

Cabinet



Title:	Agenda																				
Date:	Tuesday 8 October 2019																				
Time:	6.00 pm																				
Venue:	Conference Chamber West (F1R09) West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU																				
Membership:	<p style="text-align: center;">Leader John Griffiths</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Deputy Leader Sara Mildmay-White</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Councillor</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Portfolio</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sarah Broughton</td> <td>Resources and Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carol Bull</td> <td>Governance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andy Drummond</td> <td>Regulatory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robert Everitt</td> <td>Families and Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Susan Glossop</td> <td>Growth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Griffiths</td> <td>Leader</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sara Mildmay-White</td> <td>Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Joanna Rayner</td> <td>Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Stevens</td> <td>Operations</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	Sarah Broughton	Resources and Performance	Carol Bull	Governance	Andy Drummond	Regulatory	Robert Everitt	Families and Communities	Susan Glossop	Growth	John Griffiths	Leader	Sara Mildmay-White	Housing	Joanna Rayner	Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs	Peter Stevens	Operations
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Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.																				
Quorum:	Three Members																				
Committee administrator:	Claire Skoyles Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01284 757176 Email: claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk																				

Public Information



Venue:	West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU	T: 01284 757176 E: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk W: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk
Access to agenda and reports before the meeting:	Copies of the agenda and reports are open for public inspection at the above and following address: West Suffolk Council College Heath Road Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 7EY at least five clear days before the meeting. They are also available to view on our website.	
Attendance at meetings:	The Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public.	
Public participation:	Members of the public who live or work in the District are welcome to speak and may ask one question or make a statement of not more than three minutes duration relating to items to be discussed in Part 1 of the agenda only. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply. A person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. There is an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chair's discretion.	
Disabled access:	West Suffolk House has facilities for people with mobility impairments including a lift and wheelchair accessible WCs. However in the event of an emergency use of the lift is restricted for health and safety reasons. Visitor parking is at the car park at the front of the building and there are a number of accessible spaces.	
Induction loop:	An Induction loop is available for meetings held in the Conference Chamber.	
Recording of meetings:	The Council may record this meeting and permits members of the public and media to record or broadcast it as well (when the media and public are not lawfully excluded). Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Committee Administrator who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.	
Personal Information	Any personal information processed by West Suffolk 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: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm or call Customer Services: 01284 763233 and ask to speak to the Information Governance Officer.	

Agenda

Procedural Matters

1. Apologies for Absence

Part 1 - Public

2. Open Forum

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

3. Public Participation

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

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

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

4. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 1 - 6 26 September 2019

Report No: **CAB/WS/19/033**
Chairman of the Committee: Cllr Ian Houlder
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sarah Broughton
Lead Officer: Christine Brain

5. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 7 - 12 2 September 2019

Report No: **CAB/WS/19/034**
Chair of the Committee: Cllr David Nettleton
Lead Officer: Christine Brain

NON-KEY DECISIONS

- 6. Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 2 September 2019 - West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023** **13 - 56**
- Report No: **CAB/WS/19/035**
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sara Mildmay-White Lead Officer: Davina Howes
- 7. Decisions Plan: 1 October 2019 to 31 May 2020** **57 - 72**
- To consider the most recently published version of the Cabinet's Decisions Plan
- Report No: **CAB/WS/19/036**
Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Griffiths Lead Officer: Ian Gallin
- 8. West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy and Plan** **73 - 92**
- Report No: **CAB/WS/19/037**
Portfolio Holders: Cllrs Susan Glossop and Peter Stevens
Lead Officers: Julie Baird and Mark Walsh

Part 2 - Exempt

- 9. Exclusion of Press and Public**
- To consider whether the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of the following items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt categories of information as prescribed in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and indicated against each item and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
- 10. Exempt Appendices: West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy and Plan (para 3)** **93 - 98**
- Exempt Appendices B2 and B4 to Report No: **CAB/WS/19/037**
Portfolio Holders: Cllrs Susan Glossop and Peter Stevens
Lead Officers: Julie Baird and Mark Walsh

(These exempt appendices are to be considered in private under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

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

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Cabinet



Title of Report:	Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 26 September 2019	
Report No:	CAB/WS/19/033	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	8 October 2019
Portfolio holder:	Councillor Sarah Broughton Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01284 787327 Email: sarah.broughton@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Chair of the Committee:	Councillor Ian Houlder Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07597 961069 Email: ian.houlder@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead Officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: Christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	On 26 September 2019, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the following items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Ernst and Young – Annual Audit Letters 2018-2019; (2) Local Government Ombudsman - Annual Report; (3) Treasury Investment Limits 2019-2020 (4) Approach to Delivering a Sustainable West Suffolk Council Budget 2020-2021 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024; (5) Work Programme 2019-2020. 	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that Report No: CAB/WS/19/033, being the report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, be noted.	

Key Decision:	No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only.
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See reports listed in Section 2 below.
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See reports listed in Section 2 below.
Implications:	
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Risk/opportunity assessment:	Please see background papers.
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards
Background papers:	Please see background papers, which are listed at the end of the report.
Documents attached:	None

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 **Ernst and Young - Annual Audit Letters 2018-2019 (Report No: PAS/WS/19/012)**

1.1.1 The Committee received and **NOTED** the above report, which updated Members on the outcome of the annual audit of the 2018-2019 financial statements by Ernst and Young, the councils external auditors as detailed in their Annual Audit Letters for the year ended 31 March 2019, attached as Appendix A (former Forest Heath) and Appendix B (former St Edmundsbury). The letters were for information and confirmed the completion of the audits for the 2018-2019 financial statements.

1.1.2 The audit fees for 2018-2019 Code were, as contained in the appendices were summarised below, as follows:

Audit Fee - Code Work	Planned Fee 2018/19 £	Final Fee 2018/19 £
Forest Heath DC	36,253	TBC
St Edmundsbury BC	33,701	TBC

1.1.3 Final fee would be discussed and agreed with the Chief Finance Officer before gaining formal approval from Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd, and would be reported in a separate fee letter if required.

1.1.4 The fees for certification work relating to the 2018/19 Housing Benefit Subsidy claim, as contained in the appendices, were summarised below, as follows:

Audit Fee - Grant Claims	Planned Fee 2018/19 £	Final Fee 2018/19 £
Forest Heath DC	14,960	TBC
St Edmundsbury BC	14,960	TBC

1.1.5 Work on the certification of the Housing Benefit Subsidy returns was not yet completed and the results of this work, along with the final fees, would be reported in the Annual Certification Reports.

1.1.6 The Committee considered the report and did not raise any issues.

1.2 **Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Report (Report No: PAS/WS/19/013)**

1.2.1 The Committee received and **NOTED** the above report on the recommended approach in reporting Ombudsman complaints as contained in Section 4 of the report. The report set out the background and context; number of complaints for Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council; outcome of complaints considered by

- the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO); considering LGO outcomes in future and conclusions.
- 1.2.2 The LGO issues an annual report on its activity, which maps the volume and nature of complaints received across the Country. Each Council was also issued with its own performance report. The report presented to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee informed Members on the outcome of the final annual performance reports for Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils, in comparison to national performance measures.
- 1.2.3 Two cases were upheld at Forest Heath Council. One case was reported to the former Forest Heath Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee in October 2018, and details of the second case was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. With regards to the second case, the LGO felt the Council had already taken all necessary action to resolve the complaint. However, whilst it was disappointing that two cases had been upheld, this represented just 12.5% of the complaints the LGO considered in the year.
- 1.2.4 Historically, officers reported to the Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees where there was a finding of fault on the part of the Council, and the Council was required to pay compensation. This reporting was confirming to the Committee what had already occurred, as the Council was often given limited time to remedy such findings. With this in mind, officers suggest that in future, where the Ombudsman finds fault but the remedy suggested was less than £1,000, such cases would be included in the LGO annual report. Where the remedy suggested was more than £1,000, or in the rare event the officers considered the Council should reject the findings of the Ombudsman, such cases would be reported to the next meeting of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2.5 The Committee considered the report and asked questions, to which responses were provided. Members were pleased to note the low level of complaints raised with the LGO. However, members questioned when complaints were upheld by the LGO whether the Council reviewed its processes, to which officers duly responded and provided examples.
- 1.3 **Treasury Investment Limits 2019-2020 (Report No: PAS/WS/19/014)**
- 1.3.1 The Committee received **NOTED** the above report, which informed Members of a delegated decision made on 19 August 2019 to revise investment limits for un-rated building societies by £1m to a maximum of £2m per institution giving a maximum exposure of £12m in this class of investment.
- 1.3.2 The Council currently holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In 2018/2019, West Suffolk Council's investment balance ranged between £52.4m and £66.3m. During 2019/2020 and in future years, due to the Authority's Capital Programme, these levels were expected to fall dramatically. In the first months of this year the cash available for

investment had exceeded our forecast by £4m due to changes in profile of our capital programme and increased business rate retention receipts.

- 1.3.3 Following consultation with the Council's Treasury advisors Arlington, it was identified that the best opportunity available to the Council in terms of security, portfolio balances and returns would be to increase its investments with building societies.
- 1.3.4 Under the delegated authority, as per the Treasury Management Strategy, of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance and the S151 Officer the investment limits for building societies had been changed from £1m to £2m for institutions that had no credit rating (this was normal for Building Societies). These institutions were still required to have an asset base of £1bn and the Council would only deal with the top15 institutions that met that criteria.
- 1.3.5 The increase in limits enabled the Council to place £1m each at Principality, Nottingham, National Counties and Newcastle Building Societies at reasonable rates (0.75%-0.81%) and remain within the revised Treasury Management Strategy limits.
- 1.3.6 The Committee considered the report and did not raise any issues.

1.4 **Approach to Delivering a Sustainable West Suffolk Council Budget 2020-2021 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024 (Report No: PAS/WS/19/015)**

- 1.4.1 The Committee received the above report, which informed Members on the approach and timescales for the 2020-2021 budget setting process and medium term plans to 2024.
- 1.4.2 The report set out the background and context; future budget pressure and challenges; key assumptions; proposed approach for securing a balanced budget 2020-2024; timescales and next steps.
- 1.4.3 The Committee was informed that the starting position in its budget approach was from the existing approved medium term financial plan which at February 2019 was balanced for 2020/2021 followed by a budget gap of £2.7m in 2021/2022 and £3.9m (cumulative from 2021/2022) in 2022/2023. This had enabled the methodology for revising this outlook to be focussed on three areas:
 - 1 Challenging the pre-existing assumptions and updating these to reflect new knowledge and information.
 - 2 Collating new items or making changes to existing plans to reflect the outcome of the development of the West Suffolk 2020-2024 Strategic Framework and MTFS.
 - 3 Reflect any changes in the wider macro environment which require a change in approach.

- 1.4.4 Members considered the report in detail, the approach and timescales for the 2020-2021 budget setting process and the medium term financial strategy. Members asked a number of questions to which responses were provided. In particular, discussions were held on the Treasury Management Strategy; future investments in solar farms; investing in commercial properties within West Suffolk; the emerging Asset Management Strategy; and how the Council monitored its extensive range of assets held, to which comprehensive responses were provided.
- 1.4.5 There being no decision required at this stage, the Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

1.5 **Work Programme Update (Report No: PAS/WS/19/016)**

- 1.5.1 The Committee received Report No: PAS/WS/19/016, which provided information on the current status of its forward work programme for 2019-2020.
- 1.5.2 The Committee **NOTED** the contents of its forward work programme for 2019-2020.

2. Background Papers

- 2.1.1 Report No: [PAS/WS/19/012](#), [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Ernst and Young – Annual Audit Letters 2018-2019
- 2.1.2 Report No: [PAS/WS/19/013](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Report
- 2.1.3 Report No: [PAS/WS/19/014](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Treasury Investment Limits 2019-2020
- 2.1.4 Report No: [PAS/WS/19/015](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Approach to Delivering a Sustainable West Suffolk Council Budget 2020-2021 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024
- 2.1.5 Report No: [PAS/WS/19/016](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme 2019-2020

Cabinet



Title of Report:	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 2 September 2019	
Report No:	CAB/WS/19/034	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	8 October 2019
Chair of the Committee:	Councillor David Nettleton Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 01284 702212 Email: david.nettleton@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead Officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: Christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>On 2 September 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy; (2) Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee – 11 July 2019; (3) Cabinet Decisions Plan (1 September 2019 to 31 May 2020); (4) Work Programme Update. <p>A separate report is included on this Cabinet agenda for Item (1) above.</p>	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that Report No: CAB/WS/19/034, being the report of the Overview and Audit Scrutiny Committee, be <u>noted</u>.	
Key Decision:	No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only.	

Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See reports listed in Section 2 below.
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See reports listed in Section 2 below.
Implications:	
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please see background papers.
Risk/opportunity assessment:	Please see background papers.
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards
Background papers:	Please see background papers, which are listed at the end of the report.
Documents attached:	None

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 West Suffolk Parking Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Report No: OAS/WS/19/008)

1.1.1 Prior to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Sara Mildmay-White presenting the West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy, she provided Members with a brief overview of her housing portfolio; the areas which it covered; and how it links into the Council's Strategic Framework 2018-2020.

