority shares.

### **Local share of Business rates**

This is the percentage share of locally collected business rates that will be retained by local government. This is currently set at 50%. At the outset, the local share of the estimated business rates aggregate is divided between billing authorities on the basis of their proportionate shares.

### **Net Expenditure**

Gross expenditure less services income, but before deduction of government grant.

### **National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR)**

Also known as 'business rates', Non-Domestic Rates are collected by billing authorities such as West Suffolk Council and, up until 31 March 2013, paid into a central national pool, then redistributed to authorities according to resident population. From 2013-14 local authorities will retain 50% of the value of any increase in business rates. The aim is to provide an incentive to help businesses set up and grow.

### **New Homes Bonus**

Under this scheme councils receive a new homes bonus (NHB) per property for the first four years following completion. Payments are based on match funding the council tax raised on each property with an additional amount for affordable homes. It is paid in the form of an unringfenced grant.

### **Precept**

The precepting authority's council tax, which billing authorities collect on behalf of the major preceptor

### **Prudential Borrowing**

Set of rules governing local authority borrowing for funding capital projects under a professional code of practice developed by CIPFA to ensure councils' capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

### **Referendum**

Power under which the Government may limit the level of council tax increase year on year. Any major precepting authority in England wanting to raise council tax by more than 3% or £5 whichever is the higher amount, must consult the public in a referendum. Councils losing a referendum would have to revert to a lower increase in bills.



**Revenue Expenditure**

The day-to-day running expenses on services provided by Council.

**Revenue Support Grant (RSG)**

All authorities receive Revenue Support Grant from central government.

**Risk Management**

We define risk as being uncertainty of outcome, whether relating to 'positive' opportunities or 'negative' threats / hazards. Our new, positive approach to risk is based on context, proportionality, judgement and evidence-based decision making that considers risk on a case by case basis and is documented at all stages. We will be joined-up in our decisions, and will draw on one another's skills and experience to take responsibility for sound and reasonable decisions about the use of public funds, avoiding a blame culture when things go wrong.

<http://westsuffolkintranet/howto/risk-management.cfm>

**Section 151 officer (or Chief Financial Officer)**

Legally Councils must appoint under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 a named chief finance officer to give them financial advice, for West Suffolk councils case this is held by the post holder of Assistant Director (Resources and Performance).

**Specific Grants**

Funding through a specific grant is provided for a specific purpose and cannot be spent on anything else. e.g. Housing Benefits.

**Spending Review**

The Spending Review is an internal Government process in which the Treasury negotiates budgets for each Government Department.

**Suffolk Business Rate Pool**

All district/borough councils in Suffolk, along with Suffolk County Council have created the Suffolk Business Rates Pool. The pooling of business rates across Suffolk will:

- through its governance arrangement ensure no individual council is financially any worse off for being in the Suffolk pool;
- maximise the proportion of business rates that are retained in Suffolk;
- benefit the wider communities within the county led by the Suffolk Leaders' collective vision for a 'Better Suffolk';
- provide incentives for councils to work together to improve outcomes for Suffolk.

**Tariffs and top-ups**

Calculated by comparing an individual authority business rates baseline against its baseline funding level. Tariffs and top-ups are fixed at the start of the scheme and index linked to RPI in future years. West Suffolk is a 'tariff' authority.



**Treasury Management**

Managing the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments to support the councils finances. ***Details are set out in the Treasury Management Strategy which will be considered and approved by Cabinet and Council in February.***





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# Capital Strategy 2019-21



***NOTE: THE DETAILED NUMBERS WILL BE COMPLETED AS PART OF THE 2019-20 BUDGET SETTING PROCESS (CONCLUDED IN FEBRUARY 2019), ALONG WITH ALL REFERENCED TABLES AND LINKS.***



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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Capital Strategy has been developed in line with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities 2017. This is a working document, officers will keep under review both as the government makes clear its intended outputs for such a strategy and as good practice is worked through amongst local authorities during 2018/19.

This Capital Strategy seeks to provide a framework within which the Council's capital investment plans will be delivered. West Suffolk has a number of agreed strategies, frameworks, policies and guidance to support its capital and investment decisions. This strategy seeks to reference these from a single document.

Adherence to the principles of this Capital Strategy should ensure that capital expenditure and investment decisions are taken in line with the West Suffolk strategic framework and Medium Term Financial Strategy and take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. This Capital Strategy has been written in conjunction with the Council's Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2018/19.

## **AIMS OF THE CAPITAL STRATEGY AND ITS LINKS TO THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK, BUDGET FRAMEWORK AND ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

This Capital Strategy is intended to give a high-level overview of how capital expenditure and financing plans are decided upon and how they contribute to the delivery of the Council's Strategic Framework, Medium Term Financial Strategy and overall service delivery.

With our West Suffolk Strategic priorities, statutory and discretionary responsibilities and increasingly complex demands on the Council's services, investment activity covers many areas over and above the normal treasury management of our cash balances and borrowing.

These investments will have a broad range of objectives ranging from behaving commercially investments intended to deliver a financial return to support service delivery to investments in our communities and places that have a primary objective of improving health, housing, growth or other outcomes.

The Capital Strategy must also align to the Asset Management Strategy (which is currently in development). The Asset Management Strategy presents a framework for strategic management of the Council's land and property portfolio, reflecting corporate priorities, aims and objectives, our commitment to the One Public Estate Principles and driving transformational change in service delivery.



## MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY - CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The summary for Capital expenditure on Projects for West Suffolk Council is set out within the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy (***include link***).

***[Summary of capital plans to be provided here]***

## THE PRUDENTIAL CODE

This Capital Strategy draws together the framework for capital investment decisions. The strategy for funding this investment portfolio is underpinned by the Prudential Code for Local Authority investment, which was introduced by the Local Government Act 2003.

The Prudential Code has the following key objectives:

- That capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable
- That treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice
- That local strategic planning, asset management and proper option appraisal are supported

To demonstrate that these objectives have been fulfilled, the Prudential Code details the indicators that must be set and monitored. These are designed to support and record local decision-making, and not to be comparative performance indicators. The Prudential Indicators are approved annually as part of the budget setting process by Council (***West Suffolk document under development - link to be provided***).

## TREASURY MANAGEMENT

For the purposes of this document, "Treasury Management Activities" are defined as:-

"The management of the Local Authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of the optimum performance consistent with those risks."

The West Suffolk approved Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy (***West Suffolk document under development - link to be provided***) links to the Capital Strategy and programme in determining the Council's approach to borrowing and investment, including borrowing to fund capital expenditure. The Treasury Management Strategy is closely related to the Prudential Code and Prudential Indicators discussed above.

The Authority has an integrated Treasury Management Strategy, and has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services. The Treasury Management Strategy deals with borrowing and investment arising as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the authority, not exclusively those arising from capital spending.



The Treasury Management Code of Practice lays out the Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) that have been adopted by the Council and the indicators that will be used to ensure that the correct approach is taken to:

- Risk management
- Performance measurement
- Decision making and analysis
- Approved instruments, methods and techniques
- Organisation, clarity and segregation of responsibilities and dealing arrangements
- Reporting requirements and management information arrangements
- Budgeting, accounting and audit arrangements
- Cash and cash flow management
- Money laundering
- Training and qualifications
- Use of external service providers
- Corporate governance

The detail behind each of these can be found within the Council's approved Treasury Management Code of Practice (West Suffolk document under development - link to be provided).

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Capital Strategy is supported by the Council's Asset Management Strategy and Plan (***West Suffolk Strategy under development - link to be provided***) which includes an objective to optimise the Council's land and property portfolio through proactive estate management and effective corporate arrangements for the acquisition and disposal of land and property assets.

### **GROWTH INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

This strategy covers investments in projects that support our Strategic Framework priorities and objectives, particularly around our economic growth priority, and fall outside of standard treasury management activities.

This strategy has been devised in order to meet the following aims:

- Ambitious vision for the towns and rural communities of West Suffolk. Set out in the Strategic Framework 2018-2020.
- Delivery on capital and revenue investment to deliver our growth agenda.
- All our activities and duties are investments in our communities and our places, seeking to create positive returns from all we do.
- Behaving more commercially – seeking financial returns to invest in our communities.
- Seeking blended returns across social, economic and financial investments.





This is laid out in more detail in the West Suffolk Growth Investment Strategy (**[Link to be provided](#)**). As part of our agreed approach, Councillors agreed to prepare investment plans for West Suffolk’s places which will be approved by Cabinet and will enable the consideration of investment opportunities in relation to the different characteristics of our market towns and rural areas.

## CAPITAL EXPENDITURE GOVERNANCE FOR PROJECTS

Projects that are identified that will support our Strategic Priorities and Medium Term Financial Strategy are assessed against our approved Investment Framework and are required to go through an approval process prior to accessing any capital funding. This approval is subject to the Council’s democratic decision making process, but each proposal is required to go through a rigorous process of evaluation and scrutiny prior to reaching a formal council report.

The project evaluation, assessment framework and business case development stages will focus on the following areas for each proposal:

- strategic fit
- deliverability within existing resource commitments
- risk profile
- added value
- financial return

An opportunity will be rejected at any stage if it is not appraised by councillors as an appropriate investment decision, for example, it doesn’t have sufficient strategic fit or bears an imbalance between investment, risk and returns.



As projects are developed, they require production of:

- Project Initiation Document
- Stakeholder engagement analysis
- Risk log
- Issues log
- Lessons learned log
- Detailed project plan including delivery and decision timetable and resource requirements.

During implementation, project plans, risk registers and financial schedules are reviewed monthly and a Project Status Report (PSR) is submitted to the Programme Office support team, each month. Any significant variance from any component of the plan is elevated for review by the Council's officer Leadership Team.

The overall capital programme is monitored monthly by the officer Leadership Team and reported to Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis highlighting forecast variances to plan in terms of investment.

### AFFORDABILITY

Affordability is critical in applying the Capital Strategy and assisting the decision making process when considering projects for inclusion into the Capital programme.

All projects need to have a clear funding source with commitment for the entirety of the projects. Funding can come from:

- Capital receipts
- Borrowing
- Revenue Reserves
- Use of leasing
- External Grants
- A s106 agreement, where one has been agreed for the site

Where external borrowing is to be used the affordability is of greater importance as the interest costs and capital repayment of that borrowing need to be considered and included in the evaluation.

The current and projected debt and affordability position of West Suffolk Council is shown below.

<b><i>To be updated as part of the 2019-20 budget process</i></b>	Actual 31/03/18	Forecast 31/03/19	Forecast 31/03/20	Forecast 31/03/21
External Borrowing				
Annual Interest payable				
Annual repayment cost (MRP)				
Annual Interest				



payable as % of net revenue budget				
Annual repayment cost as % of net revenue budget				

## PROPORTIONALITY

The concept of proportionality, alongside that of affordability, is a key consideration when considering funding projects through borrowing.

The costs and risks associated with that borrowing should be looked at as part of the whole financial position of the council. Awareness of the scale and relationship with the asset base and revenue delivery is essential to informed decision making.

This relationship and trend between borrowing, asset base and yield from the investments that the council has made are laid out in the tables below. These are split by asset type.

<b><i>To be updated as part of the 2019-20 budget process</i></b> 2019-20	Borrowing	Borrowing as % of Long Term Assets	Annual Income	Income as % of Net Revenue	Annual Surplus/Deficit	Surplus/Deficit as % of Net Revenue
Industrial Units						
Retail Units						
Other Investment Property						
Project A						
Project B						
Project C						
Project D						
Project E						
TOTAL						

<b><i>To be updated as part of the 2019-20 budget process</i></b> 2020-21	Borrowing	Borrowing as % of Long Term Assets	Annual Income	Income as % of Net Revenue	Annual Surplus/Deficit	Surplus/Deficit as % of Net Revenue
Industrial Units						
Retail Units						
Other Investment						



**Appendix 1 (Appendix B)**

Property						
Project A						
Project B						
Project C						
Project D						
Project E						
TOTAL						

These tables show the increase in borrowing required over the life of the MTFS to fund the capital projects currently in plan. It also shows that this borrowing is still <X% [TBC] of our asset base and that will supply [TBC] % of our ongoing annual revenue.

This position will be monitored on a regular basis and referred to when any new projects that require borrowing are proposed. This will provide key insight on the proportionality and affordability of each new project within the context of the whole portfolio and financial position of the council

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Our approach to risk, as set out in our approved risk management framework, is based on context, proportionality, judgement and evidence-based decision making that considers each capital investment project on a case by case basis and is documented at all stages, following the following core principles:

- a positive approach
- contextual decision making
- informed risk-taking
- proportionality
- decision risk vs delivery risk
- documented decision
- continuous improvement

## **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The capital expenditure carried out in the year is reflected in the Balance Sheet of the Statement of Accounts ensuring stewardship of assets is demonstrated.

The accurate monitoring and recording of capital expenditure ensures that this document is free from material error. The Statement of Accounts is externally audited at the end of each financial year to certify that it presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council.

## **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY**

The manner in which capital monies are spent is determined by the Procurement Strategy, which along with the Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations, set the framework for the supply of goods and services to the Council, and how these goods and services should best be obtained to secure value for money.



**LINKED DOCUMENTS** [to be completed included summary explanation and links]:

Asset Management Strategy and Plan  
Growth Investment Strategy  
Investment Framework  
Medium Term Financial Strategy  
One Public Estate  
Prudential Code  
Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2018/19  
Treasury Management Code of Practice  
Strategic Framework



# Shadow Executive (Cabinet)



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>West Suffolk - Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/2020</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EXC/SA/18/003</b>	
<b>Report to and dates:</b>	<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet)</b>	10 July 2018
	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:</b>	Stephen Edwards <b>Tel:</b> 07904 389982 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk">stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk</a>	Ian Houlder <b>Tel:</b> 01284 810074 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk">ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Lead officer(s):</b>	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) Telephone: 01638 719245 Email: <a href="mailto:rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk">rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To consider and review the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) and proposals to take effect from 1 April 2019.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that, subject to the approval of Shadow Council, the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) approves the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for West Suffolk to take effect from 1 April 2019 as attached at Appendix A and as detailed in Section 5 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/003.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>  <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> 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"/> As it is a decision of full Council.	
<b>Consultation:</b>	No changes to the current scheme are proposed for 2019/20	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	As detailed in the body of the report	
<b>Implications:</b>		
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> As outlined in the body of the report	



Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Each year the Council is required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This report advises Cabinet about the conclusion of the 2018 annual review and the resultant proposals for the LCTRS scheme to take effect from 1 April 2019.	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Officers have previously completed an Equality Impact Assessment for the current scheme and no equality concerns were highlighted.	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
<b>Reduction in collection rates</b> Council Tax collection rates could decrease over the year, reducing the scheme revenues	High	ARP closely to monitor non-payment from working age claimants.	Medium
<b>Demand</b> There is a risk of a higher demand on the LCTR Scheme.	Medium	ARP to closely monitor caseload and expenditure. The major precepting authorities will share the financial risks associated with LCTRS. Representatives from West Suffolk, other Suffolk billing authorities and Suffolk County Council are continuing to work together to monitor the county-wide framework.	Medium/Low
<b>Hardship</b> The changes to the scheme may create financial hardship for some claimants.	Low	This scheme has been in place since 2013 with limited hardship requests through the exceptional hardship fund which continues to be available under the scheme. ARP to monitor impact to claimants.	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All wards	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018/2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Heath DC – <a href="#">CAB.FH.17.062</a></li> <li>• St Edmundsbury BC – <a href="#">CAB.SE.17.068</a></li> </ul>	



**Documents attached:**

**Appendix A** – West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Section 13a Policy  
*(Note: due to the size and technical nature of this Appendix, this has not been attached to this report, but can be viewed in the electronic version of these agenda papers, via the link below:*  
[Shadow Executive \(Cabinet\) - 10 July 2018](#)  
*under Report No: EXC/SA/18/003)*

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## 1. Background

- 1.1 Since 1 April 2013, St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council have operated a Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) to replace the previous, centrally administered Council Tax Benefit (Reports SEBC D224 and FHDC COU13/610 provide further background). The West Suffolk scheme continues to be aimed at:
- making provision to protect vulnerable people; and
  - supporting work incentives for claimants created by the Government's wider welfare reform.
- 1.2 St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath's initial schemes for 2013-14 required working age claimants to pay 8.5% more of the council tax charge than previously. This requirement has been continued over the subsequent 5 financial years, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19. St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath also protected War Pensioners (pensioners are protected by the Government changes) from the reduction in maximum benefit and removed Second Adult Rebate for working age claimants.
- 1.3 St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath both developed a LCTRS that mirrored the previous Council Tax Benefit rules. The scheme pays maximum benefit of 91.5% for working age claimants, previously 100%, and otherwise is, in most areas, the same as the default prescribed LCTRS scheme applied to pensioners. It should be noted the old Council Tax Benefit scheme and rules complied with protections for vulnerable groups, including the disabled, to mitigate the effects of child poverty, duty to prevent homelessness as well as the Equality Duty (see background paper A 'Vulnerable People Key Local Authority Duties').
- 1.4 Each year the Council is required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This report advises Cabinet about the conclusion of the 2018 annual review and the resultant proposals for the LCTRS to take effect from 1 April 2019 under the new West Suffolk Council.

## 2. Scheme Review – Financial Impact

- 2.1 Table 1 below, shows the collectible council tax for all cases that has at some point in the year received a discount under the LCTRS, alongside the amount collected to date. The debit shown includes the whole amount charged for the year including the discounted periods. Table 1 also shows the overall council tax performance for both Council's and the amount collected.

<b>Table 1. St Edmundsbury</b>			
	<b>Debit raised</b>	<b>CTax collected</b>	<b>% collected</b>
<b>Council Tax 2016/17</b>	£56,969,268	£55,979,435	98.26
<b>LCTRS awarded 2015/16</b>	£5,229,556		84.4
<b>LCTRS awarded 2016/17</b>	£5,131,461		84.9



<b>LCTRS awarded 2017/18</b>	£4,988,775		82.40
<b>LCTRS Caseload</b>	<b>April 2016</b> 6,366	<b>April 2017</b> 6,103	<b>April 2018</b> 5,808

<b>Table 2. Forest Heath</b>			
	<b>Debit raised</b>	<b>CTax collected</b>	<b>% collected</b>
<b>Council Tax 2016/17</b>	£27,359,646	£26,549,477	97.04
<b>LCTRS awarded 2015/16</b>	£3,037,812		84.7
<b>LCTRS awarded 2016/17</b>	£2,966,663		84.1
<b>LCTRS awarded 2017/18</b>	£2,933,791		81.0
<b>LCTRS Caseload</b>	<b>April 2016</b> 3,838	<b>April 2017</b> 3,613	<b>April 2018</b> 3,545

- 2.2 Council Tax accounts, where there has been a period of LCTRS awarded, show lower collection rates against those without LCTRS and the initial target of 90%. As expected collection has partly relied upon a significant increase in arrangements to deduct Council Tax from Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) Benefits.
- 2.3 West Suffolk Councils continue to see year on year reductions in LCTRS caseload. A very small number of LCTRS customers have also received Housing Benefit reductions attributed to the Welfare Reform changes since April 2013, namely the Spare Room Subsidy Restriction and the Benefit Cap, with little demand for Exceptional Hardship payments.

### **3. Behavioural and Administrative impacts**

- 3.1 The Councils aim in designing the scheme was to achieve a balance in charging an amount of council tax to encourage customers back in to work whilst setting the amount charged at an affordable and recoverable level.
- 3.2 By setting the amount payable at 8.5% of the charge, in most cases, where a customer is not paying we can affect recovery through attachment to benefit within a year and so, the charge with costs is recoverable. If the amount payable was much higher then it is likely that debt would not be recoverable and there would be a danger of creating a culture of non-payment of council tax.
- 3.3 The Joseph Rowntree Trust has released data concerning councils' schemes where higher charges have been passed on to customers. This evidence suggests that volumes of calls, reminders and summons are still at the high levels and so the cost of recovery is higher and recovery in a year will become more difficult where customers default.



- 3.4 The New Policy Institute released a report highlighting that nationally Council Tax arrears have risen by 13%, particularly for councils requiring customers to pay more than 8.5%, whilst councils who retained a 100% scheme have seen a decrease in uncollected tax. (To report CAB/SE/16/065 and CAB/FH/16/060)

#### **4. Setting the 2019-20 scheme**

- 4.1 Councils are required to review their LCTRS schemes annually. The annual deadline for Billing authorities to set and agree their local Council Tax reduction schemes is 11 March of the preceding year.
- 4.2 Where councils seek to amend their scheme it will be necessary to consult/engage preceptors and stakeholders in order to inform final scheme design by 28 February of the preceding year.

#### **5. Proposals for the 2019-20 scheme**

- 5.1 Based on the overall findings of the scheme review outlined above in sections 2 and 3 of this report. The recommendation is to bring the current schemes into a new West Suffolk scheme for 2019/20 with the following areas continuing.

<b>Scheme Area</b>	<b>2018/19 LCTRS Forest Heath</b>	<b>2018/19 LCTRS St Edmundsbury</b>	<b>Proposed 2019/20 LCTRS West Suffolk</b>
Working age claimants minimum contribution	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%
Protection of war pensioners	Yes	Yes	Yes
Removal of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Adult rebate for working age claimants	Yes	Yes	Yes
Applicable amounts to determine scheme value for claimants	2015 rates linked to annual DWP uprating	2015 rates linked to annual DWP uprating	2015 rates linked to annual DWP uprating
Harmonised with DWP welfare reforms	Yes	Yes	Yes
Links to the award of Universal Credit for new claimants	Yes	Yes	Yes

- 5.2 Further details on background to each of the table descriptions can also be found in report CAB/SE/17/068 and CAB/FH/17/062.
- 5.3 An applicable amount is the amount the Government says a family needs to live on each week. When the applicable amount has been calculated it is then compared with an applicants' income to work out the Council Tax Reduction entitlement for which the applicant is eligible.
- 5.4. Due to the fact that the LCTRS is not changing from the current individual Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury schemes there is no requirement to undertake consultation.



**6. Other options considered but discounted**

- 6.1 Increasing customer contribution rate to more than 8.5% – the possible increase in Council Tax collected for the Council is considered to be less than the additional costs of recovery (additional recovery staff, postage and enquiries to customer services), including the inability to recover the debt in year by deduction from DWP benefits. Such an approach will have a negative impact on Council Tax collection as detailed in the findings at CAB/SE/17/068 and CAB/FH/17/062.

**7. Equality and Diversity**

- 7.1 The existing LCTRS scheme continues the DWP's previous Council Tax Benefit scheme conventions established over many years, regarding protections for vulnerable groups, including children, the disabled and the Armed Forces. The impact assessment has not raised additional concerns about the impact of the proposed scheme on groups with protected characteristics.



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# Shadow Executive (Cabinet)



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums Changes</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EXC/SA/18/004</b>	
<b>Report to and dates:</b>	<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet)</b>	10 July 2018
	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:</b>	Stephen Edwards <b>Tel:</b> 07904 389982 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk">stephen.edwards@forest-heath.gov.uk</a>	Ian Houlder <b>Tel:</b> 01359 250912 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk">ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) <b>Tel:</b> 01638 719245 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk">Rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To agree the West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums from 1st April 2019.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that, subject to the approval of Shadow Council, the Shadow Executive (Cabinet):</b>  <b>1) Approves the West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Second Homes set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004, from 1st April 2019.</b>  <b>2) Approves the West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes – Empty Property Reliefs as set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004, from 1st April 2019.</b>	



		<b>3) Subject to the coming into force of legislation accordingly on 1 April 2019, approve an additional 50% Council Tax premium on long term properties raising the current premium to 200% as set out in Section 1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/18/004.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b> <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> 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"/>	
<b>Consultation:</b>		As set out in the main body of the report.	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>		A scheme that is less or more favourable could be considered however these were discounted as set out in the main body of the report.	
<b>Implications:</b>			
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> As set out in the body of the email.	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None as a result of this report	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None as a result of this report	
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adoption of these technical changes will ensure a single approach across the West Suffolk Council</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Screening Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed changes, has been carried out and no equality concerns were highlighted.</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
Risk of new guidelines not being implemented by staff	Low	Training and guidance given to staff	Low
Changes may result in substandard properties coming onto the market	Medium	Keep under review through housing standards team. Experience in St Edmundsbury hasn't seen this risk materialise.	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All Wards	



<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included):</i>	Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2018/2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Heath – <a href="#">CAB.FH.17.063</a></li> <li>• St Edmundsbury – <a href="#">CAB.SE.17.069</a></li> </ul>
<b>Documents attached:</b>	None

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# 1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

## Background

- 1.1 Since April 2013, Councils have the discretion to charge up to 100% for some previously exempt properties, to charge up to 100% in respect of furnished empty properties (usually referred to as holiday homes), to charge up to 100% in respect of second homes and to charge up to 50% empty homes premium for properties that had been empty for over 2 years. These discretions are described in this and previous council reports as the 'Council Tax Technical Changes'.
- 1.2 In offering these new powers the Government were seeking to influence owners to bring empty homes back in to use as well as the ability for councils to increase council tax income.
- 1.3 As part of the 2017 government budget it was announced that the Government would be implementing new flexibilities in respect of charging an additional 50% Council Tax on long term empty property premiums. Whilst this flexibility is not in place at this moment in time, it is anticipated that this will come into effect on 1 April 2019. Once in force, these powers will provide local authorities with the ability to implement a scheme that would enable 200% Council Tax charge on properties that have been empty for longer than 2 years (deemed as a long term empty property).

## The current position and proposed approach

- 1.4 The following table sets out the differences between the current schemes and the approach proposed for West Suffolk Council.

	Forest Heath	St Edmundsbury	West Suffolk
Empty, substantially unfurnished	100% discount for 1 month	100% discount for 1 week	100% discount for 1 week
Empty, unfurnished and undergoing major repairs to render habitable	30% discount for 12 months	10% discount for 12 months	10% discount for 12 months
Second homes	0% discount	0% discount	0% discount
Long Term empty homes premium (property empty more than 2 years)	150% charge	150% charge	200% charge

- 1.5 As the second homes element is already aligned it is proposed that this continues into the West Suffolk Council.



**Recommendations for alignment of empty property reliefs and new long term empty property premium**

- 1.6 It is proposed that in terms of the empty property reliefs that the following objectives are set for the new scheme. The scheme should:
- not be rewarding landlords for having properties left empty
  - take the Councils' Financial context into account
  - be capable of being supported by the major preceptors (Suffolk CC and Police)
- 1.7 In order to deliver against these objectives, particularly to have less empty properties within our overall borough/ district housing stock, it is proposed that the new West Suffolk Council adopts the empty property reliefs set out in section 1.4.
- 1.8 The empty & unfurnished proposal would allow landlords effectively five weeks in order to establish a new tenant. The rationale behind this is that typically one months' notice is provided as part of the tenancy agreement and a further one weeks exemption allows five weeks for a landlord to be able to find, new tenants and prepare the property ready for a new tenancy. It is worth reminding Members that Council Tax due on a property available for rent is eligible to be deducted from the cost of operating that business model by the landlord as a taxable deduction.
- 1.9 It is worth noting that the above proposals in respect of the empty properties will not impact registered social landlords as they currently receive a Class B exemption which gives them six months empty time period in order to turn around a void property.
- 1.10 It is proposed that the new West Suffolk Council adopts the new additional 50% premium flexibility that is available on long term empty properties in order to continue to support our ambitions to bring empty properties back into use as soon as possible and to incentivise landlords to do so by adding financial penalties through the additional premium to long term empty properties.
- 1.11 Councils around the East of England vary in how long an exemption they give for empty and unfurnished properties. Fenland District Council, for example, does not offer any exemption; Babergh District Council offers a 25% discount for three months; and East Cambridgeshire offers a one month exemption. For empty and uninhabitable properties, practice around the East of England also varies, from no discount in Fenland to 50% discount for one year in Breckland District Council.

**2.0 Modelling the proposed changes and Potential Other Options**Empty & Unfurnished Relief

- 2.1 The cost of the current scheme across the West Suffolk Councils totals £271,000 per annum. The revised cost of moving to a one week scheme is £130,000. Although this creates a saving, it is worth noting that the scheme cost is to all major preceptors, the district/borough share is around 11-12% of this total cost.



- 2.2 The average days void for Forest Heath is 36 days and 28 days for St Edmundsbury. A one week scheme would support around 1800 accounts (approximately 25% of all empty West Suffolk property accounts) based on the 2016/17 data.
- 2.3 An example of the potential financial implication of the proposed new scheme - A landlord who rents out a 3 bed Band D property in Mildenhall attracts a £1,683.34 Council Tax charge a year, and receives £18,000 in rent. The property lies empty between tenants for a month. At the moment, the current scheme would offer a council tax discount of £140.28, with no payment due by the landlord during the month the property sat empty. Under the proposed changes, a council tax discount of £32.37 would be given, leaving £107.91 due by the landlord during the month the property sat empty.
- 2.4 The move to a 1 month exemption across West Suffolk would cost £402,000 per annum, an additional cost of £131,000 per annum to the major preceptors. In terms of our objectives, this option wouldn't demonstrate a strong strategic fit. It doesn't incentivise empty properties back into use, it adds to the Council financial challenges and is unlikely to be supported by other precepting authorities.

Empty, unfurnished and undergoing major repairs to render habitable

- 2.5 The two current West Suffolk councils schemes cost a total of £20,000 per annum. The revised cost of moving to 10% discount for 12 month scheme being £10,000. It is worth noting that the scheme cost is to all major preceptors, the district/borough share is around 11-12% of this total cost. The same number of accounts would be entitled to the relief, the impact would be a reduction in the level of that relief from 30% to 10%.
- 2.6 The move to a 30% discount for 12 months across West Suffolk would cost £31,000 per annum, an additional cost of £11,000 per annum to the major preceptors. In terms of our objectives, this option wouldn't demonstrate a strong strategic fit. It doesn't incentivise empty properties back into use, it adds to the Council financial challenges and may not be supported by other precepting authorities.

### **3.0 Engagement**

- 3.1 In order to test the draft proposals, and ensure they didn't have any unintended consequences, or disproportionate impacts on particular groups, a link to the web pages that explained the changes was sent to key stakeholder groups (as listed below) along with an email address for responses. The information was also circulated to all Members.
- 3.2 Key stakeholder groups contacted were:
- Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
  - RAF Lakenheath and Mildenhall (due to the US Visiting Forces' reliance on the private rented sector in West Suffolk)
  - West Suffolk Lettings Partnership
  - West Suffolk Landlords Forum
  - Letting Agents



- 3.3 In order to allow a reasonable time for responses to be made, the engagement period will continue beyond the circulated date for this report. Comments received from stakeholder will be reported orally at the meeting in order to inform the discussion.
- 3.4 By the time of writing this report, one response had been received from a councillor, highlighting concerns that the change to the time period for council tax discounts will result in poorer quality properties being put on the market for rent. This concern should be mitigated by landlords being able to plan ahead to have repairs carried out between tenancies, and where longer vacant periods were required, being able to plan ahead to absorb the costs. Where there were problems with housing standards, this would be addressed by the Council's housing standards team through advice and enforcement action where necessary.
- 3.5 Poorer housing quality had also not been the experience in St Edmundsbury, where the exemption period of 1 week had not resulted in a noticeable rise in housing standards complaints.
- 3.6 A verbal update will be provided at the meeting where further responses have been received through the engagement process.



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# Shadow Council



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) Draft Recommendations for new Electoral Arrangements for West Suffolk Council</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>COU/SA/18/008</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Shadow Council</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:</b>	Not applicable – electoral matters are not an executive function.	
<b>Lead officers:</b>	<p>Fiona Osman Electoral Services Manager <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757105 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:fiona.osman@westsuffolk.gov.uk">fiona.osman@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Ben Smith Programme Manager: Single Council Implementation <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757101 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ben.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk">ben.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a></p>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	The purpose of this report is to consider the draft warding proposals for West Suffolk Council. This includes an assessment of where the LGBCE option differs to the options that were submitted by the West Suffolk Councils.	