1.1.2 The Committee received Report No: OAS/WS/19/008, which sought the approval of a revised Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy and a new Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy. Attached to the report were a number of appendices, namely:

- Appendix 1: Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023;
- Appendix A: Evidence Base for the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy;
- Appendix B: Delivery Plan for the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy;
- Appendix C: Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy.

In June 2018, West Suffolk councils adopted the Homelessness Reduction Strategy. This report (OAS/WS/19/008) sets out a review of the strategy and changes that had been made in response to new duties and requirements which had been placed on local authorities. The strategy was now be called the "Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy".

1.1.3 The Committee considered the report and appendices in detail and asked questions to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on Suffolk County Council's floating support contract; feedback from the Drop In Centre; social media in relation to verbal aggression and public shaming; landlord forums; empty homes; housing support for under eighteens; and sharing lessons learnt with other local authorities.

1.1.4 The Committee did not suggest any amendments to be made to Appendix 1 or Appendix C, and **RECOMMENDS** to Cabinet the approval of the Revised Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and the new Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (*See separate Agenda Item 6 of this Cabinet agenda, Report No: CAB/WS/19/035*)

1.1.5 The Cabinet Member for Housing then referred to housing questions which had been submitted in advance of this meeting by members of the Committee, on a wider bases around housing delivery, and to the comprehensive responses provided, which were emailed to all Scrutiny

Members on 29 August 2019. The Committee asked follow-up questions, to which responses were provided.

1.1.6 The Portfolio Holder informed the Committee she had three areas of concern regarding housing, namely:

- The Rough Sleeping Grant: Is this being spent effectively and achieving its aims?
- Registered Social Landlords (housing providers): How can we ensure that registered social landlords are providing the housing that is required for this area, including social rent?
- Registered Social Landlords: To understand whether the Council was working as effectively as it could with key RSL's to deliver social housing objectives.

1.1.7 In response to the Portfolio Holder's concerns, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing looks at inviting Registered Social Landlords in West Suffolk to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to give a presentation on their aims/objectives and their future housing provision/types of affordable social housing in West Suffolk.

1.2 **Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee – 11 July 2019 (Report No: OAS/WS/19/009)**

1.2.1 Councillor Margaret Marks, the Council's appointed representative on the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee informed the Committee, with the agreement of the Chair, Councillor David Nettleton, that all members and substitute members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive a link to the Health Scrutiny papers, once published, to enable members to consider and inform Councillor Marks of any concerns or suggestions they would like raised at the Health Scrutiny Committee.

1.2.2 The Committee then received a report, prepared by Councillor Marks setting out what was considered at its meeting held on 11 July 2019; being Home Care Procurement (future arrangements for delivery of home care services in Suffolk); and Appointments to Joint Committees and observers, and for the NHS Boards.

1.2.3 Councillor Marks advised the Committee she had been appointed to the following strategic health bodies:

- CCG Executive Board meetings as an observer;
- West Suffolk Board meetings as an observer; and
- The NHS Ambulance Service Trust as a substitute observer.

In addition, Councillor Marks was nominated as the West representative on the Joint Health and Scrutiny (West, East and North East Essex), and would be ratified by the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting on 10 October 2019.

- 1.2.4 The Committee considered the report and asked questions to which Councillor Marks provided comprehensive responses. In particular discussions were held on the meaning of “re-ablement”; provisions for working across two health authority areas (Suffolk/Cambridgeshire); and standardised care packages and training.
- 1.2.5 Members shared the same concerns as Councillor Marks, in that some care agencies were recording patient’s data/medical needs on IPADs, which were then removed from the patient’s home. It was felt that a book should be left in the patient’s home, so that relatives etc. could easily refer to the data recorded.
- 1.2.6 There being no decision required, the Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

1.3 **Cabinet Decisions Plan (1 September 2019 to 31 May 2020)**
(Report No: OAS/WS/19/010)

- 1.3.1 The Committee considered the latest version of the Cabinet Decisions Plan, covering the period 1 September 2019 to 31 May 2020. Members reviewed the Decisions Plan and asked questions, to which responses were provided. There being no decision required, the Committee **NOTED** the contents of the Decisions Plan.

1.4 **Work Programme Update (Report No: OAS/WS/19/011)**

- 1.4.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/WS/19/011, which provided an update on the current status of the Committee’s Work Programme for 2019-2020.
- 1.4.2 The Committee **NOTED** a future item to be included in its forward work programme in relation to inviting Registered Social Landlords to a future meeting of the Committee.
- 1.4.3 The Chair also requested that a report on the “Management of Events in the Abbey Gardens” be presented to the Committee on 9 January 2020, which the Committee **NOTED**.

2. Background Papers

- 2.1.1 Report No: [OAS/WS/19/008](#) and [Appendix 1](#), [Appendix A](#), [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- 2.1.2 Report No: [OAS/WS/19/009](#) and [Appendix](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: SCC: Health Scrutiny Committee – 11 July 2019
- 2.1.3 Report No: [OAS/WS/19/010](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Cabinet Decisions Plan (1 September 2019 to 31 May 2020)
- 2.1.4 Report No: [OAS/WS/19/011](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update

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Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 2 September 2019 - West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023

Report No:	CAB/WS/19/035	
	Cabinet	8 October 2019
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White Portfolio Holder for Housing Tel: 01359 270580 Email: sara.mildmay-white@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) Tel: 01284 757070 Email: davina.howes@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>		

Wards impacted: All Wards

Recommendations: It is RECOMMENDED that, Cabinet:

- (1) approves the revised West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023 (Appendix 1 to Report No: CAB/WS/19/035);**
- (2) notes the performance of the Housing Options and Homelessness Team in the evidence base (Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/035);**
- (3) notes progress against the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy delivery plan (Appendix B to Report No: CAB/WS/19/035); and**
- (4) approves the new West Suffolk Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (Appendix C to Report No: CAB/WS/19/035).**

1. Background / Context

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received Report No: **OAS/WS/19/008** which informed Members of the proposals set out at section 2 of this report (below).
- 1.2 The Committee considered the report and appendices and had a detailed discussion about the work currently being carried out to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping across West Suffolk. The Committee did not make any amendments to the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy or the Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy.

2. Proposals

Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023

- 2.1 In June 2018, West Suffolk councils adopted the Homelessness Reduction Strategy. This report sets out a review of the strategy and changes that have been made in response to new duties and requirements being placed on local authorities. The strategy will now be called the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 2.2 In August 2018, Central Government published a Rough Sleeping Strategy. The focus is on (i) prevention, which is at the core of the Homelessness Reduction Act; (ii) intervention, where people experiencing rough sleeping are supported with help to ensure it never happens again and; (iii) recovery, where sustainable accommodation and flexible support is given so people can maintain a stable home. The Government's Strategy required that councils publish a Rough Sleeper Strategy. Whilst the Council's Homelessness Reduction Strategy (approved in June 2018) included actions to reduce rough sleeping, the document has been updated to reflect the new duty being placed on local authorities to adopt a rough sleeping strategy. Our commitment to tackling rough sleeping was reflected in the Strategy agreed in June 2018.
- 2.3 Furthermore, in March 2018 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government launched a £30 million fund to help areas with the highest levels of rough sleepers. West Suffolk bid for this funding and in August 2018 secured Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) grant to deliver targeted interventions that could be implemented quickly and make a real difference to the number of rough sleepers on the streets. In 2018/19, West Suffolk received £245,782 of RSI funding and £345,562 in 2019/20. Progress against these actions is included in the review of the delivery plan.
- 2.4 When West Suffolk made a bid for the RSI funding we were required to submit an RSI funding action plan. The seven actions included in that action plan have now been incorporated in the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy and can be found at 2.11 to 2.17 of the delivery plan.

2.5 **Evidence base for the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Appendix A – not attached click [here](#) to view)**

2.6 The development of the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy is supported by data and analysis that sets out the extent to which people in West Suffolk are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, assess the likely extent of homelessness in the future, what is being done and the resources available to prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

From April 2018, local authorities have provided data on homelessness and rough sleeping to Central Government through a new reporting system. All of the data for 2018/19 has been submitted by local authorities, however only the first three quarters of 2018/19 have been audited and published by Central Government. The data attached as Appendix A therefore presents data for the first three quarters of 2018/19, which is the only audited and published data available. This data reflects the new duties placed on local authorities through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

2.7 **Review of the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy delivery plan (Appendix B – not attached click [here](#) to view).**

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 brought in fundamental changes to the prevention and relief duties that has changed the work of housing teams. We have worked hard to implement those duties so that we can help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

2.8 When the Homelessness Reduction Strategy was adopted in 2018 a commitment was made to present Councillors with a review of the delivery plan on an annual basis. The delivery plan has been regularly monitored since it was adopted. The delivery plan is attached as Appendix B to the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy and it sets out the progress that has been made along with some challenges that are being addressed.

2.9 We have seen successes in a number of areas. Where data is given this is also provided in Appendix A to the strategy. The delivery plan contains detailed information and some key activities are listed below:

1. providing support with a focus on preventing and relieving homelessness to ensure that more people are able to maintain and secure a settled home. In West Suffolk 77% of those owed a duty had a successful prevention duty outcome (compared to 58% across England) and 48% had a successful relief duty outcome (compared to 44.8% across England);
2. 62% of the successful prevention duty outcomes resulted in households staying in their existing accommodation (compared to 39% across England);
3. the main activity that resulted in accommodation secured for households was negotiation, mediation and advocacy at 55% in West Suffolk (compared to 9% across England);

4. West Suffolk has a high percentage of households with a relief duty ending due to a successful relief duty outcome at 48% (compared with 45% across England);
5. the number of rough sleepers across West Suffolk has reduced from 29 in 2017 to 22 in 2018. Note that Rough Sleeper Initiative funding had only been available for three months before the November count;
6. working with our statutory and voluntary partners to ensure that they provide the right support and advice in accordance with the Act;
7. agreeing clear pathways, referral routes and protocols with partners for the duty to refer;
8. implementing pathways for tackling homelessness, identifying risks early and promoting self-help and resilience and working with partners to provide services with the aim of breaking the cycle of homelessness;
9. supporting rough sleepers through use of Rough Sleeper Initiative funding by recruiting and establishing a Rough Sleeper Outreach Team, increasing accommodation options for rough sleepers, extending emergency accommodation provision with a support worker and undertaking a rough sleeper count every two months;
10. increasing accommodation options for vulnerable households including those who have experienced domestic abuse; and
11. supported customers and private sector landlords during the implementation of Universal Credit.

2.10 We have also faced challenges. A number of these are outside of our control but we continue to liaise with and influence our partners. We are working to address challenges in the following areas:

1. ensuring that floating support is available to help those in temporary accommodation to access services despite this provision being reduced. The contract has been extended until 2021 and we will continue to work closely with Suffolk County Council;
2. working with registered providers and the voluntary sector to increase access to accommodation including lodging schemes, shared accommodation, temporary accommodation and tenancies to support move on;
3. continuing to influence the provision of supported accommodation and support Suffolk County Council to manage its existing contracts (we are giving support and information to the post reviewing Housing Related Support); and
4. ensuring that the review of mental health services addresses the support needs of the most vulnerable, including specialist accommodation and outreach services.

- 2.11 We are currently resourcing the delivery of our priorities and actions through existing budgets and resources including the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG) and Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding. We do, however, have a key issue in that FHSG and RSI funding is short-term funding which we are reliant upon to deliver our five-year delivery plan.

Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (Appendix C)

- 2.12 Following a Supreme Court judgment, local authorities have a duty to adopt a Temporary Accommodation Procurement Policy. This requirement was set out in case law stating that local authorities should be looking in advance at their temporary accommodation needs. Whilst West Suffolk has always planned ahead in this way, we now need to formally document our plans for providing sufficient temporary accommodation for our needs.
- 2.13 West Suffolk has in place an existing Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy that sets out how we will place households in temporary accommodation. We have taken these two policies to create one **Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy** that will be attached as Appendix C to the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative option is to continue with the Homelessness Reduction Strategy in its original form. However, not incorporating rough sleeping in the way that we have means that we would not be consistent with the requirements of Central Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Homelessness Reduction Strategy was the subject of public and stakeholder consultation through a workshop and online survey. It was not necessary to consult on the revised strategy although we have sought the advice of the Rough Sleeper Team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

5. Risks

- 5.1 Not being compliant with the requirements of Central Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy. Members not receiving an update on progress against the delivery plan

6. Implications arising from the proposal

- 6.1 None.

7. Appendices

7.1 **Appendix 1** – Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023 (attached), which includes:

Appendix A – Homelessness Data/Evidence Base (not attached ([link](#) only))

Appendix B – Delivery Plan Review (not attached ([link](#) only))

Appendix C - Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (attached)

8. Background documents

8.1 [Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023](#)

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West Suffolk Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 – 2023

Home is where
the start is



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A note on the data: Where data in this strategy is given for Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council, this relates to when the councils operated as two separate entities before becoming West Suffolk Council on 1 April 2019.

Final version: June 2018.