<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>It is recommended to the Shadow Authority that:</b>  <b>(1) The Head of Paid Service be authorised to prepare and submit the Shadow Authority's observations and any new local evidence in respect of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations for electoral arrangements for West Suffolk Council before the deadline on 27 August 2018; taking account the views of the Future Governance Steering Group and any additional representations received from Councillors; and</b>  <b>(2) All interested parties, including individual Councillors, are encouraged to make their own direct consultation responses to the LGBCE.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The West Suffolk Shadow Authority is being consulted on the proposed ward boundaries that have been published by the LGBCE.</li> <li>• The West Suffolk councils consulted extensively when producing their own options for the LGBCE to consider.</li> <li>• Members are encouraged to submit their own responses to the consultation directly to the LGBCE.</li> </ul>	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Shadow Authority could decide not to respond to the consultation on the draft warding pattern. The Shadow Authority is recommended not to follow this option as it would lead to the LGBCE producing a warding pattern that did not consider the Council's own views on community identity and effective local government.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implications:</b>		
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
The LGBCE produces a warding pattern that does not take into account the wishes of the Shadow Authority and its communities	Medium	Subject to approval, the Shadow Authority will respond to the draft recommendations	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		West Suffolk Council – Electoral Review (St Edmundsbury Council on 24 April and Forest Heath Council on 25 April) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- St Edmundsbury:  <a href="https://democracy.westsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/s27385/COU.SE.18.010%20West%20Suffolk%20Council%20-%20Electoral%20Review.pdf">https://democracy.westsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/s27385/COU.SE.18.010%20West%20Suffolk%20Council%20-%20Electoral%20Review.pdf</a> </li> <li>- Forest Heath:  <a href="https://democracy.westsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/s27439/COU.FH.18.012%20West%20Suffolk%20Council%20-%20Electoral%20Review.pdf">https://democracy.westsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/s27439/COU.FH.18.012%20West%20Suffolk%20Council%20-%20Electoral%20Review.pdf</a> </li> </ul>	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		<b>Appendix 1</b> – New electoral arrangements for West Suffolk Council – draft recommendations <b>Appendix 2</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – rural wards <b>Appendix 3</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – Brandon wards <b>Appendix 4</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – Bury St Edmunds wards <b>Appendix 5</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – Haverhill wards <b>Appendix 6</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – Mildenhall wards <b>Appendix 7</b> – LGBCE draft recommendations – Newmarket wards	



## **1. Background**

- 1.1 West Suffolk Council will be created as a new district-level Council on 1 April 2019, replacing the district-level councils for Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury (the councils). A new set of wards need to be created for the West Suffolk Council before the first elections are held in May 2019.
- 1.2 Recognising that different viewpoints existed, the Future Governance Steering Group developed a number of options for the West Suffolk wards which took into account a community survey that was undertaken in January and February 2018, and a consultation on ward options during March 2018. Following consideration by the councils, the revised ward options were submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to be included as part of the electoral review of the West Suffolk district to be conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).
- 1.3 The LGBCE have now issued their draft recommendations and the consultation will be open until **27 August 2018**. The draft recommendations report, interactive maps and details of how to respond to the LGBCE consultation can be viewed here: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk>.
- 1.4 The LGBCE recommendations show that careful consideration has been given to the options put forward by the West Suffolk Councils as well as the submissions made by local groups, residents and individual Members.

## **2. Draft Recommendations**

### **2.1 Number of councillors**

The LGBCE has based their draft recommendations on a council size of 64 Members (eight fewer than the current arrangements for Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury councils). This is in line with the proposed council size which was considered and agreed at Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury council meetings in October 2017 and should therefore be welcomed by the Shadow Authority.

### **2.2 Rural wards (pages 20-36 of Appendix 1)**

The LGBCE report has divided the rural wards into five areas and they have proposed to adopt the West Suffolk councils 'Option A' for all rural wards, with the exception of the area covering the Rushbrooke with Rougham parish. The LGBCE is proposing to include an area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish, from Lady Miriam Way in the west to Sow Lane in the east and north of the A14, within the ward of Moreton Hall.

The LGBCE has proposed a single Member ward for Manor and a two-member ward for Icení but had also considered an alternative warding pattern of a combined Icení and Manor ward with three-Members. They have asked for submissions regarding this area.



*See Appendix 2 – Comparison of rural wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options*

2.3 Brandon wards (page 12 of Appendix 1)

The LGBCE has proposed to adopt the West Suffolk Councils 'Option C' with minor amendments to the three wards. Officers are seeking clarity on a discrepancy in the Brandon wards as the LGBCE draft recommendations report refers to Coronation Place being included in a proposed 'Brandon Central ward' whereas the interactive map shows that it is in the proposed 'Brandon West ward'.

*See Appendix 3 – Comparison of Brandon wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options*

2.4 Bury St Edmunds wards (page 14 of Appendix 1)

The LGBCE considered that the West Suffolk Councils 'Option F1' provided the most suitable warding pattern for Bury St Edmunds and they have based their draft recommendations on this option.

They have made a number of changes to this Option and these are detailed in Appendix 4. The main change proposed is with the councils' proposed wards for 'Moreton Hall East' and 'St Nicholas' in the "F1" scheme. The LGBCE felt that the Moreton Hall area could form a single ward represented by three Members, as this, in their view, would follow strong and identifiable boundaries, as well as still providing good levels of electoral equality. The remaining electors from the West Suffolk councils' proposed 'St Nicholas ward' could then be represented by a single Member. Please note that they have named this 'Eastgate ward' as it follows the existing boundary for the Eastgate ward of St Edmundsbury Borough Council. The draft recommendation for the Moreton Hall ward also includes part of the North ward of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish (up to Sow Lane) in the Moreton Hall ward.

The LGBCE has noted that a variety of ward names had been put forward and they would welcome comments on the ward names proposed in the draft recommendations.

*See Appendix 4 – Comparison of Bury St Edmunds wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options*

2.5 Haverhill wards (page 18 of Appendix 1)

The LGBCE concluded that the West Suffolk councils' 'Option H' provided the best reflection of the statutory criteria. Some minor amendments have been made to the Haverhill North, South and West wards and these are detailed in Appendix 5.

*See Appendix 5 – Comparison of Haverhill wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options*

2.6 Mildenhall wards (page 10 of Appendix 1)



The LGBCE considered that the West Suffolk Councils' 'Option I' provided for stronger and more identifiable boundaries. There are some proposed amendments to the West Suffolk Councils' option in the Great Heath and Queensway wards. These are detailed in Appendix 6 and the LGBCE has indicated that they would welcome submissions regarding these amendments.

*See Appendix 6 – Comparison of Mildenhall wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options. See also Para 3.4 below regarding West Row.*

## 2.7 Newmarket wards (page 8 of Appendix 1)

The LGBCE has based their draft recommendations on the West Suffolk Councils' 'Option L' as it provides for strong and identifiable boundaries and keeps the town centre area in one ward. They have made an amendment to one boundary between Newmarket East and Newmarket North wards as detailed in Appendix 7.

As a number of different ward names for Newmarket wards were suggested in the Councils' options, the LGBCE has requested submissions regarding proposed ward names.

*See Appendix 7 – Comparison of Newmarket wards: LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options*

## **3. Consequential changes to parish warding arrangements**

- 3.1 The LGBCE is required to create parish wards where a district ward or county division boundary runs through a parish area. The LGBCE draft recommendations confirm that changes to parish warding arrangements will be required for the Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Mildenhall, Newmarket and Rushbrooke with Rougham parishes. Details of the proposed electoral arrangements for those parishes are included in the LGBCE Draft Recommendations report (starting on page 37) and maps showing the proposed parish wards are available on their website:

<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk>

- 3.2 The proposed district wards in the Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket and Haverhill parishes are not wholly coterminous with the county division boundaries, and therefore the LGBCE have had to create additional parish wards for those areas. This is a transitional issue for a new long-term scheme and we anticipate that an electoral review of county division boundaries will take place before the next Suffolk County Council elections in 2021. As part of this process the LGBCE will use the new West Suffolk Council ward boundaries as the building blocks for the Suffolk County Council division boundaries in the same way that they have used the parish boundaries as building blocks for the producing the wards for the West Suffolk Council. As a result we would expect that the town council wards would revert to following the district-ward boundaries because the new County division boundaries would follow the same boundary line. However this won't take effect until the next election in 2023.



- 3.3 All of the relevant parish councils have been contacted and asked to provide feedback on these arrangements so that they can be considered by the Future Governance Steering Group and included in the Shadow Authority's response to the consultation.
- 3.4 The Order to create a new parish for West Row in April 2019 is due to be published in the autumn 2018 after the new arrangements have been discussed and finalised with the affected areas. The proposed warding arrangements for the new Council include West Row in The Rows district ward i.e. separate to wards for Mildenhall itself. This is consistent with the creation of a new rural parish. However, the LGBCE have included West Row in the parish warding arrangements for Mildenhall parish. This is a transitional arrangement until such time as the new West Row parish is created and district councils are able to address this through their own Community Governance Review powers.

#### **4. Next steps**

- 4.1 Members are strongly encouraged to respond directly to the LGBCE consultation before the deadline on 27 August 2018.
- 4.2 The main work of the local authorities on the review took place in the earlier stage, culminating in the submission of several unweighted local options which reflected the various, and often conflicting, local views on how a warding scheme should be constructed. Therefore, the main emphasis now is on encouraging local stakeholders to make their own direct responses to the LGBCE before August, and no new local consultation by the Shadow Council itself is proposed.
- 4.3 As a consultee, the Shadow Council, like any other stakeholder, can make its own observations on the recommendations, but its submission will carry no greater weight than that of any individual person or individual. Furthermore, it is worth recognising that there is already a very strong fit between the LGBCE recommendations and some of the options the West Suffolk councils put forward themselves, subject to the variations mentioned previously.
- 4.4 With these factors in mind, the Shadow Council may wish to focus its attention before the end of August on the practical detail of the recommendations, and whether any minor adaptations might improve how they may operate in practice. It may also want to continue to adopt a corporate position of putting forward ideas and options, and recognising all views received, rather than seeking to formally favour one approach over another. Just as with the earlier stage of the process, it is unlikely that there will be complete consensus between members and local communities on some issues, and the LGBCE will have the difficult task of reaching a balanced decision, just as the councils have to with a Community Governance Review.



- 4.5 In terms of preparing a submission, it is recommended that the Chief Executive is again authorised to prepare and submit the Shadow Authority's response by the deadline, particularly if the general approach outlined above is supported by Shadow Authority. As with the earlier stages of the process, it is suggested that a collective Councillor viewpoint is coordinated and considered by the Future Governance Steering Group, alongside the views of individual councillors. The Group is meeting on **27 July 2018**. If Members wish any comments to be provided in advance to the Future Governance Steering Group at this meeting these should be emailed to either Fiona Osman or Ben Smith by **9.00am on Friday 20 July 2018**. ***However, individual Councillors are still encouraged to make a direct submission to the LGBCE.***





# New electoral arrangements for West Suffolk Council

## Draft recommendations

July 2018



## Translations and other formats

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

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# Summary

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

2 Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

## Electoral review

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed
- How many wards or electoral divisions should there be, where are their boundaries and what should they be called
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division

## Why West Suffolk?

4 The Secretary of State has decided to create a new authority of West Suffolk. We are conducting a review of West Suffolk to ensure that the new unitary district council has appropriate electoral arrangements. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal. We also seek to ensure that wards reflect local communities and ensure effective and convenient local government.

## Our proposals for West Suffolk

- West Suffolk should be represented by 64 councillors.
- West Suffolk should have 45 wards.

## Have your say

5 We are consulting on our draft recommendations for an eight-week period, from 3 July 2018 to 27 August 2018. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to contribute to the design of the new wards – the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be when analysing all the views we received.

6 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

**You have until 27 August 2018 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 41 for how to send us your response.**



## What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

7 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

8 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
  - Susan Johnson OBE
  - Peter Maddison QPM
  - Amanda Nobbs OBE
  - Steve Robinson
  - Andrew Scallan CBE
- 
- Chief Executive: Jolyon Jackson CBE

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.



# 1 Introduction

9 In February 2018, the Government approved a bid from Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council to merge. A Local Government Changes Order<sup>2</sup> was subsequently approved by Parliament on 24 May 2018, establishing a new West Suffolk authority from 1 April 2019. It is the view of the Commission that an electoral review of the area was appropriate at the earliest opportunity. This will ensure the new council has electoral arrangements that reflect its functions in time for its first elections in May 2019.

10 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in West Suffolk are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the district.

## What is an electoral review?

11 Our three main considerations are to:

- Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents
- Reflect community identity
- Provide for effective and convenient local government

12 Our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

13 This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
4 May 2018	Existing local authorities submit proposals for warding arrangements and the number of councillors
19 June 2018	Commission agrees its draft recommendations
3 July 2018	Publication of draft recommendations, start of consultation
27 August 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
23 October 2018	Publication of final recommendations

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<sup>2</sup> The West Suffolk (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 (S.I 2018/639).



## How will the recommendations affect you?

14 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.



## 2 Analysis and draft recommendations

15 Legislation<sup>3</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>4</sup> there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

16 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

17 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2017	2023
Electorate of West Suffolk	121,558	131,570
Number of councillors	64	64
Average number of electors per councillor	1,899	2,056

18 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for West Suffolk are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2023.

19 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the new council – these have been decided by Parliament and we cannot amend them. Our recommendations will not result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

### Submissions received

20 See Appendix C for details of the warding submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices by appointment, or on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

### Electorate figures

21 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2023, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2018. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the

<sup>3</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.



electorate of around 8% by 2023, driven largely by development on the fringes of the towns in the district.

22 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations.

## Number of councillors

23 In January 2018, representatives of the existing councils in the area submitted a proposal to The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government that the new Council have 64 councillors. In developing its proposal, the new authority was encouraged by the Ministry to follow our Guidance in developing its proposals. The Secretary of State subsequently laid a Local Government Changes Order in Parliament to create the new authority with 64 councillors.

24 As part of its submission on warding arrangements, the Council confirmed its preference for a council size of 64. We note that the proposal for a 64-member council for West Suffolk would constitute a reduction of 11% in terms of the overall number of councillors representing the area to be covered by the new authority. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that the proposed number of councillors will make sure the Council can carry out its new roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 We have therefore formulated these draft recommendations based on a 64-member council.

## Ward boundaries consultation

26 We received three submissions on ward boundaries for the new council. These included detailed district-wide proposals from Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils, along with submissions from two borough councillors and from a parish council. All of the submissions were based on a pattern of wards to be represented by 64 elected members.

27 The Councils did not submit a single scheme, choosing to submit instead a number of different options for both the rural area and each of the towns in West Suffolk. The Councils also provided, as part of their submission, the comments that had been received during their internal consultation.

28 One of the councillors' submissions focused on the Moreton Hall and Eastgate areas of Bury St Edmunds and explained the community identities of these two areas. Another councillor made a submission that focused on allocating two-councillor wards to urban areas and single-councillor wards to rural areas and focused mainly on Bury St Edmunds. Both of these submissions have been taken into account in the formulation of the draft recommendations as set out below.

29 Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council suggested an alternative ward to the Councils in its area.



30 The district-wide proposals submitted by the Councils provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for West Suffolk. We carefully considered the proposals received and concluded that the proposed ward boundaries would have good levels of electoral equality. We also considered that they generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

31 Our draft recommendations are based on a number of the different options provided to us by the Councils as part of the submission. In some areas of West Suffolk, we have also adopted an alternative warding pattern having taken into account local evidence submitted as part of the Councils' submission, which provided evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries. We also visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of West Suffolk helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

32 Our draft recommendations are for one three-councillor ward, 17 two-councillor wards and 27 one-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

33 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table on page 37 and on the large map accompanying this report.

34 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

## Draft recommendations

35 The tables and maps on pages 8–36 detail our draft recommendations for each area of West Suffolk. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>5</sup> criteria of:

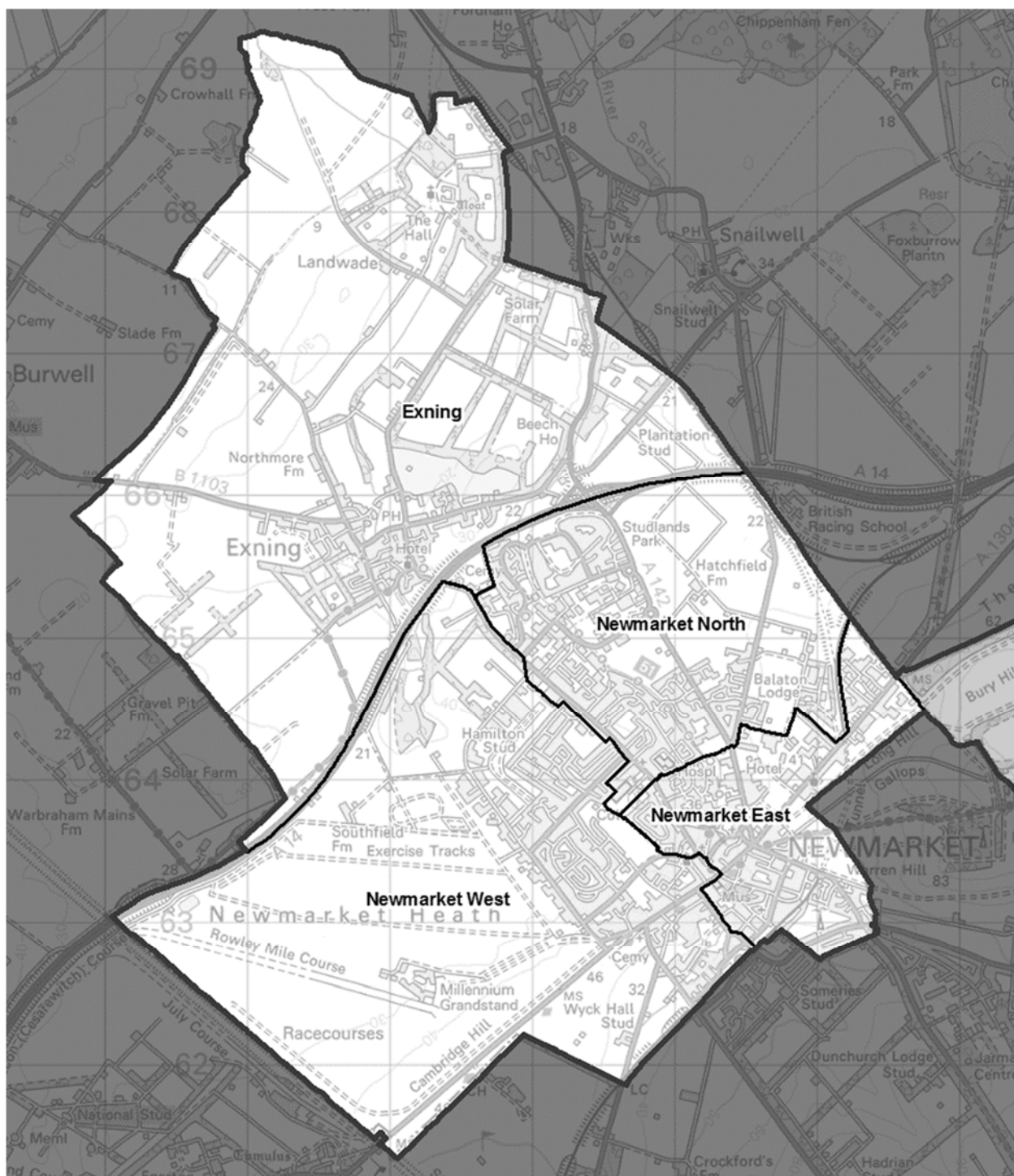
- Equality of representation
- Reflecting community interests and identities
- Providing for effective and convenient local government

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<sup>5</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.



## Newmarket



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Exning	1	-6%
Newmarket East	2	-2%
Newmarket North	2	-6%
Newmarket West	2	-9%



### *Exning*

36 As part of their submission, the Councils proposed to include the parish of Exning, to the north of Newmarket town, in a single-councillor ward. We consider that the proposed ward uses strong and identifiable boundaries and we are adopting this Exning ward, with a variance of -6%, as part of the draft recommendations.

### *Newmarket East, Newmarket North and Newmarket West*

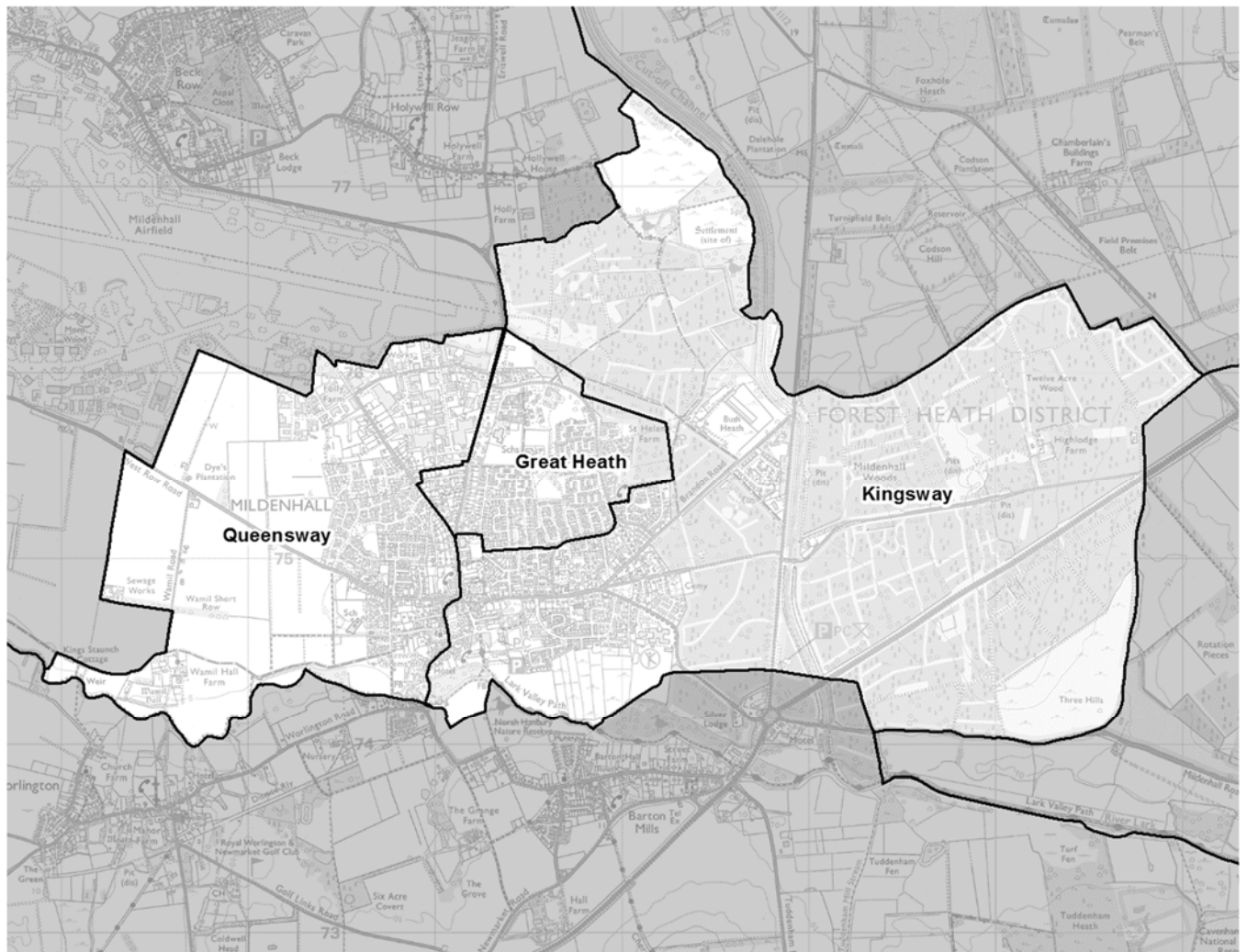
37 As part of their submission, the Councils put forward two options for the town of Newmarket – one proposal for a pattern of six single-councillor wards, and one for a pattern of three two-councillor wards. The submission noted that both schemes encompass distinct housing estates and that the proposed wards all consider the links between neighbouring areas that share community facilities. Support was expressed to the Councils for both options; local councillors argued that both single- and two-councillor wards provide better representation. Newmarket Town Council supported the proposal that created single-councillor wards; however, no evidence was provided to support the proposals, except for support for single-councillor wards. A local resident responded to the Councils' consultation about this area but did not express a view in support of either proposed option.

38 In Newmarket, we are proposing a pattern of three two-councillor wards, based on one of the two proposals submitted by the Councils. We consider that this pattern of wards provides for strong and identifiable boundaries, and keeps the town centre area in one ward. We note that there are a number of different extant communities in Newmarket. However, we consider that it is better to include different communities in the same ward than to split one community into two. We note the Town Council's preference for single-councillor wards in Newmarket; however, we considered that the proposed pattern of two-councillor wards follows stronger and more identifiable boundaries, and provides for better levels of electoral equality. The Commission does not take a preference as to whether single-, two- or three-councillor wards are better, but rather takes decisions on warding patterns based on its three statutory criteria. We are proposing an alteration to the Councils' proposed wards in the east of the town to include the small area of housing south of the railway line in Newmarket East, as we note that these residents would not have access into the rest of a Newmarket North ward.

39 We are proposing to adopt a two-councillor Newmarket East ward with a variance of -2% by 2023, a two-councillor Newmarket North ward with a variance of -6% by 2023, and a two-councillor Newmarket West ward with a variance of -9% by 2023, as part of our draft recommendations, based on an option submitted by the Councils. We note that in their submission to the Councils, Newmarket Town Council suggested a number of different ward names for Newmarket wards. We would therefore particularly welcome submissions regarding the proposed ward names here.



## Mildenhall



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Great Heath	1	0%
Kingsway	1	2%
Queensway	1	5%



### *Great Heath, Kingsway and Queensway*

40 As part of their submission, the Councils put forward two warding pattern options for the town of Mildenhall. One of the proposed options used existing polling district boundaries and divided the town into one two-councillor ward and one single-councillor ward. Two local residents responded to the Councils' consultation stating a preference for this option, with one resident stating that potential development in the south of the town would necessitate the allocation of two councillors to that area in future.

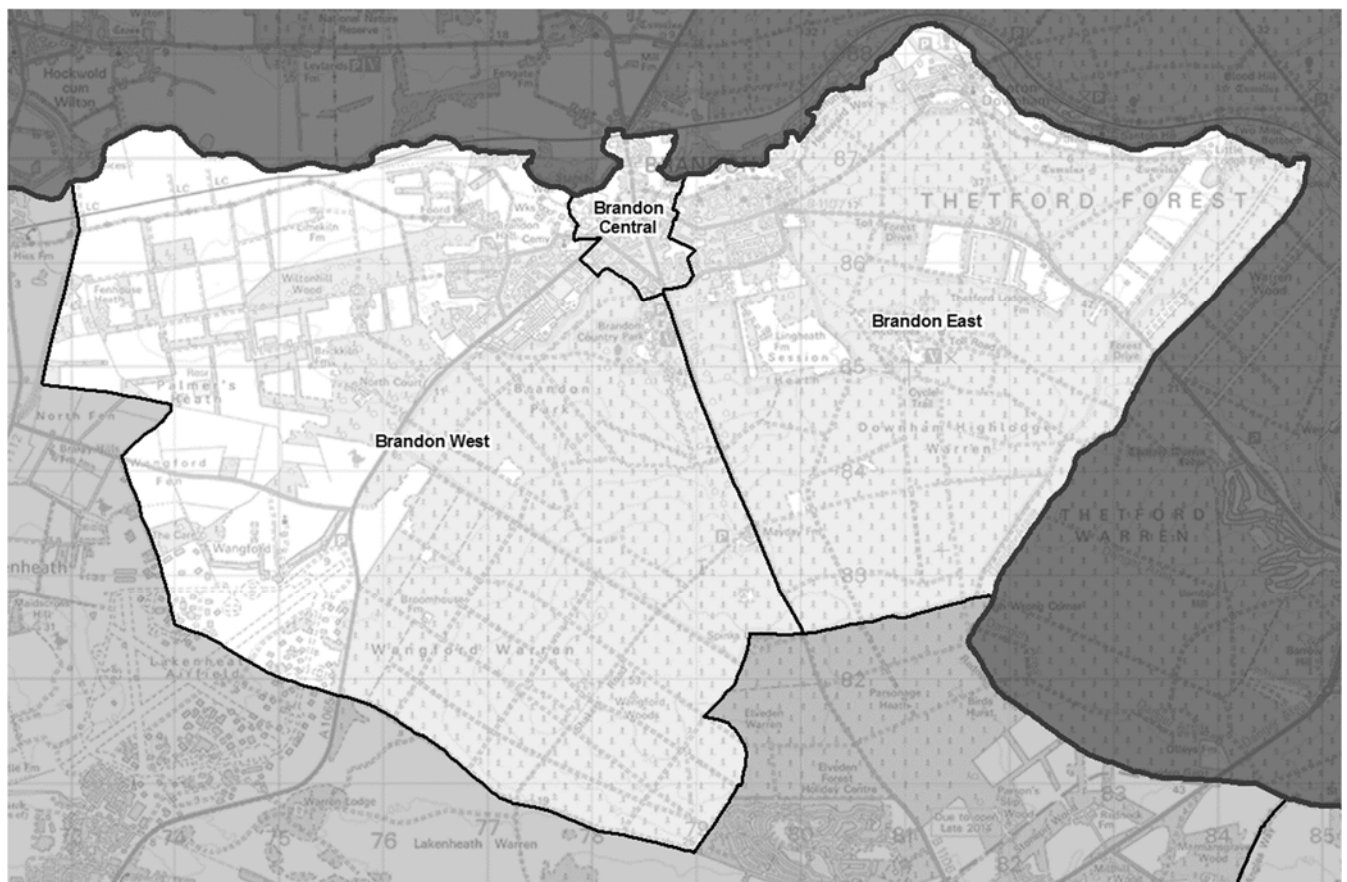
41 The second proposed option put forward by the Councils provided for three single-councillor wards in Mildenhall. Mildenhall Parish Council supported this option, stating that the proposed names of Great Heath, Kingsway and Queensway were acceptable, and that this proposal would facilitate acceptable parish warding arrangements.

42 Both of the proposed schemes provided for acceptable levels of electoral equality in Mildenhall. However, we consider that the option for three single-councillor wards provided for stronger and more identifiable boundaries. We do not consider that the option based on existing polling districts is likely to reflect community identities, as polling districts are rarely a reflection of communities in an area. We are therefore proposing to adopt three single-councillor wards in Mildenhall as part of the draft recommendations, based on the wards submitted by the Councils with one alteration. On our visit to the area, we noted that access to properties on Folly Road can only be gained from the south; in the Councils' proposed warding pattern, the northern part of Folly Road would have no access. We also noted that the Councils' proposed Queensway and Great Heath wards split the industrial estate in the north of the town between two wards, which did not provide for a strong and identifiable boundary. As part of our draft recommendations, we are therefore proposing to use Field Road, the rear of the properties on Junction Road, and the southern part of Folly Road as the boundary between the proposed Queensway and Great Heath wards. We would particularly welcome submissions regarding this amendment during the consultation on the draft recommendations.

43 We are proposing three single-councillor wards in Mildenhall as part of the draft recommendations: a Great Heath ward with a variance of 0% by 2023, a Kingsway ward with a variance of 2% by 2023, and a Queensway ward with a variance of 5% by 2023.