Amended: October 2019

If you have any questions about this Strategy document, please contact:

Email: customer.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Telephone: 01284 763233 or 01638 719000

Foreword

We know what a wonderful place West Suffolk is to live and work in. It is not just our beautiful countryside and our historic towns and villages that makes the area so appealing to so many – it is also the people that live here, our way of life and the strong community support that people have for each other. A great many people across West Suffolk naturally want to remain close to their families and the communities where they grew up. There are also many people looking to relocate to West Suffolk, to grow their business or to capitalise on the job opportunities that are being created here. The only drawback is with West Suffolk in such high demand, housing can be expensive which puts pressure on the Council to ensure that there are suitable and sustainable places for people to live.

Housing impacts our health, quality of life, employment and education. A home should be a sanctuary where people feel safe and secure. But for many, this is not the case. The reasons for this are varied and complex but it can often lead to homelessness, and at its worst extreme, rough sleeping.

If we are to succeed in reducing homelessness, then as agencies we will need to work even more closely than we have ever done before. West Suffolk Council has forged strong bonds with the public, private and voluntary sector agencies to not only help people find a home but to give them any support that they may need to move on with their lives. How we want to do that, with our partners, is set out in the pages of this strategy. Together we all need to play our important role in preventing homelessness.

This strategy builds on the good work we have already carried out and shows how we, with partners, are responding to meet national challenges and new major changes to statutory duties. At the heart of what we do are individuals and families, sometimes with challenging issues, in need of our help. This strategy ensures their needs are identified and that they are assisted as they engage and work through their personalised plans.

I want to thank our partners who have helped produce this strategy and I know they, together with us in West Suffolk are committed to preventing and reducing homelessness, tackling its main causes and supporting those in need.

Cllr Sara Mildmay-White,
Cabinet Member for Housing

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area, and based on the findings, develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness.

West Suffolk Council produced its first Homelessness Strategy in 2015, which covers the period to 2018. The strategy has been reviewed and this new strategy published. The timing of this new strategy is particularly relevant as the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the biggest change to homelessness legislation in 40 years, came into force in April 2018.

The Act has an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness and on partnership working with statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies. This ensures individuals' needs are identified and that they are assisted as they engage and work through their personalised plans.

The Act has a focus on helping individuals to access housing and we need to make sure that we have effective pathways to work collaboratively with and encourage people to secure their own accommodation.

In August 2018, central Government introduced a Rough Sleeping Strategy. The focus is on prevention, which is at the core of the Homelessness Reduction Act, intervention, where people experiencing rough sleeping are supported with help to ensure it never happens again and recovery, where sustainable accommodation and flexible support is given so people can maintain a stable home. This strategy has been updated in response to the Rough Sleeping Strategy and the commitments are reflected in our existing actions.

Residents in West Suffolk need suitable and affordable housing to achieve their ambitions, whether for family life, career development or

a fulfilling retirement. The local conditions in West Suffolk make housing particularly difficult to afford, given relatively high house prices and low wages. The council therefore has an important role to play in seeking to address this situation and to ensure housing is suitable for changing demographics, including an ageing population. West Suffolk Council is also working to improve the quality of housing, so as to ensure it supports the health and wellbeing of residents, both in our towns and in our rural areas. In recent years, while the focus has increased on the supply of appropriate housing, the Council has also responded to rising homelessness in West Suffolk by investing resources in prevention and securing suitable accommodation for those people in crisis.

The development of this Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy is an important part of our approach to preventing and reducing homelessness across West Suffolk. Other activities that support the reduction of homelessness are outlined in West Suffolk's Housing Strategy and in the Strategic Framework 2018-2020.

Since the publication of our first Homelessness Strategy, we have made progress both in preventing homelessness and helping individuals who have, for whatever reason, become homeless:

1. In 2015, West Suffolk invested in a property and converted a former bed and breakfast facility into a property that can accommodate up to six families who have become homeless and are in need of temporary accommodation. A property was also purchased in Bury St Edmunds to provide five units of accommodation for those with low level support needs.
2. We focused much of our work on prevention – in 2017 we actively assisted

- or prevented some 500 households across West Suffolk, from becoming homeless.
3. We established a number of arrangements with housing providers to secure supported accommodation, including Newmarket Open Door, YMCA and Home Group.
 4. We continue to ensure that no family would have to spend more than six weeks in bed and breakfast accommodation.
 5. We successfully bid for funding from the then Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) domestic abuse accommodation fund. Funding of £516,244 has been granted to partners to provide accommodation for victims of domestic abuse across Suffolk.
 6. We were also successful in our bid for funding for a rough sleeper outreach worker to work across the areas cover by West Suffolk, Babergh and Mid-Suffolk councils. The outreach worker helps us further achieve our aim to reduce rough sleeping by providing a point of contact for individuals who are either rough sleeping or who are homeless and at risk of rough sleeping. The outreach worker also has a role working with agencies and our partners to develop ways of preventing homelessness. This post is now included within the councils' staffing structure.
 7. We have further increased our outreach services with joint funding for two more outreach workers, one of which will specialise in helping people trying to overcome drink or drug issues.
 8. We invested £250,000 in the housing team to provide additional resourcing for advice and prevention. This includes the establishment of new posts to provide housing solutions including Welfare Support.
 9. We provided additional funding to Citizens' Advice to increase capacity for budgeting advice to support those people who are receiving Universal Credit.

10. We established a Winter Night Shelter to provide accommodation for rough sleepers over the winter months.
11. We continue to fund a specialist post within the Probation Service to find accommodation and support those leaving the criminal justice system.
12. We have begun to develop a No Second Night Out partnership.
13. We funded two bed spaces for prolific offenders, working with police and probation to support rehabilitation.

In order to develop this new Strategy we have: (i) reviewed progress since the approval of the first strategy; (ii) undertaken detailed analysis of homelessness in the area (Appendix A); and (iii) consulted a number of partners in the statutory and voluntary sector.

In accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002, West Suffolk Council has conducted a review of homelessness in the area between November 2017 and April 2018. The review takes the form of an evidence base that is attached as Appendix A to the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The depth and scope of the review has contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the key issues behind homelessness in West Suffolk. It has enabled us to consider where we need to focus our attention in the future.

2. Our vision

West Suffolk Council is committed to preventing and reducing homelessness, tackling the main causes of homelessness and supporting those in need.

Through this new Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy, West Suffolk Council is responding to a period of change, not only through the Homelessness Reduction Act but also the significant financial challenges to public services, housing demand which squeezes affordability and as a result puts pressure on social housing and the impact of welfare reforms. This strategy builds on the recent achievements already described and responds to the new ways in which homelessness and support services are delivered.

The vision of this strategy is to:

Deliver a focused and accessible service to prevent homelessness and assist homeless people to find a settled home.

The main objectives are to:

1. provide a service with a focus on preventing or relieving homelessness ensuring those people have access to effective support services
2. ensure that homeless people are supported to secure a settled home
3. work collaboratively in finding housing solutions for those people threatened with homelessness.

In order to achieve these objectives, we have identified five priorities to deliver.

These priorities have emerged from a combination of analysis of the outcomes of the first Homelessness Strategy, consultation with our partners and public, the changing national and local context which is a response to the ongoing welfare reforms and new legislation, in particular the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The five priorities are set out overleaf and they are explored in further detail, together with actions, in section 6:

Priority one: Homelessness prevention

We will continue to focus on preventing homelessness.

Priority two: Tackling rough sleeping

Central government has set a target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and to eliminate it altogether by 2027. We will continue to invest in tackling rough sleeping. One of the ways that we will do this is by establishing a No Second Night Out partnership which will support the Government's aims.

Priority three: Supporting vulnerable households

We will ensure that our services remain accessible to all and that there is targeted support for the most vulnerable households, such as those affected by domestic abuse, people leaving care, people with mental health issues, members of the Armed Forces and prison leavers.

Priority four: Increasing accommodation options

We will respond to the challenging local housing market conditions enabling a wide range of accommodation options, including providing advice and support to landlords to help develop a private rented sector that is better suited to local needs.

Priority five: Supporting the implementation of welfare reforms

We will work in partnership with support agencies and services to offer solutions that help people to maintain tenancies.



3. National and regional context

National and regional homelessness trends

The Homelessness Monitor: England 2017 commissioned by Crisis provides a useful overview of the current national and regional context in terms of homelessness.

The report shows that homelessness application acceptance rates have gone up nationally and regionally in recent years. At nearly 58,000, annual homelessness application acceptances were some 18,000 higher across England in 2015/16 than in 2009/10. With a rise of 6% over the past year, application acceptances now stand 44% above their 2009/10 low point.

The number of people sleeping rough has been increasing nationally for a number of years and more recently in West Suffolk (see Appendix A for more detail of homelessness and rough sleeping data).

Statutory duties, policy and guidance

The Homelessness Reduction Act

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 changes the way homelessness advice and assistance is provided by councils.

The Act reforms the homelessness duties to ensure that councils provide meaningful advice and assistance to those people who do not fall into a priority need category or who have been found to be intentionally homeless.

In particular this is likely to have a positive impact for singles or couples with no children where previously legislation had not prescribed much to assist them.

The Act has introduced the following:

1. The definition of being threatened with homelessness be extended from 28 days to 56 days, meaning councils can start working with people at an earlier date.
2. Councils must accept a valid 'section 21' notice as evidence that the tenant is threatened with homelessness.
3. A greater duty to give advice and information to a wider range of people at a much earlier stage than previously offered.
4. Duty to assess all eligible applicants' cases and agree a plan (known as the 'personal housing plan').
5. The creation of a stronger prevention duty for anyone threatened with homelessness and eligible for assistance. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation, or helping them to find a new place to live.
6. A new relief duty which is available to all those who are homeless, have a local connection and are eligible regardless of whether they have a priority need. It requires councils to take reasonable steps to help secure accommodation. This help could be, for example, the provision of a rent deposit or debt advice. Those who have a priority need (for example they have dependent children or are vulnerable in some way) may be provided with interim accommodation while the council carries out the reasonable steps.
7. Duties to help to secure accommodation.
8. Incentives to people to engage in prevention and relief work by allowing councils to discharge their prevention and relief duties if an applicant unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the course of action proposed.
9. A right for councils to discharge the prevention and relief duties by providing

accommodation with a reasonable prospect of this being available for at least the next six months. This does not need to be social housing.

10. A right to a review at the prevention, relief and main duty stages to ensure councils are held to account.
11. A requirement to collect data in order to monitor the overall effectiveness of the new legislation.

West Suffolk Council already take steps at an early stage to help those threatened with homelessness. However, the additional requirements as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act have also meant a redesign of the way services are provided, with additional members of staff and a new approach to the way advice and support is provided.

Other legislation

In addition, the housing team has to consider duties under the following and/or are impacted by the following legislation:

- Localism Act 2011
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Deregulation Act 2015
- Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016
- Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2018
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Children and Social Care Act 2017

4. The West Suffolk context

This section provides an overview of the West Suffolk area with a focus on its population, deprivation, economic activity and housing availability.

More detailed data on housing demand and is contained in Appendix A.

Population

West Suffolk’s population is set to grow significantly in the future, and with an ageing demographic in comparison with many parts of the country. This poses challenges for the Council in ensuring the right kinds of housing, together with employment and infrastructure, are available for our growing population in both urban and rural areas.

The ONS 2016 Mid-year population estimates that the total population of West Suffolk in 2016 was 177,385. It shows that 9.3% of West Suffolk’s population was over 75 (compared to 8.1% of England’s population). Between 2017 and 2030, the population of West Suffolk is predicted to grow by 8% (compared to 9% in England as a whole). The over 75s population is predicted to grow by 55% (compared to 47% in England as a whole).

This clearly presents West Suffolk with significant challenges in terms of the increased population of over 75 year olds and how we help meet their needs.¹

The Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) provides indicators of deprivation at local authority and lower super output area level (LSOA). Lower super output areas are a statistical geography and are smaller in size than wards. They are a

statistical cluster of around 1,500 people.

There are seven domains that look at deprivation and together they represent the IMD.

Domain	Rank	
	Forest Heath	St Edmundsbury
Overall IMD Rank	140	196
Income	208	240
Employment	250	230
Education	20	129
Health	180	203
Crime	140	198
Barriers to Services	26	32
Living Environment	187	257

Ranked out of 326 local authorities where 1 = most deprived

Forest Heath ranks poorly for education and both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury rank poorly for barriers to services.

There are 32,844 LSOAs in England, 66 of these are in St Edmundsbury and 34 in Forest Heath. Of the 100 LSOAs in West Suffolk only two (2%) are in the **most** deprived 20% of all LSOAs nationally. 14 (14%) are in the 20% **least** deprived LSOAs in England.

Socio-economic

West Suffolk’s workforce is growing faster than surrounding areas and the country as a whole, and employment among young people is particularly healthy. However, wage levels remain below the national average, leading to a renewed focus on attracting high quality

¹ ONS 2014-based Sub-National population projections

employment to the area, supported by training and skills development.

In 2016 workers in West Suffolk were employed in the five following main sectors: business administration and support services, manufacturing, health, retail and accommodation and food services.²

Economic activity

Between October 2016 and September 2017, the percentage of 16-64 year olds who were economically active³ was 83.4% across West Suffolk compared to 78.1% for Great Britain as a whole.