## Brandon



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Brandon Central	1	6%
Brandon East	1	8%
Brandon West	1	9%



*Brandon Central, Brandon East and Brandon West*

44 As part of their submission, the Councils put forward two warding pattern options to cover the parishes of Brandon and Santon Downham. One option was for three single-councillor wards, and one was for one two-councillor ward and one single-councillor ward. Both options would provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality by 2023, and little rationale was provided in support of either option.

45 Brandon Town Council responded to the Councils' consultation stating that their preference was for the three single-councillor wards put forward by the Councils, named Brandon Central, Brandon East and Brandon West.

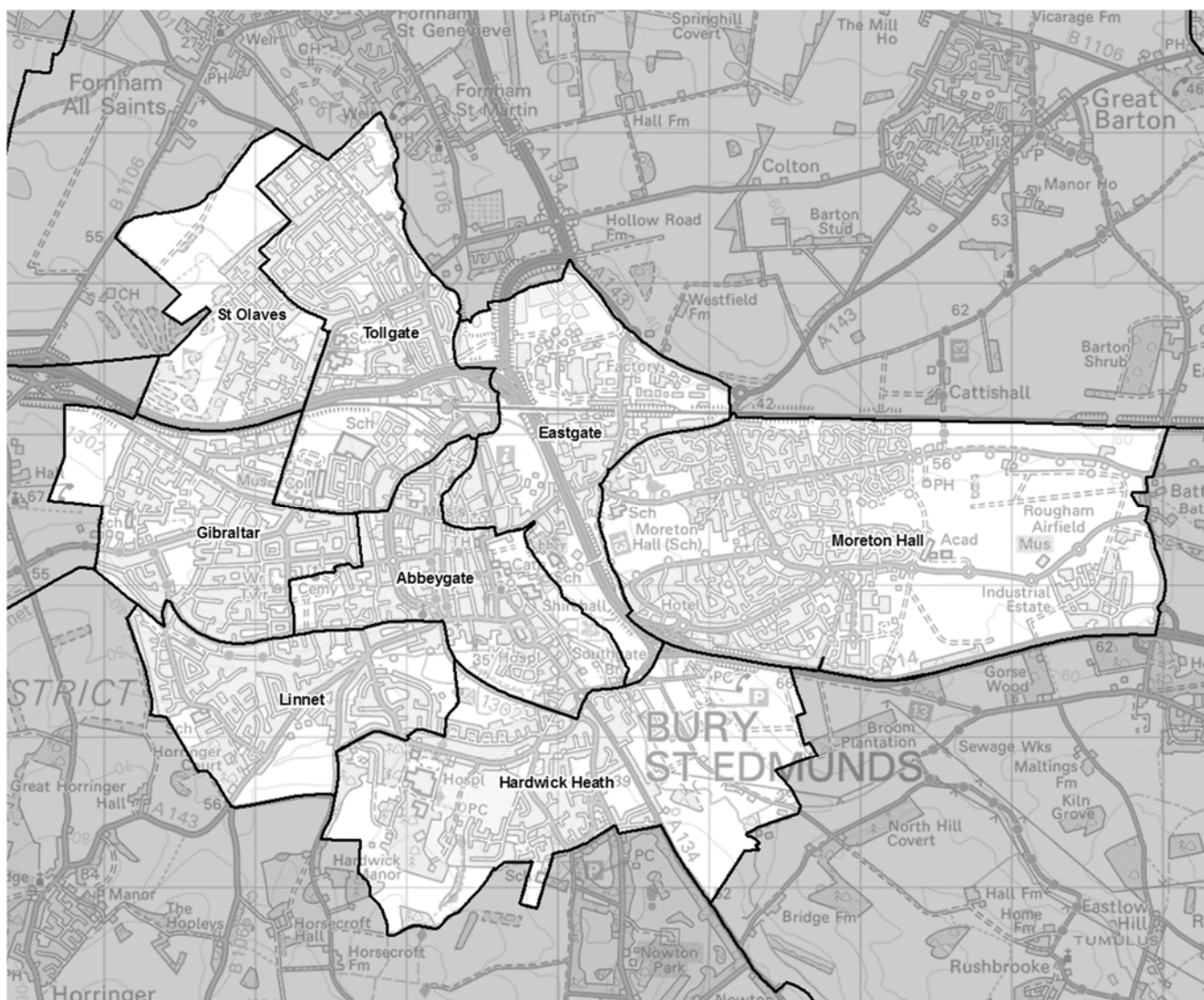
46 Santon Downham Parish Council responded to the Councils' community survey, carried out separately to the consultation process, stating that the residents of the parish use local services in Brandon, and we are therefore content to include the parish in the proposed Brandon East ward.

47 We are proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed three single-councillor wards (Brandon Central, Brandon East and Brandon West) as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that these wards have local support from the Parish Council, as well as following strong and identifiable boundaries, and we have therefore adopted this proposal over the option of one two-councillor ward and one single-councillor ward. We are proposing two amendments to the Councils' proposal; on our visit to the area, we noted that Knappers Way, which the Council had included in their proposed Brandon East ward, was significantly more similar in character to the Brandon Central ward, as well as being separated by an area of trees. We are therefore proposing to include Knappers Way in the proposed Brandon Central ward. We are also making a minor amendment to include Coronation Place in the proposed Brandon Central ward.

48 Subject to this alteration, we are proposing to adopt the Council's Brandon Central, Brandon East and Brandon West wards as part of the draft recommendations. Each of these wards will be represented by one councillor and will have variances of 6%, 8% and 9% respectively by 2023.



## Bury St Edmunds



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Abbeygate	2	-6%
Eastgate	1	-8%
Gibraltar	2	7%
Hardwick Heath	2	-4%
Linnet	2	-5%
Moreton Hall	3	-1%
St Olaves	2	9%
Tollgate	2	1%



*Abbeygate, Gibraltar, Hardwick Heath, Linnet, St Olaves and Tollgate*

49 Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils submitted four separate proposals for Bury St Edmunds. Two of these proposals excluded the new areas of development in the north of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish; however, we considered that this area should be included in a Bury St Edmunds ward, and as such there are two options put forward by the Councils that can be considered as viable warding patterns for Bury St Edmunds.

50 Having considered the options put forward by the Councils, and having taken into account all of the evidence put to the Councils by residents, members, and local groups, we considered that the Councils' Option F1 was the most suitable warding pattern for Bury St Edmunds, as it provided for strong and identifiable boundaries, as well as providing for good electoral equality. We therefore consider that this warding pattern is better than the alternative put forward by the Councils, which did not follow such strong boundaries, particularly in the west of the town. In putting this warding pattern together, the Councils had taken into account all of the submissions received during their consultation. As a result, a number of the comments received by the Councils had already been addressed in the course of putting together the options submitted. We have made a number of minor alterations to the Councils' proposed wards to follow stronger and more identifiable boundaries, and to ensure better levels of electoral equality.

51 Our proposed Abbeygate ward is based largely on the ward put forward by the Councils as part of Option F1. It covers the majority of the town centre, including the Abbey, and is bounded in the south by the A1302, in the west by West Road, and in the east by No Man's Meadows. In the north, we have amended the Councils' proposed ward to include the Long Brackland area. This both improves electoral equality and allows for the retention of the existing single-councillor Eastgate ward to the east. We have also amended the Councils' proposal to include West Suffolk College and the surrounding area in the proposed Tollgate ward to the north. This amendment allows for access onto Fen Way; under the Councils' proposed boundaries, there was no strong access from the rest of the Tollgate ward into Fen Way. Accordingly, we are proposing a two-councillor Abbeygate ward, with a variance of -6%, as part of the draft recommendations.

52 Our proposed Gibraltar, Hardwick Heath and Linnet wards are based on those put forward in one of the Councils' options – Option F1, as outlined above. We are proposing to include the western part of Winthrop Road in the proposed Gibraltar ward to avoid the creation of an unviable parish ward in this area. We considered that the Councils' proposals for three two-councillor wards here followed clear and identifiable boundaries and that the proposed wards provided for good levels of electoral equality, with variances of 7%, -4% and -5% respectively by 2023. We are therefore proposing to include these wards as part of our draft recommendations.

53 Our proposed St Olaves and Tollgate wards are based largely on the Councils' proposal (Option F1) as outlined above. To provide for improved levels of electoral equality both in Tollgate and in the neighbouring St Olaves ward, we are proposing to include the entirety of Northumberland Avenue in the Tollgate ward. We are also amending the boundary to include the entirety of the industrial estate in the north of the ward; under the Councils' proposal, this was split between St Olaves and



Tollgate. As mentioned in paragraph 51, we are including the area around West Suffolk College in the Tollgate ward to facilitate access to the Fen Way area. During our tour of the area we noted that, while the A14 and the railway line run through the proposed Tollgate ward, they do not form a barrier as they are elevated above the housing. Subject to these amendments, we are proposing a two-councillor Tollgate ward, with a variance of 1%, and a two-councillor St Olaves ward, with a variance of 9%, as part of the draft recommendations.

54 We note that the proposed ward names were debated during the formulation of the Councils' submission, and a wide variety of names were put forward. At this stage we have adopted the names proposed as part of the Councils' scheme here, but we would particularly welcome comments on these during the consultation on the draft recommendations.

### *Eastgate and Moreton Hall*

55 Of the four separate patterns of wards that the Councils submitted as possibilities for Bury St Edmunds, two included Rushbrooke with Rougham parish in a Bury St Edmunds ward. On our visit to the area, we noted that this part of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish which lies north of the A14 is very different in character from the rest of the parish as it is currently undergoing significant development.

56 Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council responded to the Councils and to the LGBCE, stating that the entire parish should be included in an entirely rural ward. However, whilst the Rougham ward put forward by the Parish Council would provide for good electoral equality it would have significant knock-on effects on the surrounding rural wards as it would not fit in with any of the district-wide schemes put forward by the Council. We acknowledge the detailed submission provided by the Parish Council and note that the ward would provide good electoral equality for the Parish Council's proposed Rougham ward. We consider that the parish has a distinct community identity, as demonstrated in the Parish Council's submission, but we are persuaded that the new development in the north-west of the parish means that this area should be included in a Bury St Edmunds ward. We do not consider we can justify such significant knock-on effects to the surrounding wards, and we are therefore not adopting the Rougham ward proposed by Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council.

57 A number of the submissions received by the Councils, including two from local residents, supported including the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish undergoing development in a Moreton Hall ward; Moreton Hall Residents' Association noted that the new development will look towards Bury St Edmunds for services, and our visit to the area supported this inclusion. We have therefore decided to include the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish that lies to the west of Sow Lane and north of the A14 in a proposed Moreton Hall ward.

58 All of the proposals put forward by the Councils for the Eastgate and Moreton Hall areas split the Moreton Hall area between two wards. The Councils received significant opposition to this in response to their consultation from both residents and local groups, and a local councillor also made an independent submission to the LGBCE regarding this area. A number of submissions made to the Council, including

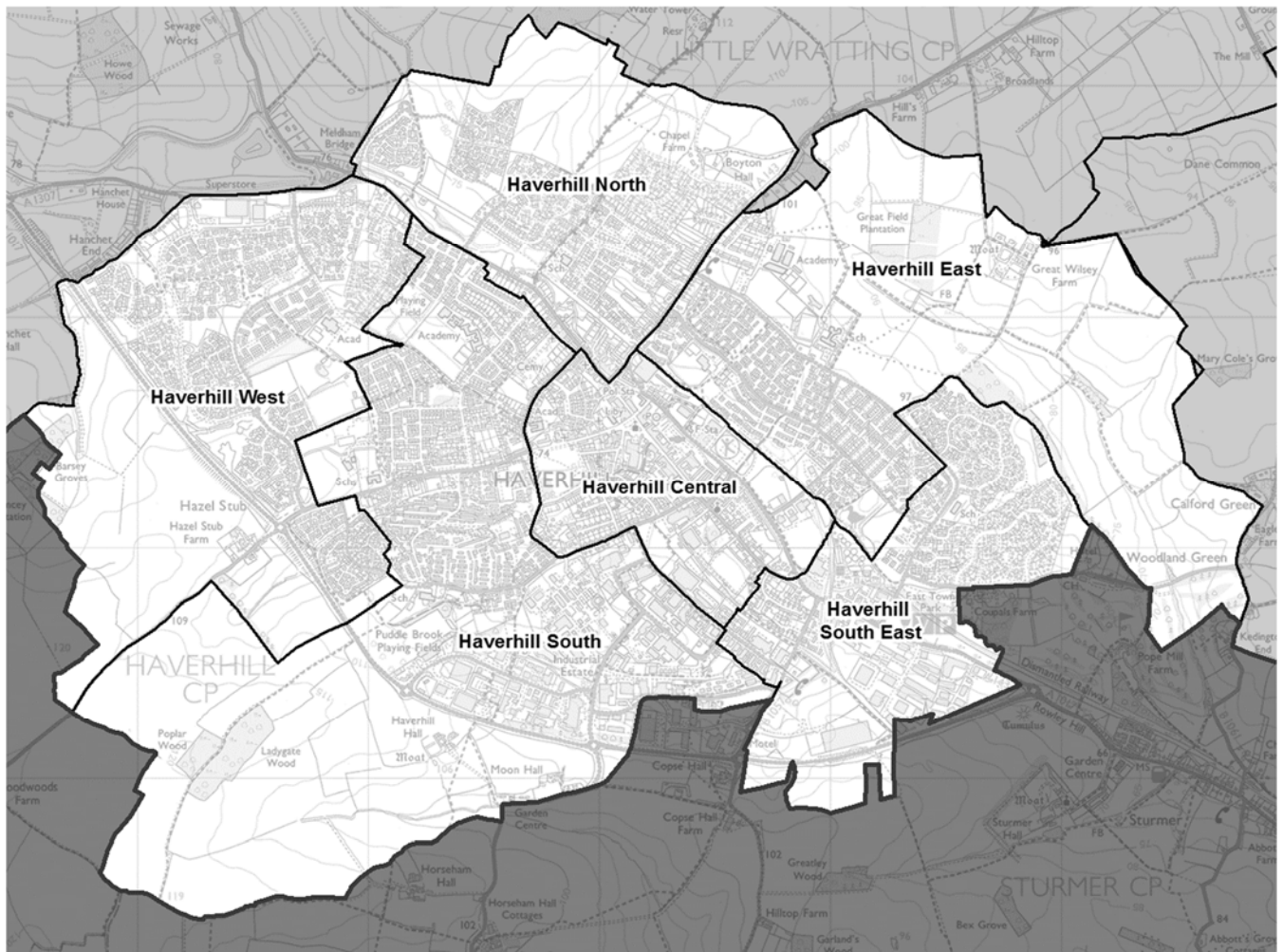


one from Moreton Hall Residents' Association, opposed splitting the existing Moreton Hall ward. The Residents' Association argued that the area has an established community centre and an active residents' association and is affected by unique issues regarding the traffic and planning concerns around the A14.

59 A submission made by a local councillor enumerated the differences between the Moreton Hall and Eastgate areas, describing the local services that are used by Moreton Hall residents. We considered that the evidence received from councillors, local groups, and residents, regarding the unique nature of Moreton Hall was persuasive, and we therefore set out to identify a pattern of wards that would allow for the Moreton Hall area to be included in one ward. We consider that the existing Moreton Hall ward, with the addition of the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish west of Sow Lane and north of the A14, would follow strong and identifiable boundaries, and would also provide for good levels of electoral equality. This ward would be represented by three councillors, and would have a projected variance of -1% by 2023. We are proposing, in response to the evidence received in submissions, to retain the existing Eastgate ward, which would be represented by a single councillor and would have a projected variance of -8% by 2023.