In 2015, 83.3% of West Suffolk employees worked in services, 11.1% worked in manufacturing and 4.4% worked in construction.⁴

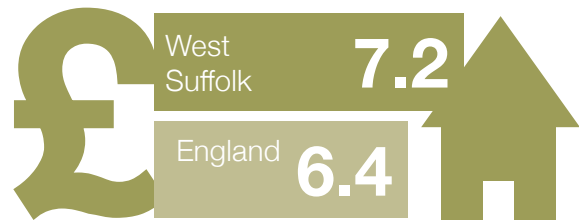
The weekly median pay (gross) for full time workers in Forest Heath in 2017 was £506.70, in St Edmundsbury it was £536.40 compared to £555.30 in England.⁵

Housing affordability

The infographic below shows that compared to earnings, property in West Suffolk is less affordable than England as a whole which has a significant impact on options available to local people and on the services we deliver.

As of November 2017, the percentage of out-of-work benefits claimants in Forest Heath was 0.7%, in St Edmundsbury it was 1.1% and across Great Britain it was 1.9%.⁶

The estimated ratio of average earnings to average property price in West Suffolk in 2017 was 7.2 compared to a ratio of 6.4 for England as a whole.



Ratio of average earnings (full time workers' mean gross annual pay) : (Mean semi-detached property price). Comparisons using ratios of lower quartile earnings to lower quartile house prices can also be used, which show further problems with affordability in West Suffolk. As a rule of thumb, house prices of up to 3 - 3.5 times household income are considered affordable.

Source: Wage levels - Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings. House prices - Gov.uk - UK House Price Index: data downloads Aug 2017

It should be noted that under Universal Credit, a broader span of claimants are required to look for work than under Jobseeker's Allowance. As Universal Credit Service is rolled out in particular areas, the number of people recorded as being on the Claimant Count is likely to rise.

Health and wellbeing

Housing that meets the minimum standard and is suitable and warm, is essential to ensure the health and wellbeing of residents. We understand that housing is a wider determinant of health.

Male life expectancy is 80.5 years in Forest Heath and 81.9 years in St Edmundsbury compared to 79.5 years in England. Female life expectancy is 83.3 years in Forest Heath

² Business Register and Employment Survey

³ NOMIS Annual population survey October 2016 to September 2017

⁴ NOMIS Annual population survey 2015

⁵ Annual survey of hours and earnings

⁶ ONS claimant count

and 84.6 years in St Edmundsbury compared to 83.1 years in England. Across Suffolk, healthy life expectancy for males is 65.1 years compared to 63.4 years in England⁷. Healthy life expectancy for females across Suffolk is 66.7 compared to 64.1 years in England. Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of the number of years lived in “very good” or “good” general health, based on how individuals perceive their general health.

In 2015, the top three causes of death across West Suffolk were cancers, diseases of the circulatory system and diseases of the respiratory system⁸.

In 2015/16, the prevalence of depression in Suffolk was 8.9% compared with 8.3% in England.⁹ In 2015/16, the prevalence of severe

mental illness for those registered with a GP was 0.78%, this is lower than the England value of 0.990% and equates to 1,919 individuals in West Suffolk. In 2014/15, 7,516 of people who are registered with a GP in Suffolk have been diagnosed with schizophrenia, bipolar or other psychoses¹⁰.

In 2015/16 a personal wellbeing survey¹¹ for those aged 16+ in Suffolk found that: 1 in 3 reported low happiness (7-8%), 1 in 5 reported high anxiety (18.8%), 1 in 25 reported low life satisfaction (4.4%) and 1 in 30 reported low worthwhileness (3.5%).

7 www.phoutcomes.info (2013-15)

8 NOMIS

9 [Healthy Suffolk.org.uk/JSNA](http://HealthySuffolk.org.uk/JSNA)

10 www.fingertips.phe.org mental health profile MH JSNA

11 ONS.gov.uk/people, population and community/wellbeing/localauthorityupdate2015to2016

5. Strategic context

This section outlines the key strategies which need to be taken into account alongside the delivery of this Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020

West Suffolk Council's strategic framework sets out the vision and aims that the Council will be working with others to achieve over the next two years, as follows:

Supporting and investing in our west Suffolk communities and businesses to encourage and manage ambitious growth in prosperity and quality of life for all.

To achieve this vision, the focus will be on the three main strategic priorities which are:

1. growth in West Suffolk's economy for the benefit of all our residents and UK plc
2. resilient families and communities that are healthy and active
3. increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk both in our towns and rural areas.

With a particular focus on housing, the priorities as set out in the Strategic Framework are to:

- plan for housing to meet the needs of current and future generations throughout their lifetimes, that is properly supported by infrastructure, facilities and community networks
- improve the quality of housing and the local environment for our residents
- enable people to access suitable and sustainable housing.

West Suffolk Housing Strategy

Our Housing Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for increasing the overall supply of housing in the area. The Strategy will be developed later in 2018 and will support the delivery of the Council's housing priorities which are:

1. plan for housing to meet the needs of current and future generations throughout their lifetimes, that is property supported by infrastructure, facilities and community networks
2. improve the quality of housing and the local environment for our residents
3. enable people to access suitable and sustainable housing.

Domestic Abuse Strategy

The Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board has widened its responsibilities around domestic abuse to include Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) which is in line with a refreshed strategy published by central Government. It acknowledges however that victim and perpetrators can be women, men, girls and boys.

The vision for Suffolk's Violence Against Women and Girls Multi Agency Strategy is as follows:

Ensure that victims of abuse in Suffolk are safe and supported.

To achieve this the main objectives are:

1. to reduce the prevalence of all forms of VAWG in Suffolk
2. increase the early identification and intervention with victims of VAWG

3. build cross-agency skills and capability to provide effective VAWG advice and support services
4. improve the criminal justice response to VAWG.

Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing Board was established in 2013 and it has a duty to encourage integrated working between health, care, police and other public services in order to improve wellbeing outcomes for Suffolk. It has an important strategic influence in encouraging joined up, integrated and system wide working to improve outcomes for local people.

In 2015, Suffolk's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2022 was refreshed. The following strategic outcomes for years 4-6 of the strategy were agreed:

- Outcome one: Every child in Suffolk has the best start in life
- Outcome two: Improving independent life for people with physical and learning disabilities
- Outcome three: Older people in Suffolk have a good quality of life
- Outcome four: People in Suffolk have the opportunity to improve their mental health and wellbeing

Given that housing is a wider determinate of health, it is important that the actions within this strategy support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Board's outcomes. Furthermore, given that the Council requires the support and expertise of other agencies to meet its homelessness duties, it is vital that effective partnership working is central to this strategy. While the statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness rest with the Council, the reality is that input from a wide cross-section of public and voluntary partners is needed to find and

retain accommodation.

Housing Forum

The councils' Chair the West Suffolk Housing Forum. The purpose of this forum is to bring together statutory and voluntary sector partners, including housing providers, to support some of the most vulnerable individuals and households. Cases discussed are usually about those people who are sleeping rough or those who are struggling to maintain tenancies. The aim is to have a joint approach with all organisations so that information can be shared and action co-ordinated. Any organisation can add cases for discussion and outcomes are shared.

Working in partnership

The Council works closely with a range of partners in the statutory and voluntary sector and recognise that there are a range of factors that contribute to homelessness. Furthermore the solutions for these can only be found by partners working together as part of a coherent approach to tackling homelessness. Examples of joint working include:

Suffolk and Cambridgeshire partnerships:

A number of Suffolk and Cambridge-sub region partnership meetings are in place to provide a forum for senior managers to discuss best practice, sharing resources and agreeing collective training and development. They also provides an opportunity for organisations to discuss strategic and operational matters with a wider range of district housing authorities.

Joint pathways for support: Suffolk housing authorities are working together to develop pathways for support, particularly for vulnerable individuals such as people with mental health issues, people leaving care, people leaving prison. These pathways will provide consistency of support for the individuals and enable

organisations working across the county (and wider) to understand the requirements of housing teams.

Joint staffing: The Council continues to explore opportunities for sharing resources, including joint staffing posts, to increase resilience and access to specialist skills and support services. Joint posts are currently in place for outreach work and for domestic abuse support and the Council will continue to identify opportunities for sharing staff with other organisations where there is mutual benefit. Further conversations are being explored

with partners, particularly in order to increase capacity for helping people with mental health issues.

Universal Credit partnership: The councils have coordinated the local response to Universal Credit to ensure the right level of support is in place and that organisations are able to signpost effectively. The council chairs a partnership of the Citizens Advice Bureau, local housing providers, Jobcentres and the county council.

6. 2018-2023 homelessness priorities

This five year strategy covers the period 2018-2023, and seeks to further strengthen the partnership working in place in West Suffolk and to continue to make significant improvements in alleviating homelessness.

We will continue to work to prevent homelessness and help local families and individuals. This will be achieved through the adoption of the following five inter-relating priorities. Key actions across each of the five priorities are detailed in the delivery plan attached as Appendix B.

Our priorities and actions are aligned with our Strategic Plan 2018-2020 and with the Housing Strategy.

The five priorities are:

Priority one: Homelessness prevention

We will continue to focus on prevention of homelessness in the first instance as has been our strategy prior to its emphasis in the Homelessness Reduction Act. We will work in partnership with residents, communities, registered providers and other partner organisations to prevent homelessness and ensure families and individuals are appropriately housed.

We know that many people are experiencing housing difficulties and sometimes this can reach a crisis point before they ask for advice from homelessness services. We want to reach people earlier with the right advice, practical help and support to help them to either keep their current home or move home in a planned way rather than through eviction.

The Homelessness Reduction Act enables us to support people much earlier in the process

(56 days as opposed to 28 days). It also places a duty on public sector organisations to refer cases to us who they consider to be homeless or threatened with homelessness. This statutory duty does not include registered providers (housing associations). We have, however, already put in place local arrangements for these referrals so that support can be provided at a much earlier stage.

The Act strengthens our duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants including those who do not have priority need or those who may be considered intentionally homeless and regardless of local connection. Given the increased number of people who will require support, we must make sure that responses are both timely and every contact is made to count whether directly to housing or with other services.

The housing team must report to Government each quarter detailing what prevention activity has been undertaken. In order for the council to discharge the prevention and relief duties, it has to be satisfied that accommodation is available and that there is a reasonable prospect of this being available for at least the next six months. This accommodation could be social housing or private housing. As a consequence, the Council will need to provide advice and information to applicants to ensure that they are fully aware of all accommodation options available to them. Furthermore, given the lack of social housing availability, the affordability of housing and the costs in the private rented sector, the Council will need to be proactive and enable different accommodation options. This will include boosting the availability of affordable private rented homes (see priority four for more detail).

To deliver this priority we will:

- Provide high quality timely advice to all residents on their housing options.
- For people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, we will agree a personal housing plan that sets out the actions they can take and we will take to enable the applicant to help themselves. We will review our casework management system to ensure we can monitor progress and report on the outcomes of advice given.
- Identify people at risk of homelessness at an earlier stage and develop interventions to prevent them from being threatened with or becoming homeless.
- Identify ways to encourage tenancy sustainment and prevent recurring homelessness by helping people sustain settled accommodation.
- Provide tailored advice for people at greater risk of homelessness including young single people, people released from prison, people leaving care, victims of domestic abuse, former members of the armed forces, people leaving hospital, people with learning difficulties, people with mental health issues and Gypsies and Travellers (also linked to actions around priority three).
- Develop a prevention toolkit, training and advice to help organisations respond to the risk of homelessness at an earlier stage.
- Ensure that the statutory and voluntary sector are aware of the requirements and expectations of the Homelessness Reduction Act so that they can provide the right support and advice.
- With partners, agree clear pathways and referral routes. This will include public bodies that will have a new duty to refer cases as well as implement protocols for information sharing between services working with customers at risk of homelessness.
- Improve our data collection and recording. Use data and predictive analysis to help

target resources to prevent homelessness and identify and interact with people in need of support and advice, in order to prevent homelessness from occurring. This will include developing local community based responses offering specialist advice and signposting to services in those geographical areas identified as having higher levels of homelessness.

- Make better use of debt and financial advice to improve prevention work.
- Better align assessment processes with statutory services and explore housing issues where appropriate as a key line of questioning.
- Work with partners through the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that the health benefits of individuals and families having a settled home, remain high on its agenda.
- Ensure that people in temporary accommodation are supported to access services and ensure that referrals are made to relevant floating support. Floating support provides the flexibility to support people wherever they are living.

Priority two: Tackling rough sleeping

Central government has set a target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and to eliminate it altogether by 2027. We will continue to invest in alleviating rough sleeping by establishing a No Second Night Out partnership which will support the Government's aims.

We want to see an end to rough sleeping in West Suffolk by doing more to prevent the risk and improve the support that is available. The main focus currently is on dealing with rough sleeping at crisis point or mitigating the impact. There are a range of services but the activity needs more co-ordination. We will concentrate more on preventing rough sleeping happening and improving the effectiveness of services for entrenched rough sleepers.

The Government defines rough sleeping as people sleeping or bedded down in the open air and people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation. A long term rough sleeper is defined as someone who has been identified as sleeping rough on at least 50 occasions over a five year period.

People who become entrenched in rough sleeping are more likely to have complex mental and physical health needs and a shortened life expectancy. Most have previously been involved in programmes of support and have lost permanent and supported housing. Supporting entrenched rough sleepers will link to our work under priority three to improve partnership work for the most vulnerable to homelessness.

West Suffolk has seen a sharp increase in numbers of rough sleepers. We have, and will continue, to work hard with partners to address that situation. In 2011, there were four rough sleepers across West Suffolk and this number increased to 29 rough sleepers in 2017. Of the 325 local authorities, in 2017 West Suffolk ranked 284 out of 325 (a ranking of 325 indicates the highest number of rough sleepers per 1000 head of population).

In 2017/18, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government launched a £30 million fund to help areas with the highest levels of rough sleepers. West Suffolk secured Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) grant to deliver targeted interventions that could be implemented quickly and make a real difference to the number of rough sleepers on the streets. In 2018/19 West Suffolk received £245,782 of RSI funding and £345,562 in 2019/20. The RSI grant funded the following: a rough sleeper co-ordinator role, outreach provision, increased floating support, extension to the existing emergency accommodation and identifying and funding temporary accommodation. The specific actions put in place as a result of the RSI funding are included in the actions below.

To deliver this priority we will:

- Use dedicated support to work with rough sleepers and try to address the problems that lead to rough sleeping and being at risk of sleeping rough. This will include the development of a 'No Second Night Out' partnership. No Second Night Out is aimed at ensuring that people who spend a night sleeping rough for the first time do not spend a second night on the streets. This means that rapid support is provided to new rough sleepers so that they do not have to sleep out for a second night.
- Implement pathways for tackling homelessness, including identifying risks early, promoting self-help and resilience for those who are able to help themselves and proactive help for those who are too vulnerable to help themselves.
- Deliver robust services for those who are homeless. Our work will recognise that some people need more than just a roof over their head. We will work in partnership to provide support and stability to their lives, with the aim of breaking the cycle of homelessness.
- Work with local authorities across Suffolk and the Cambridge sub-region to improve the service offer and outcomes over the next two years including support to people leaving institutions (for example hospitals and prisons).
- Further enhance coordination across statutory, commissioned and voluntary services that are working with rough sleepers to coordinate activity, share information and work together on initiatives.
- Continue to access external funding to support outreach and prevention activity, building on the success of previous bids for funding from government and Suffolk Public Health.
- Continue to provide Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)
- Help people with entrenched patterns of rough sleeping more holistically through

better collaborative working and support tailored to their individual needs.

- If people have come from another area, should they wish, we will reconnect them back to their local community where they have support that they need. There will however be some occasions when there is a good reason why they shouldn't return to a previous area, and naturally we will respect this.
- Provide effective information to the public about rough sleeping and how they can help if they have concerns.
- Recruit and establish Rough Sleeper Outreach Team (1 x Co-ordinator, 1 x Mental Health specialist, 1 x Drug and Alcohol specialist, 2 x Outreach and Resettlement).
- Increase the accommodation options available ring fenced for rough sleepers, including the recruitment of additional support staff.
- Extend emergency accommodation provision by the provision of additional night support worker.
- Agree, manage and monitor service level agreements with each provider for the use of ring fenced accommodation.
- Use additional £25,000 fund for provision of SWEP accommodation.
- Undertake rough sleeper counts every two months from September 2018.
- Work with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and our partners to tackle street activity.

Priority three: Support for vulnerable households

We will ensure that our services remain accessible to all whilst ensuring there is targeted support for the most vulnerable households.

We aim to increase the resilience of people and communities, equip them with the necessary skills to prevent crises, such as homelessness, before they occur.

For some people who become homeless the provision of suitable accommodation is the only problem that needs to be addressed. However, many other people can become homeless or threatened by homelessness due to a range of support needs. Some vulnerable groups are at a greater risk of homelessness and/or repeated incidence of housing instability. This includes young people, those with complex needs, substance misusers and victims of domestic abuse. There are also groups with very complex needs who may be substance misusers, have mental health issues and have had contact with the criminal justice system. We will improve our targeted interventions and partnership work to help people find lasting housing solutions. This includes how we assess needs and plan support jointly across agencies and design the specific services to be provided.

By working with our partners to provide targeted, specialist support, we endeavour to limit the number of vulnerable people who become homeless.

We aim to achieve this by developing new ways of co-commissioning services with partners, exploring the Housing First model. The model is a new evidence-based approach to supporting people with high needs and a history of entrenched or repeat homelessness to live in their own homes. The aim is to provide a stable and independent home with intensive personalised support to people with multiple and complex needs.

We will continue to influence commissioning and services provided by other organisations to ensure there is effective support in place for those who need it.

This updated strategy includes a Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (Appendix C). The purpose of the policy is to set out how we will procure sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet demand and how we will place households in temporary accommodation for the best possible outcomes.

To deliver this priority we will:

- Explore options for the provision of more temporary accommodation, in order to house individuals and families, including those who have experienced domestic abuse.
- Support the monitoring of housing related support, we will work with partners to identify the resources that are available to meet the support needs of all those groups that are at high risk of homelessness.
- Explore the Housing First model and continue to influence commissioning decisions, made by other agencies, in order that contracts support the outcomes we are aiming to achieve and that appropriate resources are allocated to West Suffolk.
- Continue to monitor and review pathways and referral processes for vulnerable groups to ensure that they provide the right level of support and are fit for purpose.
- Work with partners across Suffolk to ensure there is appropriate provision of domestic abuse support and accommodation, including building on the satellite accommodation already in place.
- Continue to identify opportunities to share resourcing, including staff, to support vulnerable households. Share posts and have funding in place to support domestic abuse, and rough sleepers.
- Explore opportunities to increase access to mental health services with a view to promoting these services to housing customers.
- Continue to operate the Housing Forum to provide a multi-agency approach to vulnerable customers, including those who

are rough sleeping and those in supported accommodation.

- Continue to hold and attend case management meetings with agencies, including adult and children services, to help prevent the most vulnerable families from becoming homeless.

Priority four: Increasing accommodation options

We need to improve the range of housing options available to both prevent homelessness and meet rehousing needs. As well as providing housing, we also want to improve the support available to help people keep their home and live independently. The West Suffolk Housing Strategy sets out in detail how the council will use its influence, including through its planning and regulatory services, to increase the supply of housing in the area.

The Housing Team proactively source a wide range of accommodation options, either by direct provision or encouraging providers and commissioners, including: lodging schemes; shared accommodation; six months' tenancies; temporary accommodation; supported accommodation; and increased private sector provision.

We will respond to the challenging local housing market conditions by working collaboratively with, and offering advice and support to people and landlords to develop suitable private rented sector offers.

Having a settled home enables people to access support services, integrate into their local community and to obtain and sustain work and training. We will continue to manage the expectations of customers and ensure that we maximise access and availability not only to social rented accommodation but to other housing options. This approach will help us to meet housing need, prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation.

The homeless legislation expands the circumstances in which we can help an applicant find a private sector tenancy. We will therefore need to increase access to private rented housing for people who we have a duty to rehouse and other groups in housing need. This will help us provide meaningful options for people that we must help under the Homelessness Reduction Act. It enables us to offer more choice of property type and areas as well as recognising that not everybody is looking for a lifetime home.

This presents a challenge, as finding enough properties can be difficult due to the supply of housing, a very competitive housing market which means more people are private renting, the pressure that then puts on social rented accommodation, and issues around benefits.

The lower security of tenure is also an issue as the loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy is one of the main reasons for homelessness.

To deliver this priority we will:

- Improve access to good quality private rented housing to expand choices and provide affordable housing options for families and individuals. This includes supporting both tenants and landlords in developing new approaches that are attractive to all parties.
- Work with private sector landlords and developers to maximise the use of resources and opportunities for all vulnerable people across West Suffolk.
- Continue to review the effectiveness of the West Suffolk Lettings Partnership to increase access to quality private rented accommodation.
- Encourage private landlords to engage with the council by holding Landlord Forums which share best practice and offer advice and support.
- We will focus more on sustaining tenancies and providing timely advice to prevent a

housing crisis arising in the rented sector and working positively with landlords and tenants to improve positive outcomes.

- Work with registered providers and voluntary sector to increase access to accommodation, including: lodging schemes; shared accommodation (particularly for under 35s); temporary accommodation; and tenancies to support move on.
- Continue to influence the provision of supported accommodation by identifying need and demand.
- Support Suffolk County Council to manage its existing contracts, by providing robust operational feedback, and influencing the new contracts from 2020.
- Monitor use of bed and breakfast accommodation to ensure use only in emergency situations. Manage move on as soon as possible to improve the outcomes for individuals and families and reduce cost to the taxpayer.
- Ensure procedures are followed to manage the use of temporary accommodation and when used, to ensure that plans are in place to manage move on.

Priority five: Supporting the implementation of welfare reforms

We will continue to work in partnership with support agencies and services to offer solutions that help households to maintain tenancies. We already support households to maximise their income and to minimise outgoings to ensure they are able to manage rent or mortgage payments. Our Welfare Support and Income Recovery roles support individuals and households and identify ways of supporting them to sustain existing tenancies or to help whilst better accommodation options are found. This can include effective use of Discretionary Housing Payments.

We already work with partners at the Department of Work and Pensions, Jobcentres, Citizens' Advice, Anglia Revenues Partnership and registered housing providers, to ensure there is a collective response to Universal Credit. The partnership ensures there is effective signposting for support and contacts for helping vulnerable people. Digital assistance and personal budgeting support is provided by the council and partner agencies, such as Citizens' Advice.

To deliver this priority we will:

- Continue to develop the role of our Welfare Support Officer and Income Recovery posts to ensure they continue to support people to maximise income and minimise expenditure.
- Develop early intervention protocols with registered providers to ensure tenants retain their accommodation.
- Work with Anglia Revenues Partnership, the Citizens' Advice Bureau, Jobcentres,

Department of Works and Pensions and registered providers to support the roll out of Universal Credit.

- Work with partner organisations to provide timely financial advice to households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to debt.
- Support private sector landlords to understand the impact of Universal Credit and other welfare reform matters through the West Suffolk Lettings Partnership and Landlords Forum.
- Support customers with financial management advice and signpost to appropriate agencies.
- Work with Anglia Revenues Partnership to ensure effective allocation of Discretionary Housing Payment to support those who are experiencing difficulties as a result of welfare reform.

7. Equality analysis

An equality impact assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken on this strategy to ensure that there are no adverse effects for any particular group. The strategy contains priorities and actions which will be delivered to prevent homelessness and respond to those in housing need. It has relevance to equality because it impacts on West Suffolk's most vulnerable people. Additional support is identified for those who have priority needs, including people who are:

- pregnant or have dependent children
- vulnerable due to old age, mental illness or physical disability
- care leavers and young people
- veterans and those leaving the armed forces
- prison leavers
- people experiencing violence or threats of violence
- people experiencing homelessness as a result of an emergency

8. Governance and delivery of the strategy

The Council is committed to ensuring that together with partners, we have the skills, structures and infrastructure for the delivery of the strategy's priorities over the next five years.

West Suffolk Council is committed to working with partners to ensure that the priorities set out in the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy are delivered. The objectives in the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be achieved using the delivery plan (Appendix B) that identifies the main tasks needed to tackle and prevent homelessness over the next five years. Given the context of rapid change, the delivery plan will be reviewed every year to ensure that the tasks remain relevant and are revised where appropriate. A mid-term review is also planned for 2020.

Progress towards the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy delivery plan (Appendix B) will be monitored with feedback, if necessary, on the barriers to delivering the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy.



West Suffolk Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy

Version 3
September 2018
Updated August 2019

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If you have any queries about this policy document, please contact:

Email: customer.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Telephone: 01284 757605

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is an appendix to West Suffolk Council's Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023. The purpose of this policy is to set out how West Suffolk Council will procure sufficient units of temporary accommodation and place households in temporary accommodation.

Procurement of temporary accommodation to meet anticipated demand will be undertaken following the principles of:

- achieving value for money for the Council and its residents;
 - providing suitable accommodation for households in housing need; and
 - complying with the Council's contract standing orders.
- 1.2 Temporary accommodation is procured for households for whom homelessness cannot be prevented. It is required for the purposes of:
- accommodating new statutory accepted homeless applicants;
 - accommodating households while homelessness cases are investigated; and
 - reducing the use of nightly paid (bed and breakfast) accommodation.
- 1.3 The Council aims to procure sufficient **temporary accommodation** to accommodate homeless households within the local authority area as far as reasonably practicable or as close to where they were previously living. Temporary accommodation is usually provided on an ongoing short-term basis. The Council understands the resources available for use, the difficulties in procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation at affordable prices and the need to procure accommodation in nearby authorities.
- 1.4 **Emergency accommodation** is procured on a nightly paid basis in bed and breakfast accommodation, guest houses and hotels and is available for a short period, usually at a point of housing crisis. Due to increasing demand it is not always possible to procure sufficient emergency accommodation within West Suffolk. It is therefore sometimes necessary to procure emergency accommodation out of the area. When this happens it will be in an adjoining district where possible to minimise the distance. The household will be identified as requiring an in area placement and be prioritised for a move.

Placement of households in temporary accommodation, both within and outside the area. The Council has a duty to provide temporary or interim accommodation for households who approach the Council as homeless and who meet the criteria set out in The Housing Act 1996, Part VII as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.