# Haverhill



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Haverhill Central	1	3%
Haverhill East	2	-5%
Haverhill North	2	-4%
Haverhill South	2	6%
Haverhill South East	1	7%
Haverhill West	2	6%



*Haverhill Central, Haverhill East, Haverhill North, Haverhill South, Haverhill South East and Haverhill West*

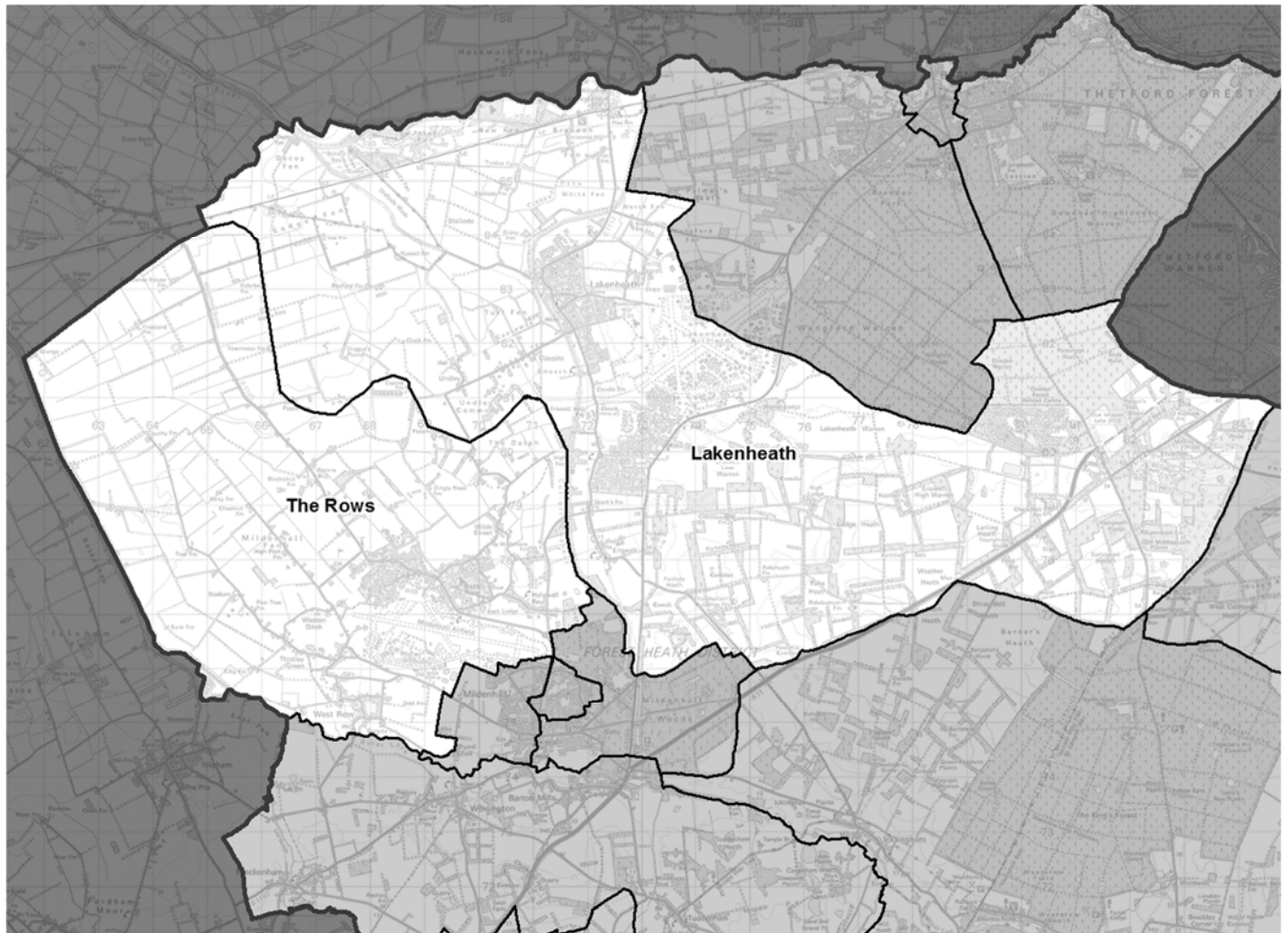
60 As part of their submission, the Councils put forward two warding pattern options for the town of Haverhill in the south of West Suffolk. Both options proposed provided for a mixed pattern of six one- and two-councillor wards, and feedback was received by the Councils in support of both proposed options. We carefully considered both options received, and concluded that the Councils' Option H, which provides for two single-councillor wards and four two-councillor wards covering the parish of Haverhill, provides for the best reflection of the statutory criteria. The proposed warding pattern provides for strong and identifiable boundaries, and this proposed pattern allows for good levels of electoral equality. This pattern of wards was also supported by the Councils' Future Governance Steering Group and by two local councillors. Comments received by the Councils supported this proposal because it was considered to reflect extant communities, as well as recognising the existing town centre of Haverhill in its own ward.

61 We are proposing an amendment to the Councils' proposed Haverhill South ward to include the Cambridge Way area and Castle Manor Academy; under the Councils' proposal, there was no way to access the Academy without entering a different ward. This alteration provides for a stronger and more identifiable boundary, running along the A1307. We are also making a minor amendment to include Hazel Stub Farm in the proposed Haverhill West ward, rather than in Haverhill South as proposed by the Councils; this keeps all of Hazel Stub together in one ward. We considered including the Cleves Road area in the proposed Haverhill South ward to provide for a stronger and more identifiable boundary; however, this would result in a variance of 20% by 2023, and as no supporting evidence was received for this alteration, we are not proposing to make this change as part of the draft recommendations.

62 We note that the Councils' proposed Haverhill Central ward covers the area of the town centre, and that this warding pattern also facilitates the inclusion of the development in the east of the town in the proposed Haverhill East ward. Subject to the amendments outlined above, we are proposing to adopt the Councils' Haverhill wards as part of our draft recommendations. This would result in a single-councillor Haverhill Central ward with a variance of 3%, a two-councillor Haverhill East ward with a variance of -5%, a two-councillor Haverhill North ward with a variance of -4%, a two-councillor Haverhill South ward with a variance of 6%, a one-councillor Haverhill South East ward with a variance of 7%, and a two-councillor Haverhill West ward with a variance of 6%.



## Rural north-west



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Lakenheath	2	7%
The Rows	2	-10%



### *Lakenheath and The Rows*

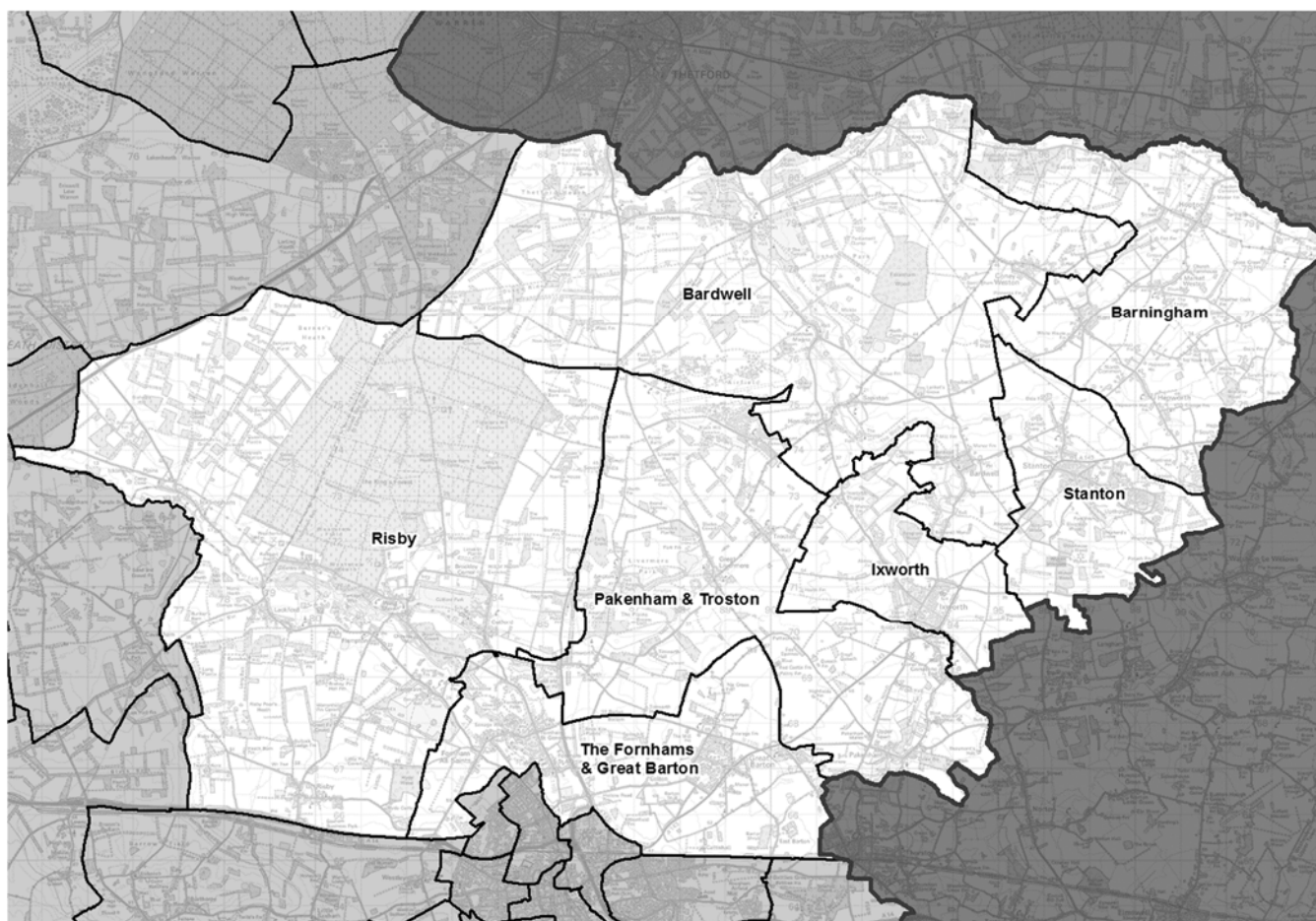
63 The Councils' proposed Lakenheath ward comprises the parishes of Lakenheath, Eriswell and Elveden, and the Councils' proposed The Rows ward comprises the grouped parish of Beck Row, Holywell Row & Kenny Hill and the West Row area of Mildenhall parish. The Councils did not submit any alternative warding patterns here.

64 The proposed Lakenheath ward comprises parishes that, as we noted on our visit to the area, are similar in character, and the Councils did not receive comments on this proposed ward during their consultation. We are therefore proposing the Councils' two-councillor Lakenheath ward, with a variance of 7% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

65 The proposed The Rows ward was supported by Mildenhall Parish Council and follows strong and identifiable boundaries. We note that the ward has a projected variance of -10%; however, the ward keeps existing communities together and, given the geography of the area and the distribution of electors within the ward, we consider that the proposed ward reflects our statutory criteria. We are therefore proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed two-councillor The Rows ward, with a variance of -10% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.



## Rural north



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Bardwell	1	-1%
Barningham	1	8%
Ixworth	1	-7%
Pakenham & Troston	1	-3%
Risby	1	9%
Stanton	1	9%
The Fornhams & Great Barton	2	3%



### *Bardwell, Pakenham & Troston and Risby*

66 The Councils proposed three single-councillor wards in this area. The proposed Bardwell ward comprises the parishes of Bardwell, Barnham, Coney Weston, Euston, Fakenham Magna and Sapiston, and the village of Honington. The proposed Pakenham & Troston ward comprises the parishes of Ampton, Great Livermere, Little Livermere, Pakenham, Timworth and Troston, and part of the Honington parish. The proposed Risby ward comprises the parishes of Culford, Flempton, Hengrave, Icklingham, Ingham, Risby, West Stow and Wordwell.

67 The Councils amended their original proposals in this area after their initial consultation, as significant feedback was received with regard to the original plan to split RAF Honington between two wards. Respondents noted that the RAF Station is one community and that the original proposals would have caused this community to be split between two wards. As a result of the feedback received, the Councils adopted a pattern of wards, put forward by numerous respondents, that retains the RAF Station in the Pakenham & Troston ward. We consider that this reflects the community identity in the area. Respondents also stated that there are links between Barnham and Euston parishes, with part of the Euston estate lying within Barnham parish, and both of these parishes have been included in the same Bardwell ward in our draft recommendations.

68 A number of respondents also commented on the parish of Lackford and opposed any proposal to include the parish in the Manor ward, instead stating that its community links lie with the parishes included in the Risby ward. Respondents also stated that, as it is not possible to pass from Icklingham parish to the rest of the Risby ward without passing through Lackford, both Lackford and Icklingham should be included in the Risby ward. The proposal that we are adopting as part of the draft recommendations includes both of these parishes in the proposed Risby ward.

69 We are therefore including the Councils' proposed wards in this area as part of our draft recommendations, as we consider that they take into account community evidence as received during their consultation as well as reflecting the Commission's statutory criteria. The proposed single-councillor Bardwell ward is forecast to have a variance of -1% by 2023, the proposed single-councillor Pakenham & Troston ward is forecast to have a variance of -3% by 2023, and the proposed Risby ward is forecast to have a variance of 9% by 2023.

### *Barningham, Ixworth and Stanton*

70 The Councils proposed three single-councillor wards are identical to the existing warding patterns in this area. We consider that the proposed wards provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality, and we are proposing to include the three wards as part of our draft recommendations. The proposed single-councillor Barningham ward is forecast to have a variance of 8% by 2023. The proposed single-councillor Ixworth ward is forecast to have a variance of -7% by 2023. The proposed single-councillor Stanton ward is forecast to have a variance of 9% by 2023.

### *The Fornhams & Great Barton*

71 In response to their consultation on the proposals for this area, the Councils received a number of comments on the original proposed ward name, requesting



that The Fornhams be recognised in the naming of the ward. There were also concerns raised about the fact that the ward will be represented by two councillors, but no viable alternative warding patterns were put forward. We consider that the Councils' proposed The Fornhams & Great Barton ward provides for good electoral equality. We do note that the ward combines two separate communities, but Great Barton parish is too large on its own to form a single-councillor ward – it would have a variance of 27% – and it has therefore been necessary to provide for a two-councillor ward which combines communities rather than proposing an arrangement that splits one community between wards in order to achieve better levels of electoral equality. We are therefore proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed The Fornhams & Great Barton ward, which would be represented by two councillors and would have a variance of 3% by 2023.







## Rural west



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Barrow	1	10%
Icen	2	-9%
Kentford & Moulton	1	9%
Manor	1	-4%



### *Barrow*

72 The Councils proposed a single-councillor Barrow ward comprising the parishes of Barrow, Denham, The Saxhams and Westley. No submissions were received by the Councils during their consultation regarding this proposed ward. We consider that whilst the ward has a projected variance of 10%, no alternative warding pattern options were put forward here and the proposed Barrow ward keeps whole parishes together and follows strong and identifiable boundaries. We are therefore proposing to include it as part of the draft recommendations for West Suffolk.

### *Iceni and Manor*

73 The Councils' proposed Iceni ward comprises the parishes of Red Lodge and Herringswell, with a variance of -9% by 2023. The neighbouring proposed Manor ward comprises the parishes of Barton Mills, Cavenham, Freckenham, Tuddenham and Worlington, with a variance of -4% by 2023. The Councils received a number of comments on these wards during their consultation on possible warding patterns. Worlington, Tuddenham and Freckenham Parish Councils supported the proposed Manor ward, stating that it will strengthen the relationship between the villages.

74 Two local residents, along with Herringswell Parish Council, requested that the parish of Herringswell be included in the Manor ward, instead of in the proposed Iceni ward; however, this would result in a projected electoral variance of -20% for Iceni by 2023, and we do not consider that any compelling evidence was received to justify such a high level of electoral inequality. Whilst we recognise that Herringswell and Red Lodge are different communities, we must seek to balance our statutory criteria and we consider that it is better to include different communities in the same ward, rather than having to divide a community elsewhere to provide for improved electoral equality.

75 A number of submissions referred to the parish of Lackford and expressed concern over any plan to include Lackford in the proposed Manor ward. Respondents stated that the parish had significantly stronger links to the proposed Risby ward than to the Manor ward, sharing community events and facilities with those parishes in Risby ward. We are therefore proposing to include Lackford in the Risby ward rather than in Manor at this stage.

76 We considered including the parish of Icklingham in the proposed Manor ward, instead of in the proposed Risby ward. Whilst this would have little impact overall on electoral equality, we considered that evidence in the submissions provided by the Council showed that Icklingham had stronger links to Lackford. As we have proposed to include Lackford in the proposed Risby ward, due to the community links that were demonstrated in the submissions to the Councils' consultation, we are therefore not including Icklingham in the Manor ward at this stage.

77 An alternative warding pattern here would be to combine the proposed Iceni and Manor wards into a three-councillor ward with a variance of -2%; however, we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received at this stage to recommend this. We are therefore adopting the Councils' proposed Iceni and Manor wards, with variances of -9% and -4% respectively, as part of the draft recommendations. We would be particularly interested to receive submissions regarding this area during the consultation on the draft recommendations.



### *Kentford & Moulton*

78 The Councils' proposed Kentford & Moulton ward comprises the parishes of Gazeley, Higham, Moulton and Kentford. Two parish councils supported the proposed ward, stating that the parishes within the ward have similar issues.

79 In response to the Councils' consultation, Higham Parish Council requested that the existing ward in this area be retained; however, due to the reduction in the number of councillors, the existing ward containing the parish of Higham would have a variance of -33% and we do not consider a ward with such high levels of electoral inequality is justified.

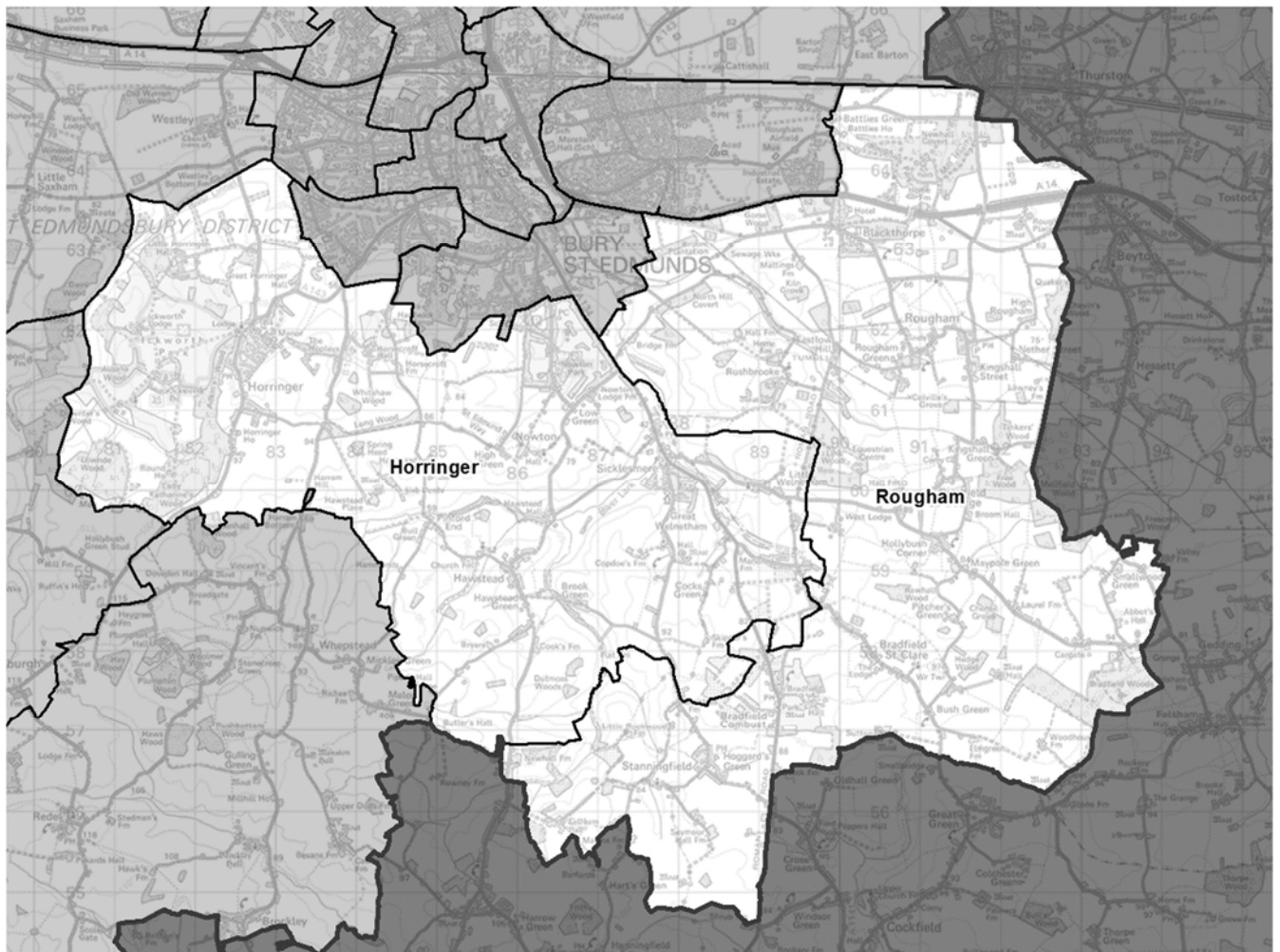
80 We consider that the Councils' proposed single-councillor Kentford & Moulton ward, with a variance of 9% by 2023, provides for a good reflection of our statutory criteria and we are therefore proposing to include it as part of the draft recommendations.







## Rural east



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Horringer	1	1%
Rougham	1	-10%



### *Horringer and Rougham*

81 The Councils proposed two options in this area. The option we are adopting is for two single-councillor wards: a single-councillor Horringer ward comprising the parishes of Great Whelnetham, Little Whelnetham, Hawstead, Horringer, Ickworth and Nowton, and a single-councillor Rougham ward comprising the parishes of Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield, Bradfield St Clare and Bradfield St George, and the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish that lies to the south of the A14. The Councils proposed including the area to the north of the parish in a Bury St Edmunds ward in this option, and as outlined above, we consider that this warding pattern would provide for the best adherence to the Commission's statutory criteria. The Councils' second option here combined a number of different parishes into a two-councillor ward, but we did not consider that this ward used strong boundaries, and it would have significant knock-on effects elsewhere, and as such we are not proposing to adopt it.

82 Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council made a submission both to the Council and to the LG BCE outlining an alternative proposal for their parish, as the Parish Council stated that the entire parish should be included in one ward. The Parish Council's proposal stated that their preferred pattern of wards would have all of Rushbrooke with Rougham included with Bradfield St George and Bradfield St Clare parishes. Whilst this arrangement would provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality in the proposed Rougham ward (3%), the parish of Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield would need to be placed in the proposed Horringer ward, which would then have a variance of 24%. To retain Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield in the Parish Council's proposed Rougham ward would result in that ward having a variance of 19%. We acknowledge the strength of feeling in the area regarding the parish of Rushbrooke with Rougham, and that the Parish Council's proposed ward reflects the community identity of the area, but the proposal would have significant knock-on effects to the surrounding areas; we would have to make significant changes across the district to accommodate the alterations in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality.

83 We are proposing to make an alteration to the Councils' proposed Rougham ward, partly in response to Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council's submission. The Councils' proposals included the entirety of the parish to the north of the A14 in a ward with areas of Bury St Edmunds. However, on our visit to the area, we noted that the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish to the east of Sow Lane was significantly more rural in character than the area undergoing development in the north-west of the parish. We are therefore proposing to include the area of the parish to the east of Sow Lane in the proposed Rougham ward.

84 Subject to this amendment, we are proposing to adopt the Councils' Rougham ward, which would be represented by one councillor and would have a variance of -10% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

85 A number of responses were received by the Councils regarding the proposed Horringer ward, which were supportive of the single-councillor ward proposed here. The Councils had also proposed another option here which involved combining Rougham and Horringer wards together, but submissions received did not support this option and we are not proposing to adopt it. We consider that the single-



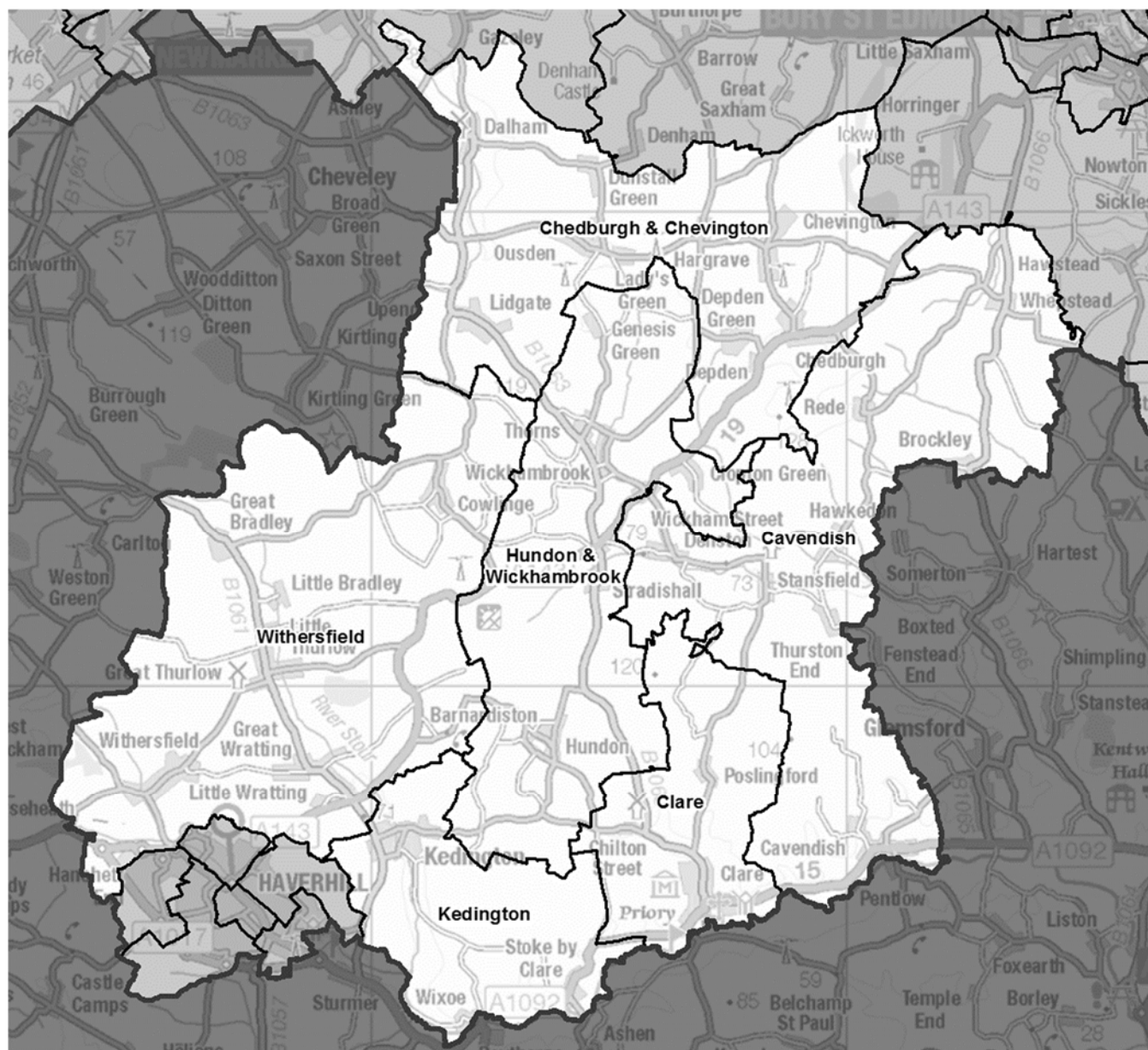
councillor Horringer ward follows strong boundaries and the submissions suggest that it reflects the communities in the area. We are therefore proposing to include the Councils' proposed Horringer ward, which would be represented by one councillor and have a variance of 1% by 2023, as part of our draft recommendations.







## Rural south



Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2023
Cavendish	1	-3%
Chedburgh & Chevington	1	-3%
Clare	1	-3%
Hundon & Wickhambrook	1	9%
Kedington	1	3%
Withersfield	1	-5%



*Cavendish, Clare, Hundon & Wickhambrook and Kedington*

86 The Councils' proposed Cavendish ward comprises the parishes of Cavendish, Brockley, Denston, Hawkedon, Rede, Stansfield and Wkepstead. This warding pattern was supported by a parish councillor during the Councils' consultation, as well as by a district councillor who considered that it represented a 'natural spread of villages' that look north towards Bury St Edmunds. We are proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed Cavendish ward, which would be represented by one councillor and would have a variance of -3% by 2023. The Councils did include, as part of their submission, an alternative Cavendish ward, but this ward included the parish of Hawstead, that is included in the Horringer ward being adopted above. As we are adopting the Council's proposed single-councillor Horringer ward, we are not adopting this alternative warding pattern here.

87 The Councils' proposed Clare ward comprises the parishes of Clare and Poslingford, and would be represented by one councillor. The proposed Kedington ward would also be represented by one councillor and would comprise the parishes of Kedington, Stoke by Clare and Wixoe. There were a number of submissions received by the Councils regarding these wards. Poslingford Parish Council expressed concern over the proposal to include the parish in a ward with Clare parish, and requested that the existing warding arrangement here be retained. However, the existing ward would have a variance of -19% and as such we are unable to retain the existing arrangements here. We acknowledge that Clare and Poslingford are distinct communities but we consider that it is better to retain both communities within one ward rather than having to split a community elsewhere to provide for a good level of electoral equality. We are therefore proposing to adopt the Councils' single-councillor Clare ward, with a variance of -3% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

88 A number of submissions regarding the proposed Kedington ward focused on the parishes of Stoke by Clare and Wixoe, and many requested that the parish of Stoke by Clare be moved into the neighbouring Clare ward. However, this would result in a Clare ward with a variance of 17% and a Kedington ward with a variance of -17%, which would not provide for a good level of electoral equality. We considered combining the proposed Kedington and Clare wards into one two-councillor ward with a variance of 0%. However, we do not consider that evidence has been received at this stage to support this option. Stoke by Clare Parish Council requested that the existing Hundon ward in this area be retained; however, this would have a variance of -15% by 2023 and we are therefore not recommending a ward with such a high level of electoral inequality here. We are therefore confirming the Councils' proposed single-councillor Kedington ward, with a variance of 3%, as part of the draft recommendations.

89 The Council's proposed Hundon & Wickhambrook ward comprises the parishes of Hundon, Stradishall and Wickhambrook. A local councillor proposed a completely different pattern of wards in this area in response to the Councils' consultation period; however, no supporting information was provided for these wards and it would have a knock-on impact on the Chedburgh & Chevington ward to the north, resulting in a ward with a variance of 21%. We are not adopting this proposal here. We consider that the Councils' proposed Hundon & Wickhambrook ward follows strong and identifiable boundaries and we are proposing to include the single-



councillor ward, which is forecast to have a variance of 9% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations in West Suffolk.

#### *Chedburgh & Chevington*

90 The Councils' proposed Chedburgh & Chevington ward comprises the parishes of Chedburgh, Chevington, Dalham, Depden, Hargrave, Lidgate and Ousden. Depden Parish Council responded to the Councils' consultation and stated that the parish had closer community links with Wickhambrook and should be in a ward with that parish; however, to include Wickhambrook in this ward would result in a variance of 47%, and to move Depden parish into the neighbouring Hundon & Wickhambrook ward would result in a variance of 18% in that ward. We do not consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify such high variances, or the knock-on effects of attempting to mitigate these variances.

91 We are therefore proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed single-councillor Chedburgh & Chevington ward, which is forecast to have a variance of -3% by 2023, as part of the draft recommendations.

#### *Withersfield*

92 The Councils' proposed Withersfield ward comprises the parishes of Barnardiston, Cowlinge, Great Bradley, Little Bradley, Great Thurlow, Little Thurlow, Great Wratting, Little Wratting and Withersfield. A local councillor requested that the existing ward in this area be retained; however, due to the change in council size, it is necessary to reconsider the ward boundaries here to provide for good levels of electoral equality. Retaining the Withersfield ward would have a variance of 40% by 2023. A councillor also commented to the Councils that the parishes of Great Wratting and Little Wratting have stronger links to Kedington than to the proposed Withersfield ward. To include these parishes in the neighbouring Kedington ward would, however, result in a Kedington ward with a variance of 16% and a Withersfield ward with a variance of -18%, which we do not consider is justified in light of an alternative with better electoral equality. The same councillor also commented that Hundon and Barnardiston should be included in the same ward; however, to include Hundon in the proposed Withersfield ward would result in a Withersfield ward with a variance of 37%, and no evidence was provided to support such a high level of electoral inequality.