- 1.5 This policy covers both the interim placements made under Section 188 Housing Act 1996, while homelessness enquiries are undertaken, and longer term temporary accommodation placements for households accepted as homeless under Section 193 of the same Act. Within this document, placements under both of these duties will be referred to as temporary accommodation placements.
- 1.6 The Council is dependent on a supply of accommodation to meet the needs of households who have been required to leave their previous accommodation and have not been able to secure alternative accommodation themselves or whilst the Council works with them to prevent their homelessness. In some cases, households have not been given warning and therefore may require emergency assistance to source such accommodation. The Council must have options in place to deal with such emergencies.
- 1.7 In accordance with the Housing Act Section 208 and paragraph 16.7 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance, the Council will, wherever reasonable and practical, try to secure suitable accommodation within West Suffolk to allow a household to maintain their existing networks, such as employment, schooling, medical care as well as family and social support. The Council has to be mindful of current prevailing housing conditions as well as demand and pressures that affect the Council on a daily basis, whilst taking into account the individual needs of the households requiring assistance.
- 1.8 Whilst the Council will have regard to this policy when allocating temporary accommodation, the Council retains its discretion to take into account any particular personal circumstances of an applicant or the household when allocating accommodation.
- 1.9 This policy operates in conjunction with the [Home-Link Lettings Policy](#), the [Discharge of the homelessness duty into the private rented sector](#) and the Council's Asset Management Strategy (note: currently being developed).

2. Procurement of temporary accommodation

This section sets out the current levels of homelessness, the need for temporary accommodation, types of temporary accommodation provided and how the Council will look to meet demand.

Homelessness in West Suffolk

- 2.1 The Council both maintains its own stock of temporary accommodation and has access to temporary accommodation in the area. In addition, the Council has procured additional temporary accommodation, usually in an emergency, from other providers and some of these are out of the area.
- 2.2 Please see Appendix A of the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy for data on homeless applications, homeless acceptances, reasons for homelessness, number of households in temporary accommodation and the reasons for homelessness.

Understanding the need for temporary accommodation

- 2.3 Please see section 1 (identifying current and future levels of homelessness) in Appendix A of the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy. It sets out factors that contribute to people becoming homeless, those most likely to become homeless or be threatened with homelessness and the factors that may affect future levels of homelessness.

Supply of temporary accommodation

- 2.4 We will continue our focus on the prevention of homelessness and wherever possible the Council provides longer-term accommodation before an applicant becomes homeless as a homeless prevention. However, it is sometimes necessary to use interim or temporary accommodation before longer-term accommodation becomes available either as homelessness relief or once the 56 day period ends pending a discharge of any duty owed.
- 2.5 The types of temporary accommodation currently used by the Council are set out below:
 - **Interim and emergency accommodation:** this is normally in the form of hostels, most of which have shared facilities and is provided within the district. This can also be nightly paid accommodation which is located outside of the district with either shared facilities or self-contained.
 - **Temporary accommodation:** provided by either West Suffolk Council or a third party providers usually in the district.
 - **Specialist accommodation:** there are different types of supported housing available for particular groups including young single homeless and rough

sleepers, mental health needs, substance misuse and refuge accommodation and younger families. Allocations to these schemes are determined by Housing Related Support, registered provider or agencies running the schemes (as appropriate). The Housing Related Support contract is managed by Suffolk County Council.

- 2.6 The table below sets out the sources and numbers of units of temporary accommodation supplied both in and out of the district as at July 2019.

Type of unit	Number as at 1 July 2019
Temporary accommodation	
- of which Registered Provider	34
- of which charity owned	53
- of which Council owned	4
Total	91

- 2.7 There are occasions when we use Bed and Breakfast accommodation for emergency or temporary accommodation. In 2018/19 there were approximately 15 families or individuals in Bed and Breakfast accommodation at any one time.

Maintaining supply to meet demand

- 2.8 The Council will explore ways to maintain the supply of good quality temporary accommodation that provides value for money to meet demand by:
- Seeking to increase the number of landlords engage in the West Suffolk Lettings Partnership;
 - Seeking to reduce the reliance on spot purchased nightly paid accommodation and bed and breakfast as far as possible by increasing the number of temporary accommodation properties available;
 - Seeking to expand the range of properties either in partnership with registered providers or, where value for money can be demonstrated, in the private rented sector;
 - Continuing to explore options for purchasing properties on the open market, subject to business cases and in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Strategy; and
 - Exploring options for working with lettings agencies.
- 2.9 The Council has increased its provision of temporary accommodation in recent years and will continue to monitor its requirements and take action accordingly. The long-term aim is to reduce reliance on spot purchased accommodation and to procure accommodation on a longer term basis whilst

maintaining sufficient flexibility to allow for demand fluctuation and avoid a costly over supply of temporary accommodation.

Meeting quality standards

- 2.10 All of our temporary accommodation must meet the appropriate suitability and quality checks. When appropriate, the Council carries out spot checks on nightly paid units. Furthermore the West Suffolk Landlords Forum meets on a quarterly basis to discuss the latest regulations, good practice and landlord obligations. To review the current accommodation offer and future needs. Monthly meetings on management on properties, RPs and providers and monitoring of SLAs.

3. Placement of households in temporary accommodation

This section sets out factors the Council will consider when placing households in temporary accommodation.

Suitability of accommodation

- 3.1 This policy takes into account the statutory requirements on councils in respect of the suitability of accommodation, including the Suitability of Accommodation Order 2012 and has regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as required by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.
- 3.2 When deciding if a temporary accommodation placement is suitable, consideration will be given to Chapter 17 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (dated [April 2019](#)) which states that the following factors need to be taken into account:
- a. Needs, requirements and circumstances of each household member**
- 3.3 The needs, requirements and circumstances of each household member should be considered, this includes any identified health or mobility issues, any care or support provided by agencies or the need to access specialist medical services.
- 3.4 The key factor to consider when assessing medical issues is whether the condition itself would make the accommodation unsuitable, for example offering a flat above the ground floor to a household member without the ability to climb stairs.
- 3.5 Consideration will be given to whether the accommodation is affordable for the applicant and their household.

b. The location of the accommodation

- 3.6 Factors to be considered include the ability to access the workplace if in paid employment, avoiding disruption to the education of young people, in particular those who are at critical education points such as those close to sitting GCSE examinations.
- 3.7 Where possible the Council will avoid placing applicants in isolated accommodation away from public transport, shops and other facilities in order for them to maintain established links with schools, doctors and key services to ensure the wellbeing of the family is maintained.

c. The size and facilities of the accommodation

- 3.8 The accommodation provided should have adequate space for the household and this would be assessed by taking into account the needs, requirements and circumstances of the household as outlined above.
- 3.9 Households requiring temporary accommodation will often be placed into accommodation that has fewer bedrooms than a household may be entitled to on a permanent basis. The condition of the decoration, furniture in the property (where applicable), the layout or type of accommodation, provision of parking and lack of access to a garden are extremely unlikely to be classed as acceptable reasons for refusals of offers.
- 3.10 Assessments in regard to suitability of temporary accommodation placement will be completed on a case by case basis to ensure that any temporary accommodation offered is considered reasonable and suitable for the household involved. These assessments are made within the context of the accommodation and resources that are available to the Council.
- 3.11 The individual needs and requirements of a household will be assessed by the Advice and Prevention Officer alongside the Accommodation Officer to confirm the allocation is suitable. Consideration is given to any risks that an applicant may pose to existing residents or members of the public.
- 3.12 Wherever possible, attempts will be made to identify suitable accommodation within the Council's accommodation, local registered provider stock or in the private rented sector.

Placements

- **Bed and Breakfast placements**

- 3.13 Circumstances may arise which require short notice placements of households into emergency temporary accommodation and therefore the options available can be very limited. In these cases the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation may be the only option available to fulfil the Council's temporary accommodation duty. In addition, if an applicant

contacts the Housing Options team outside of office hours and requires emergency accommodation, Bed and Breakfast will be the only available option.

3.14 Consideration is given to the code of guidance which states that Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not to be regarded as suitable for 16 and 17 year olds or applicants with family commitments, therefore Bed and Breakfast placements for households of this type are only to be used if no other accommodation is available. The Council aims for all Bed and Breakfast placements not to exceed a period of six weeks, however there may be exceptions to this if no other suitable accommodation options can be identified with the six week period. The average length of time a household spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation in 2018/19 was 19 days.

3.15 Whenever an applicant is accommodated in Bed and Breakfast, action will be taken to identify alternate temporary accommodation as quickly as possible.

- **Out of district placements**

3.16 Wherever possible the Council will seek to provide temporary accommodation within West Suffolk.

3.17 There are circumstances in which the Council needs to place households into Bed and Breakfast accommodation outside of West Suffolk, such as in cases where accommodation is required in an emergency and there is no availability located within West Suffolk with whom the Council has agreements in place.

3.18 Whenever an applicant is placed outside of West Suffolk, attempts will be made to identify alternate accommodation within the district as soon as possible.

3.19 In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate for a placement outside of the area to be arranged, for example where an applicant may be at risk within West Suffolk.

Offers and refusals

3.20 Applicants who are provided with temporary accommodation will be made one offer of suitable accommodation. The Council is under no legal obligation to allow the applicants to view this accommodation prior to acceptance.

3.21 For interim placements made under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 while homelessness enquiries are being undertaken, applicants do not have the right to request a review of the Council's decision as to the suitability of

an offer. However applicants do have a right of review of temporary accommodation placements once accepted as homeless under section 193 of the same Act.

- 3.22 If an applicant refuses an offer of temporary accommodation, they will be asked to provide a reason for their refusal which will be considered by the Advice and Prevention Officer. If the accommodation is still considered as suitable the Council will be under no obligation to offer any further temporary accommodation. The applicant would then need to decide whether to accept the offer or to source accommodation themselves.
- 3.23 If the specified reasons for refusal are considered valid, the offer would be withdrawn and alternate temporary accommodation options would be considered.
- 3.24 Where the Council decides that homeless applicants housed under Section 188 are not owed the main homelessness duty, they will be asked to leave their interim accommodation placement following a reasonable notice period, once being informed of the Council's decision in respect of their homeless application. This length of notice will vary depending on the household individual circumstances.

Decisions Plan

Key Decisions and other executive decisions to be considered

Date: 1 October 2019 to 31 May 2020

Publication Date: 6 September 2019

The following plan shows both the key decisions and other decisions/matters taken in private, that the Cabinet, Portfolio Holders, Joint Committees or Officers under delegated authority, are intending to take up to 31 May 2020. This table is updated on a monthly rolling basis and provides at least 28 clear days' notice of the consideration of any key decisions and of the taking of any items in private.

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

Members of the public may wish to:

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

In all instances, contact should be made with the named Officer in the first instance, either on the telephone number listed against their name, or via email using the format firstname.surname@westsuffolk.gov.uk or via West Suffolk Council, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3YU or College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Bury St Edmunds IP28 7EY.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
No later than 24/09/19 (NEW) Page 58	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP): Draft Local Industrial Strategy – Endorsement Following consultation with all Members, a consultation response on the first version of the draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was sent to NALEP by the Leader of the Council. A second version of this document is to be provided by NALEP and the Council will once more be consulted. Depending on the content of the second draft of the LIS, the Leader of the Council will be asked to either: 1. Endorse the content on the NALEP draft LIS on behalf of West Suffolk Council; or 2. Send further representations to NALEP	Not applicable	(PH) (D)	Leader of the Council	John Griffiths Leader of the Council 01284 757001	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613 Andrea Mayley Service Manager (Economic Development and Growth) 01284 757343	All Wards	Report to the Leader of the Council.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	as to why the document cannot be endorsed by West Suffolk Council.							
08/10/19 (ITEM REMOVED) Page 59	Member Development Strategy This item has been removed from the Decisions Plan as it is considered that Member Development will be disseminated in alternative ways rather than through the adoption of a specific Strategy.				Carol Bull Governance 07767 472419	Leah Mickleborough Service Manager (Democratic Services) 01284 757162		
08/10/19 (Deferred from 23/07/19) (Since publication this item has been deferred to a later date.)	Housing Delivery Plan: Update on First Phase The Cabinet will be asked to approve a housing delivery plan for West Suffolk. The Plan will set out a range of actions and interventions that the Council can take to increase the rate of housing delivery developed from a detailed analysis of the local	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Sara Mildmay-White Housing 01359 270580	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613 Simon Phelan Service Manager (Strategic Housing) 01638 719440	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with draft delivery plan.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	housing market.							
08/10/19 (Deferred from 23/07/19) D (Since publication this item has been deferred to a later date.)	<p>Review of West Suffolk's Children's and Vulnerable Adults' Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>In July 2018, the Government updated its statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.' The document sets out the legislative requirements and expectations of how key partners, including local authorities, should safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.</p> <p>West Suffolk Council will therefore review its Safeguarding Policy to reflect the updated guidance.</p>	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Sara Mildmay-White Housing 01359 270580	<p>Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613</p> <p>Simon Phelan Service Manager (Strategic Housing) 01638 719440</p>	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with draft policy.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
08/10/19	Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommending to Council the adoption of a new Asset Management Strategy and associated Asset Management Plan.	Possible Exempt Appendices: Paragraph 3	(R) – Council 05/11/19	Cabinet / Council	Susan Glossop Growth 01284 728377	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council with the possibility of Exempt Appendices.
08/10/19	West Suffolk's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy In response to fundamental changes to legislation and additional duties introduced through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, a new Homelessness Reduction Strategy for West Suffolk was adopted in June 2018. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government introduced its Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 and a delivery plan in December 2018. It requires local	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Sara Mildmay-White Housing 01359 270580	Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) 01284 757070	All Wards	Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet with draft policy and action plan.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	authorities to update their Homelessness Reduction Strategies and rebadge them to include rough sleeping.							
08/10/19 (NEW) (Since publication this item has been deferred to a later date.)	Shepherd's Grove Masterplan: Adoption The Cabinet or Portfolio Holder for Growth will be asked to consider adopting a masterplan for Shepherd's Grove, Stanton, which has been subject to consultation.	Not applicable	(D) or (PH)(D)	Cabinet or Portfolio Holder for Growth	Susan Glossop Growth 01284 728377	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613 Chris Rand Principal Planning Delivery/ Specialist Officer 01284 757352	Stanton	Report to Cabinet or Portfolio Holder for Growth with draft masterplan.
08/10/19 (NEW) (Since publication this item has been removed at the present time.)	Queensbury Lodge: Urgent Works Notice The Cabinet will be asked to approve the issuing of an Urgent Works Notice in relation to Queensbury Lodge, Newmarket.	Not applicable	(KD)	Cabinet	Susan Glossop Growth 01284 728377	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613	New-market West	Report to Cabinet.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
26/11/19	Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2020/2021 The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2020/2021.	Not applicable	(D) Consideration by Council will take place as part of the budget setting paper on 25/02/20	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet.
26/11/19	Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2020/2021 The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council the basis of the formal calculation for the Council Tax Base for West Suffolk Council for the financial year 2020/2021.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/19	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.
26/11/19	Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes 2019/2020 The Cabinet will be asked to consider proposals for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/19	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	Council Tax technical changes for West Suffolk Council prior to seeking its approval by Council.							
14/01/20 Page 64	Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2020/2021 Further to its consideration on 26 November 2019, the Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2020/2021.	Not applicable	(D) Consideration by Council will take place as part of the budget setting paper on 25/02/20	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet.
14/01/20 (Deferred from 26/11/19)	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt Appendices: Paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices.
14/01/20	Treasury Management Report 2019/2020 –	Not applicable	(R) – Council 25/02/20	Cabinet / Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and	Rachael Mann Assistant Director	All Wards	Recommendations of the

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
Page 65	<p>Investment Activity (1 April to 30 September 2019) The Cabinets will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and recommend to Council, the approval of the Treasury Management Report 2019-2020 which also summarises the investment activity for the period 1 April to 30 September 2019.</p>				Performance 07929 305787	(Resources and Performance) 01638 719245		Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
11/02/20	<p>Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2020/2021 Further to its consideration on previous occasions, the Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2020/2021.</p>	Not applicable	(D) Consideration by Council will take place as part of the budget setting paper on 25/02/20	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
11/02/20	Budget and Council Tax Setting 2020/2021 and Medium Term Financial Strategy The Cabinet will be asked to consider the proposals for the 2019/2020 budget (and beyond) and Medium Term Financial Strategy for West Suffolk Council, prior to its approval by Council. This report includes the Minimum Revenues Provision (MRP) Policy and Prudential Indicators.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 25/02/20	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.
11/02/20	Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2020/2021 and Treasury Management Code of Practice The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2020/2021 and Treasury Management Code of Practice for West Suffolk	Not applicable	(R) – Council 25/02/20	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	Council, which must be undertaken before the start of each financial year.							
11/02/20 Page 67	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt Appendices: Paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices.
24/03/20	Treasury Management Report 2019/2020 – Investment Activity (1 April to 31 December 2019) The Cabinets will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and recommend to Council, the approval of the Treasury Management Report 2019-2020 which also summarises the investment activity for the	Not applicable	(R) – Council 31/03/20	Cabinet / Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Performance 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245	All Wards	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected Decision Date	Subject and Purpose of Decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision Taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio Holder Contact Details	Lead Officer Contact Details	Wards Affected	Documents to be submitted
	period 1 April to 31 December 2019.							
24/03/20 Page 68	West Suffolk Pay Policy Statement 2020/2021 The Cabinets will Council approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2020/2021, together with the Gender Pay Gap Report contained within it.	Not applicable	(R) Council – 31/03/20	Cabinet / Council	Carol Bull Governance 07767 472419	Wendy Canham Service Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) 01284 757006	All Wards	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.

NOTE 1: DEFINITIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: RELEVANT PARAGRAPHS

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

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

PART 1

DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

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

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

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

NOTE 2: KEY DECISION DEFINITION

A key decision is an executive decision that either:

- (a) Results in new expenditure, or a reduced income or savings of more than £100k in any one year that has not otherwise been included in the Council's revenue or capital budgets.
- (b) Comprises or includes the making, approval or publication of a draft or final scheme, which is not a routine business decision, that may require, either directly or in the event of objections, the approval of a Minister of the Crown.
- (c) Results in the formation of a new company, limited liability partnership or joint venture.
- (d) Has a potentially detrimental impact on communities outside of West Suffolk District.
- (e) Is a decision that is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in a definable local community in the District, or on one or more wards, in that it will:
 - (i) Have a long-term, lasting impact on that community; or
 - (ii) Restrict the ability of individual businesses or residents in that area to undertake particular activities; or
 - (iii) Removes the provision of a service or facility for that community; or
 - (iv) Increases the charges payable by members of the community to provide a service or facility by more than 5%; or
 - (v) Have the potential to create significant local controversy or reputational damage to the Council
- (f) A matter that the decision maker considers to be a key decision.
- (g) Any matters that fall under the scope of e) above must be subject to consultation with the local Member(s) in Wards that are likely to be impacted by the decision prior to the decision being made.

NOTE 3: MEMBERSHIP OF BODIES MAKING KEY DECISIONS

(a) Membership of West Suffolk Council's Cabinet and their Portfolios

Cabinet Member	Portfolio
John Griffiths Sara Mildmay-White	Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council/ Housing
Sarah Broughton	Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance
Carol Bull	Portfolio Holder for Governance
Andy Drummond	Portfolio Holder for Regulatory
Robert Everitt	Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities
Susan Glossop	Portfolio Holder for Growth
Jo Rayner	Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs
Peter Stevens	Portfolio Holder for Operations

(b) Membership of the Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee (Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, East Suffolk Council, Fenland District Council and West Suffolk Council)

Full Breckland Cabinet Member	Full East Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet Member	Full East Suffolk Council Cabinet Member	Full Fenland District Council Cabinet Member	Full West Suffolk Council Cabinet Member
Philip Cowen	David Ambrose-Smith	Steve Gallant	Jan French	Sarah Broughton
Substitute Breckland Cabinet Members	Substitute East Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet Members	Substitute East Suffolk Council Cabinet Members	Substitute Fenland District Council Cabinet Members	Substitute West Suffolk Council Cabinet Members
Sam Chapman-Allen	David Brown	To be confirmed	David Connor	Sara Mildmay-White
Paul Claussen	Joshua Schumann	To be confirmed	Kim French	To be confirmed

Jennifer Eves
Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services)
Date: 6 September 2019



West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy and Plan

Report No:	CAB/WS/19/037	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	8 October 2019
	Council	5 November 2019
Cabinet Members:	<p>Councillor Susan Glossop Portfolio Holder for Growth Tel: 01284 728377 Email: susan.glossop@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Councillor Peter Stevens Portfolio Holder for Operations Tel: 01787 280284 Email: peter.stevens@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p>	
Lead officers:	<p>Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) Tel: 01284 757613 Email: julie.baird@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Mark Walsh Assistant Director (Operations) Tel: 01284 757300 Email: mark.walsh@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p>	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input 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 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>		

Wards impacted: **All Wards**

Recommendation: **Subject to the approval of Council, Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (1) approve the West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy attached at Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/037; and**
- (2) approve the delegations for property acquisitions as outlined in the Asset Management Plan attached at Appendix B and funded through the Investing in Growth Fund to be brought in line with those for non-property transactions from the same fund, as set out in Section 2.4 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/037.**

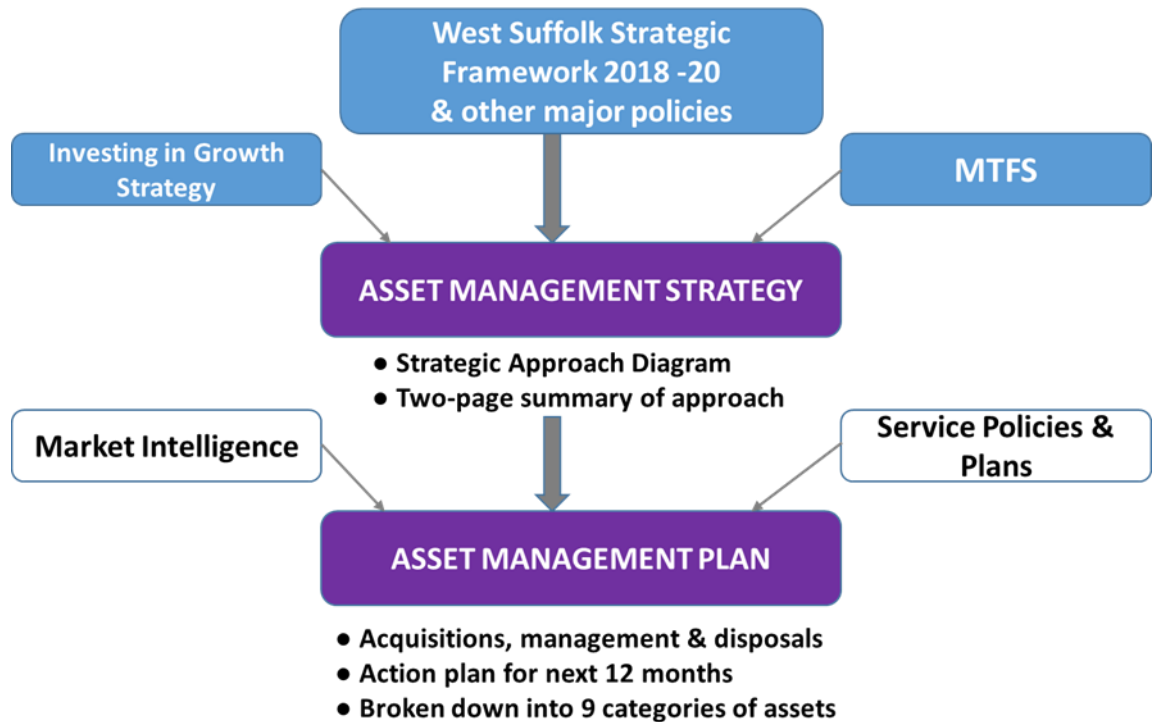
1. Background / Context

- 1.1 West Suffolk Council owns in excess of 600 land and property assets across the District, with a total value of £191m. These assets range across public buildings such as the Council Offices and Leisure Centres; specialist housing accommodation; car parks; commercial property investments; parks, recreation and open space; cemeteries; amenity land and a solar farm.
- 1.2 These assets are held for a number of reasons including providing valuable services and amenities to the residents, business and visitors in West Suffolk. Collectively these assets generate an annual revenue income of £10.98m which helps to support the delivery of services, whilst others bring wider social and economic growth benefits for our residents. Therefore it is very important that these land and property assets are managed, both individually and collectively as a portfolio, in the most effective and efficient way.
- 1.3 In the West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020, we undertook to:

"Develop an Asset Management Plan to ensure the operational and other assets owned by West Suffolk are used for maximum public benefit, including our office buildings, waste facilities, car parks, investment properties and energy assets such as Toggam Solar Farm. This will include joint initiatives such as the delivery of the West Suffolk Operational Hub and Mildenhall Hub, as part of the One Public Estate programme"
- 1.4 The West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy and Plan (AMSaP) set out in this paper is therefore delivering on that objective, as well as being in line with the approaches set out in the West Suffolk Growth Investment Strategy, adopted by both the former St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils in February 2018.
- 1.5 Delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is also a fundamental element of the Asset Management Strategy and Plan along with other individual service policies. This means that this Strategy and Plan is not a document which sits in isolation, but forms a "golden chain" with core Council policies and is expressed in those contexts.
- 1.6 The West Suffolk Asset Management Strategy and Plan (AMSaP) supports our behaving more commercially approach and provides the framework to both enable the council to maximise the value of its existing assets. Plus through future acquisitions ensure we continue to achieve the management of an overall balanced (risk/return) asset portfolio whilst generating additional revenue income streams to support the delivery of council services. The AMSaP therefore sets out a clear strategic and planned approach to how we acquire, manage, dispose, develop and maximise the potential of the Council's portfolio of land and property assets and interests.
- 1.7 This paper also sets out the financial structure and context under which the AMSaP will be delivered, along with a proposal on delegations to allow the Council to act swiftly where opportunities for investing arises, whilst still ensuring robust appraisal and value for money for the public purse.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The proposed Asset Management Plan sets out a clear working programme for the Council and its Officers for acquisitions, estate management and disposals.
- 2.2 As set out in the section 1/, the AMSaP does not sit on its own, but with a clear strategic and contextual link with other policies and documents across the Council. The following diagram demonstrates how these link together:



2.3 The AMSaP comprises two documents:

2.3.1 **Asset Management Strategy (Appendix A)**

In a simple, concise document, this sets out the overall strategic approach to land and property assets and the context with West Suffolk priorities.