93 We are proposing to adopt the Councils' proposed single-councillor Withersfield ward, which is forecast to have a variance of -5%, as part of the draft recommendations.



## Conclusions

94 The table below shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2017 and 2023 electorate figures.

### Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2017	2023
Number of councillors	64	64
Number of electoral wards	45	45
Average number of electors per councillor	1,899	2,056
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	18	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

#### **Draft recommendation**

West Suffolk Council should be made up of 64 councillors serving 45 wards representing 27 single-councillor wards, 17 two-councillor wards and one three-councillor ward. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

#### **Mapping**

**Sheet 1, Map 1** shows the proposed wards for West Suffolk.

**You can also view our draft recommendations for West Suffolk on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>**

### Parish electoral arrangements

95 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.



96 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, district councils have powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

97 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Brandon Town Council, Bury St Edmunds Town Council, Haverhill Town Council, Mildenhall Parish Council, Newmarket Town Council and Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council.

98 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Brandon parish.

<b>Draft recommendation</b>	
Brandon Town Council should comprise 14 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:	
<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
Central	5
East	4
West	5

99 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bury St Edmunds parish.

<b>Draft recommendation</b>	
Bury St Edmunds Town Council should comprise 17 councillors, as at present, representing nine wards:	
<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
Abbeygate	1
Eastgate	1
Gibraltar	2
Hardwick Heath	2
Linnet	2
Moreton Hall	3
St Olaves	3
Tollgate	2
Westgate	1

100 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Haverhill parish.



**Draft recommendation**

Haverhill Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing eight wards:

<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
Beaumont	1
Central	1
East	3
Mount Road	1
North	3
South	3
South East	1
West	3

101 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Mildenhall parish.

**Draft recommendation**

Mildenhall Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
Great Heath	4
Kingsway	4
Queensway	4
West Row	3

102 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Newmarket parish.

**Draft recommendation**

Newmarket Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
All Saints	3
Exning Road	1
Freshfields	1
Scaltback	6
Severals	2
Studlands	5

103 As result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Rushbrooke with Rougham parish.



**Draft recommendation**

Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>
North	4
South	7



### 3 Have your say

104 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole district/borough/county or just a part of it.

105 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for West Suffolk, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

106 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

107 Submissions can also be made by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (West Suffolk)**  
**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Windsor House**  
**50 Victoria Street**  
**London SW1H 0TL**

108 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for West Suffolk which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively

109 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government

110 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

111 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?



- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

#### 112 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

113 Please note that the consultation stage of an electoral review is a public consultation. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices in Windsor House (London) and on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk) A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

114 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

115 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

116 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Electoral Changes Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for West Suffolk in 2019.

## Equalities

117 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.



## Appendix A

### Draft recommendations for West Suffolk

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	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Abbeygate	2	3,783	1,891	0%	3,875	1,937	-6%
2	Bardwell	1	2,035	2,035	7%	2,035	2,035	-1%
3	Barningham	1	2,180	2,180	15%	2,211	2,211	8%
4	Barrow	1	2,013	2,013	6%	2,261	2,261	10%
5	Brandon Central	1	2,158	2,158	14%	2,182	2,182	6%
6	Brandon East	1	2,199	2,199	16%	2,211	2,211	8%
7	Brandon West	1	2,247	2,247	18%	2,247	2,247	9%
8	Cavendish	1	1,978	1,978	4%	1,990	1,990	-3%
9	Chedburgh & Chevington	1	1,986	1,986	5%	1,994	1,994	-3%
10	Clare	1	1,918	1,918	1%	1,991	1,991	-3%
11	Eastgate	1	1,822	1,822	-4%	1,894	1,894	-8%
12	Exning	1	1,590	1,590	-16%	1,924	1,924	-6%



	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13	Gibraltar	2	4,307	2,153	13%	4,420	2,210	7%
14	Great Heath	1	2,062	2,062	9%	2,062	2,062	0%
15	Hardwick Heath	2	3,291	1,645	-13%	3,928	1,964	-4%
16	Haverhill Central	1	2,035	2,035	7%	2,116	2,116	3%
17	Haverhill East	2	2,794	1,397	-26%	3,898	1,949	-5%
18	Haverhill North	2	3,142	1,571	-17%	3,954	1,977	-4%
19	Haverhill South	2	4,185	2,092	10%	4,355	2,177	6%
20	Haverhill South East	1	2,196	2,196	16%	2,196	2,196	7%
21	Haverhill West	2	4,302	2,151	13%	4,374	2,187	6%
22	Horringer	1	1,993	1,993	5%	2,080	2,080	1%
23	Hundon & Wickhambrook	1	2,218	2,218	17%	2,247	2,247	9%
24	Iceni	2	3,131	1,566	-18%	3,753	1,876	-9%
25	Ixworth	1	1,744	1,744	-8%	1,902	1,902	-7%
26	Kedington	1	2,065	2,065	9%	2,116	2,116	3%
27	Kentford & Moulton	1	2,047	2,047	8%	2,243	2,243	9%



	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
28	Kingsway	1	2,006	2,006	6%	2,105	2,105	2%
29	Lakenheath	2	3,835	1,918	1%	4,409	2,205	7%
30	Linnet	2	3,926	1,963	3%	3,926	1,963	-5%
31	Manor	1	1,733	1,733	-9%	1,968	1,968	-4%
32	Moreton Hall	3	5,517	1,839	-3%	6,093	2,031	-1%
33	Newmarket East	2	4,033	2,017	6%	4,040	2,020	-2%
34	Newmarket North	2	3,827	1,914	1%	3,871	1,935	-6%
35	Newmarket West	2	3,536	1,768	-7%	3,730	1,865	-9%
36	Pakenham & Troston	1	1,994	1,994	5%	1,994	1,994	-3%
37	Queensway	1	1,708	1,708	-10%	2,156	2,156	5%
38	Risby	1	2,222	2,222	17%	2,237	2,237	9%
39	Rougham	1	1,844	1,844	-3%	1,844	1,844	-10%
40	St Olaves	2	3,348	1,674	-12%	4,474	2,237	9%
41	Stanton	1	2,227	2,227	17%	2,234	2,234	9%
42	The Fornhams & Great Barton	2	3,376	1,688	-11%	4,224	2,112	3%



Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2017)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
43 The Rows	2	3,213	1,606	-15%	3,714	1,857	-10%
44 Tollgate	2	3,849	1,925	1%	4,139	2,070	1%
45 Withersfield	1	1,945	1,945	2%	1,953	1,953	-5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>121,558</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>131,570</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,899</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,056</b>	<b>–</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



## Appendix B

### Outline map





## Key

1. Abbeygate
2. Bardwell
3. Barningham
4. Barrow
5. Brandon Central
6. Brandon East
7. Brandon West
8. Cavendish
9. Chedburgh & Chevington
10. Clare
11. Eastgate
12. Exning
13. Gibraltar
14. Great Heath
15. Hardwick Heath
16. Haverhill Central
17. Haverhill East
18. Haverhill North
19. Haverhill South
20. Haverhill South East
21. Haverhill West
22. Horringer
23. Hundon & Wickhambrook
24. Icen
25. Ixworth
26. Kedington
27. Kentford & Moulton
28. Kingsway
29. Lakenheath
30. Linnet
31. Manor
32. Moreton Hall
33. Newmarket East
34. Newmarket North
35. Newmarket West
36. Pakenham & Troston
37. Queensway
38. Risby
39. Rougham
40. St Olaves
41. Stanton
42. The Fornhams & Great Barton
43. The Rows
44. Tollgate
45. Withersfield

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk>



## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/west-suffolk>

#### **Local Authority**

- Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils

#### **Councillors**

- Councillor T. Beckwith
- Councillor D. Nettleton

#### **Parish and Town Council**

- Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council



## Appendix D

### Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Local Government Changes Order	A legal document which implements a merger of two local authority areas.
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors



Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average



Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council
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The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government areas.

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**Twitter:** @LGBCE



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Key

Single member ward

Two-member ward

Key

Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056

Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendations 18 Single Member wards, 4 Two-Member wards						Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
Ward No.	LGBCE Area	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)	Parishes	
2	Rural north	Bardwell ward	1	-1%	Bardwell, Barnham, Coney Weston, Euston, Fakenham Magna, Honington (Village), Sapiston	None
3	Rural north	Barningham Ward	1	8%	Barningham, Hepworth, Hopton, Knettishall, Market Weston, Thelnetham	None
4	Rural west	Barrow ward	1	10%	Barrow, Denham, The Saxhams, Westley	None
8	Rural south	Cavendish ward	1	-3%	Cavendish, Brockley, Denston, Hawkedon, Rede, Stansfield & Whepstead	None
9	Rural south	Chedburgh & Chevington ward	1	-3%	Chedburgh, Chevington, Dalham, Depden, Hargrave, Lidgate & Ousden	None
10	Rural south	Clare ward	1	-3%	Clare and Poslingford	None
12	Newmarket	Exning ward	1	-6%	Exning	
22	Rural east	Horringer ward	1	1%	Gt & Lt Whelnetham, Hawstead, Horringer, Ickworth & Nowton	None
23	Rural south	Hundon & Wickhambrook ward	1	9%	Hundon, Stradishall & Wickhambrook	None
24	Rural west	Iceni ward	2	-9%	Herringswell & Red Lodge	None
25	Rural north	Ixworth Ward	1	-7%	Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe	None
26	Rural south	Kedington ward	1	3%	Kedington, Stoke by Clare and Wixoe	None
27	Rural west	Kentford & Moulton ward	1	9%	Gazeley, Higham, Moulton & Kentford,	None
29	Rural north-west	Lakenheath ward	2	7%	Lakenheath, Elveden, Eriswell and Sedge Fen	None
31	Rural west	Manor ward	1	-4%	Barton Mills, Cavenham, Freckenham, Tuddenham & Worlington	None
36	Rural north	Pakenham & Troston ward	1	-3%	Ampton, Great & Little Livermere, Honington (Station), Pakenham, Timworth, & Troston	None
38	Rural north	Risby ward	1	9%	Culford, Flempton, Lackford, Hengrave, Icklingham, Ingham, Risby, West Stow & Wordwell	None
39	Rural east	Rougham ward	1	-10%	Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield, Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St George & Rushbrooke with Rougham (South) (this would include the area to the west of Sow Lane and north of the A14)	The LGBCE have proposed that the North ward for Rushbrooke with Rougham area be split with the area to the west of Sow Lane being included in the Moreton Hall ward, and the area to the east of Sow Lane included in Rougham ward
41	Rural north	Stanton ward	1	9%	Stanton	None
42	Rural north	The Fornhams and Great Barton	2	3%	Fornham All Saints, Fornham St Genevieve, Fornham St Martin & Great Barton	None
43	Rural north-west	The Rows ward	2	-10%	Beck Row, Holywell Row, Kenny Hill & West Row	None
45	Rural south	Withersfield ward	1	-5%	Barnardiston, Cowlinge, Great and Little Bradley, Great and Little Thurlow, Withersfield and Great and Little Wrattling	None



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# LGBCE draft recommendations - Brandon wards

## Appendix 3

### Key

	Single member ward
	Two-member ward

### Key

	Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056
	Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendation 3 Single Member wards					Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
Ward No.	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)		
5	Brandon Central ward	1	6%		1. Knappers Way moved from Brandon East ward. 2. Coronation Place moved from Brandon West ward.
6	Brandon East ward	1	8%		1. Coronation Place moved to Brandon Central ward.
7	Brandon East ward	1	9%		1. Knappers Way moved to Brandon Central ward.



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Key

	Single member ward
	Two-member ward
	Three-member ward

Key

	Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056
	Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendation				
1 Single Member ward				
6 Two-Member wards				
1 Three-Member ward				
Ward No.	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)	Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
1	Abbeygate ward	2	-6%	1 - Instead of the boundary running along St Andrew's Street North, it would go up St John's Street, along Church Row and then Cannon Street, up to the roundabout, left along Tayfen Road and back down St Andrew's Street North. 2 - The area to the west of Parkway between Springfield Road and Risbygate Street (including West Suffolk college and King Edwards School) to be moved to Tollgate ward.
11	Eastgate ward	1	-8%	1 - An area that includes Long Brackland to move to Abbeygate ward (as detailed above), 2 - To create a single member Eastgate ward by moving the boundary to the east so that it goes along Barton Road and Shakers Lane.
13	Gibraltar ward	2	7%	The western part of Winthrop Road has moved to Linnet ward.
15	Hardwick Heath ward	2	-4%	
30	Linnet ward	2	-5%	The western part of Winthrop Road has moved to Gibraltar ward.
32	Moreton Hall ward	3	-1%	1 - To make the Moreton Hall ward a single ward with three members 2 - To include the area of Rushbrooke with Rougham parish that lies to the west of Sow Lane and north of the A14. 3 - To move the boundary so that it runs along Barton Road to the north and Shakers Lane to the west.
40	St Olaves ward	2	9%	1 - The boundary between Tollgate and St Olaves wards to run behind the properties in Northumberland Avenue so the entirety of Northumberland Avenue is in Tollgate. 2 - Warwick Close to move from Tollgate ward. 3 - To include the Lamdin Road Industrial estate from Tollgate ward.
44	Tollgate ward	2	1%	1 - The area to the west of Parkway between Springfield Road and Risbygate Street (including West Suffolk college and King Edwards School) to be moved from Abbeygate ward. 2 - The boundary between Tollgate and St Olaves wards to run behind the properties in Northumberland Avenue so the entirety of Northumberland Avenue is in Tollgate. 3 - Warwick Close to move to St Olaves ward. 4 - Move the Lamdin Road industrial estate to St Olaves ward.



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# LGBCE draft recommendations - Haverhill wards

## Appendix 5

### Key

	Single member ward
	Two-member ward

### Key

	Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056
	Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendation 2 Single Member wards 4 Two-Member wards				Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
Ward No.	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)	
16	Haverhill Central	1	3%	
17	Haverhill East	2	-5%	
18	Haverhill North	2	-4%	To move Cambridge Way and Castle Manor Academy to Haverhill South.
19	Haverhill South	2	6%	1 - To move Cambridge Way and Castle Manor Academy from Haverhill North. 2 - To move the boundary between Haverhill West and Haverhill South so that Hazel Stub Farm is included in its entirety in Haverhill West.
20	Haverhill South East	1	7%	
21	Haverhill West	2	6%	To move the boundary between Haverhill West and Haverhill South so that Hazel Stub Farm is included in its entirety in Haverhill West.



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# LGBCE draft recommendations - Mildenhall wards

## Appendix 6

### Key

	Single member ward
	Two-member ward

### Key

	Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056
	Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendation 3 Single Member wards				
Ward No.	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)	Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
14	Great Heath	1	0%	The entirety of the industrial estate to be included in Queensway ward so that the boundary runs along Field Lane, behind the properties in Junction Road and then down Folly Lane.
28	Kingsway	1	2%	
37	Queensway	1	5%	The entirety of the industrial estate to be included in Queensway ward so that the boundary runs along Field Lane, behind the properties in Junction Road and then down Folly Lane.



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## Key

	Single member ward
	Two-member ward

## Key

	Within 10% of the ideal electorate of 2056
	Variance against ideal electorate of more than 10%

LGBCE Draft Recommendation 3 Two-Member wards				
Ward No.	Proposed name of ward	No. of members	% Away from Average (Variance)	Differences between LGBCE draft recommendations and West Suffolk options
33	Newmarket East ward	2	-2%	To include the area north of Bury Road and bordered on the west by the railway line from Newmarket North ward.
34	Newmarket North ward	2	-6%	To move the area north of Bury Road and bordered on the west by the railway line from Newmarket East ward.
35	Newmarket West ward	2	-9%	



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