2.3.2 **Asset Management Plan (Appendix B)**

This is a detailed spreadsheet which, across four sections, sets out:

- the Asset categories and individual policy contexts;
- a 12-month action plan (some actions for which will be rolling) for acquisitions, management, and disposals.

2.3.3 To help inform the actions set out in the Asset Management Plan external property consultants, NPS, were appointed to undertake an asset survey of the Council's portfolio. This included identifying opportunities to increase returns from the existing estate and address any underperforming assets. As part of this work, NPS also used local market intelligence provided by Barker Storey Matthews to suggest out where potential investment opportunities could be sought in order to provide a balanced portfolio and returns in-line with our Investing in Growth aspirations.

2.3.4 The first section of the Plan (Policy Summary (Appendix B1) sets out:

- the description of each asset category;
- how these asset types deliver the Council’s Strategic Priorities;
- the strategic approach for each asset category

The subsequent three sections each cover Acquisitions (Exempt Appendix B2), Estate Management (Appendix B3), and Disposals (Exempt Appendix B4) and sets out the actions for each asset category under each of those headings. Also included in each tab is the overarching approach; potential resource requirements (see **6.1 Financial**); and summary of delegations (see section **2.4**).

2.3.5 There are nine categories of asset set out in the Asset Management Plan, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Operational Property	Property assets used to deliver Council services
2. Commercial Investment and Economic Development	Held to provide commercial revenue returns. Also Promote SME businesses, business growth and support retention of key employers in West Suffolk.
3. Specialist Housing and Homelessness	The Council is not a stock holding authority, however may own properties providing emergency or specially adapted residential accommodation.
4. Barley Homes Pipeline	Land owned or acquired by the Council to be developed out by Barley Homes.
5. Strategic land for Residential and Commercial Development	Land to facilitate any type of development, either directly by the Council for retention, or sold to the market. This includes small parcels of land which may help facilitate wider development.
6. Leisure, Open Space and Recreation	Land and property held for community, leisure and recreational uses.
7. Land for Energy Infrastructure	Land and property used to provide or support energy infrastructure such as solar farms, wind turbines, solar panels on Council owned and third party properties.
8. Land without development potential	Majority of small land parcels owned by the Council normally as the result of legacy and which have no current or potential future value. In many cases this land may also form an ongoing liability for the Council.
9. Options, Overage, Covenants and other agreements on land and property not directly owned by the Council	Interests in land and property not directly owned by the Council. Examples include sold land subject to covenants or containing overage provisions. May also include third party land where the Council retains a liability/ Also includes land under option by the Council.

It is recognised that some assets will cover more than one category and/or be capable of moving between categories, for example an operational asset could become surplus and therefore might become a longer-term strategic land asset.

2.4 Delegations

- 2.4.1 When the opportunity arises for the Council to acquire property, commercially-driven companies often do not understand, or do not want to support the Council going through democratic decision making processes before making a decision themselves (e.g., in respect of an offer) due to the perceived time delay. This presents a risk to achieving our strategy, whereby opportunities may be lost whilst concluding the decision-making process. We therefore need to evaluate how we balance this risk against ensuring sound, democratic decisions are made in an appropriate way.
- 2.4.2 Whilst there are established delegations in place for Estate Management (5 year budgets, reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process) and Disposals (constitutional values), there are no specific delegations for acquisitions made from the Investing in Growth Fund, which is where the majority of land and property purchases are proposed to be funded from.
- 2.4.3 When the "Overarching West Suffolk Growth Investment Strategy, Governance and Delegation" was approved by Council on 20 February 2018, the delegations contained in that report for the Investing in Growth Fund were approved but did not apply on property (assets) investments. It was stated that specific delegations would be proposed as part of the development and approval of the Asset Management Strategy. Therefore as part of the developing the AMSaP we have reviewed the levels of delegations for acquisitions, as well as for Estate Management and Disposals.
- 2.4.5 The proposed delegations (which follow the already agreed non-property transactions for the fund) for property and asset transactions are:

Value	Decision Maker	Safeguards
Up to £0.5m	Portfolio Holder and Leader, in consultation with S.151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive Example decision of this nature – Development/extension of the rent-a-roof solar scheme	The requirements of the current (constitutional) portfolio holder delegation procedure will be followed. This includes that a Member may not make a decision relating to their own ward; local Members should be informed where decisions are made that relate to their ward, and all decisions should be accompanied by a decision notice published at least 5 clear days in advance of the decision, which may be subject to call-in procedures (see below)
Up to £2m	Cabinet Example decision of this nature – Loan for property development	The current Cabinet procedure would be followed, with decision notices published as required, and a formal agenda at least 5 clear days before the meeting. Meetings are subject to call-in procedures.

Beyond £2m	Council Example decision of this nature – New solar farm or significant (above £2m) property acquisition	The current Council procedure would be followed. It may be necessary to call extraordinary meetings of Council to ensure that decisions can be made on a timely basis.
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Note that significant property acquisitions or developments outside of the Investing in Growth fund may be referred to Council in line with the current Constitution, such as the Western Way Development full business case was recently.

Note that delegations for the Investing in Growth Fund will supersede the levels set out in the West Suffolk Loans Policy.

- 2.4.6 The proposal is that, with an adopted Asset Management Strategy and Plan and in place, the delegations for acquisitions/property transactions made from the Investing in Growth Fund will be brought into line with the delegations for any other investments made from this fund, i.e. as set out above in 2.4.5.
- 2.4.7 In order to continue to protect the Council’s position and value for the public purse, robust due diligence will be undertaken for every acquisition opportunity identified and taken forward to ensure that any foreseeable risks and mitigations are considered and assessed as part of the business case to support an acquisition or disposal.

2.5 Financial matters

2.5.1 *Property Acquisitions and Investments*

The majority of property acquisitions and investments will be made through the Investing in Growth Fund, assessed against our policy framework as shown in 2.2. The original £40m fund covers several different investment types in addition to asset and property transactions. Financial returns from property acquisitions, facilitated through this strategy, are an enabler for the Investing in our Growth Agenda funds to deliver on its overall desired blended return (1% above borrowing). Thus enabling projects/property acquisitions with greater social and economic outcomes to be also considered through the fund.

- 2.5.2 When the Investing in Growth Fund was approved in February 2018, it was agreed that the funding to undertake appraisal of opportunities would be funded from the capital allocation itself (the original £40m). This would typically cover officer time spent on appraisal, up-front due diligence and obtaining Red Book valuations. Because the costs of up front feasibility cannot be capitalised until an acquisition is completed, a revenue reserve budget was set up to enable these costs to be underwritten by revenue until such time as they could be capitalised.

- 2.5.3 Whilst most of the opportunities appraised since the start of the Fund have become successful acquisitions which can then be capitalised, in order to comfortably be able to cover the those up-front costs, a top up of the

reserve of £200,000 will be proposed as part of the 20120/21 budget process to support the feasibility elements of asset acquisitions. We anticipate however that the majority will end up being capitalised offering this revenue reserve to revolve supporting a continuous flow of projects.

2.5.2 **Property Management and Disposals**

2.5.3 The estate priorities for the next 12 months are set out in the Asset Management Plan. The planned maintenance projects for the next 12 months and more generally across the next 5 years are fully funded from the Council's Building Maintenance Programme (approved as part of the Council budget), with the exception of:

- Leisure assets (replacements/major refurbishments)
- Non urgent footpath repairs left over from our housing stock transfers
- Structural surveys of Parkway and Guineas Multi Storey Car Parks are currently underway and funded by the Building Maintenance Programme, however any identified works are currently unfunded.

A number of Council-owned industrial sites have upcoming lease renewals and have the potential for expansion and development. The building Maintenance Budget only accounts for planned repairs so any development options will be subject to a business case based on return on investment/growth objectives and likely covered from the Investing in Growth Fund following the proposed delegations thereof.

2.6 **How the AMSaP will be presented externally**

2.6.1 The Asset Management Strategy will be a public document made available to view on the West Suffolk Council website.

2.6.2 The Asset Management Plan contains commercially sensitive information, including the type and nature of property the Council will be seeking to acquire and assets which may be disposed of. Therefore the two sections of the Plan covering these areas (acquisitions and disposals) will be kept restricted as commercially confidential, whilst the two sections covering the description and policy context and the approach to Estate Management will be made available, like the strategy, through a link on the West Suffolk Council website.

3. **Alternative Options**

3.1 The Council has undertaken, through its Strategic Framework, to put in place an Asset Management Plan. This plan has been produced in extensive consultation with the Services across the Council to ensure that it is fully joined-up with existing policies and identifies how assets will help to deliver Service need.

3.2 The alternative option would be not to have an Asset Management Strategy and Plan in place. This would mean that any opportunities would be assessed on an individual basis and not necessarily linked to a given wider strategic objective.

3.3 Furthermore, in not having an integrated approach, opportunities will be missed in undertaking essential maintenance and improvements when an asset becomes vacant on expiry of a lease. A planned scheme of works on known upcoming vacant sites allows us to plan resources to undertake the refurbishment, minimises disturbance to other tenants, and market the unit for lease at a higher rent.

4. Consultation and engagement

4.1 This is set out in the report above.

5. Risks

5.1

Risk	Mitigation
Delegations for acquisitions will result in the Council acquiring property which becomes a liability.	Robust due diligence and financial appraisal will be undertaken to ensure risks are assessed and mitigated against. This work will be undertaken by the Property and Legal professionals employed directly by the Council.
Tenant liquidations could affect revenue streams on property investments.	<p>The covenant strength of each tenant for each opportunity will be reviewed as part of the acquisition due diligence. This includes company searches and a review of any relevant news items related to the performance of that organisation.</p> <p>If an existing tenant is considered high-risk of liquidation or failure to comply with the lease terms, this will be reflected in the price offered and/or be a determining factor in whether to recommend the acquisition.</p> <p>Risk of tenant default on properties within the Council's ownership will be managed through pro-active property management and ongoing landlord and tenant liaison to ensure any potential issues are identified at the earliest opportunity.</p>
Operational Risk	<p>Compliance with health and safety legislation and planned maintenance programmes could result in temporary closure of an asset(s) resulting in loss of income and reputational harm.</p> <p>This will result in failure to adequately manage revenue or capital budgets and to manage income or expenditure resulting in: increased exposure to financial risk; inability to meet budgets or savings targets.</p> <p>Managed effectively, the benefits to tenants and the Council include improvements to productivity and efficiency which places a business in a better position to increase their return on investment</p>
Under performing assets resulting in higher levels of void properties and land assets.	Operational and non-operational assets that are no longer fit for purpose due to location or suitability for its intended use resulting in: service delivery impact, increased costs, higher void rates and loss of income.

6. Implications arising from the proposal

6.1 *Financial*

See section **2.5** above.

6.2 *Legal Compliance*

There are no direct legal issues arising from the adopting of the Asset Management Strategy. Individual opportunities for investment in assets will be subject to full and robust Legal review and due diligence.

6.3 *Personal Data Processing*

The Asset Management Plan and Strategy does not contain any personal data as defined by current GDPR regulation.

6.4 *Equalities*

There are no equalities issues arising from this Strategy and Plan.

6.5 *Environmental or sustainability*

Opportunities to invest in more sustainable approaches for energy use on the existing Estate will be considered as part of any decision on investment. Also as part of the due diligence process we look at opportunities to enhance the green credentials of buildings we acquire, for example putting solar panels on the roof and looking for more efficient solutions for energy use.

6.6 *HR / Staffing*

Potential resource/staffing implications arising from specific asset decisions is set out in the Asset Management Plan (Appendix B). Any requirements will be considered and presented within an individual business plan for that given proposal.

6.8 *Changes to existing policy*

This document replaces the previous adopted Asset Management Plan for 2014-19.

7. Appendices

7.1 **Appendix A** – Asset Management Strategy

Appendix B – Asset Management Plan

(Divided into:

B1: Policy Summary

B2: Acquisition

B3: Estate Management

B4: Disposal

Note that Appendices B2 and B4 are Exempt)

8. Background documents

8.1 West Suffolk Council Strategic Framework 2018-20: [Click here for link](#)

West Suffolk Growth Investment Strategy: [Click here for link](#)

Our Strategic Approach to investing in, managing and disposing of land and property assets.

Our Approach

West Suffolk Council's approach to investing in, managing and disposing of its land and property assets is to maximise benefits for our communities and businesses – be that financial, economic, improved access to services and/or social and environmental returns.

By generating a financial return, we generate income, which enables us to provide important services and deliver against the Council's priorities. The need for us to be self-sufficient and financial prudent is a priority in our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The corresponding diagram gives an overview of our approach, drivers and outcomes we are meeting. The document also comprises an Asset Management Plan, which sets out a programme of work, which we will focus on over the next year.

Governance

West Suffolk Council was set up to be more fleet of foot and has the governance to match, so we can proactively create our own opportunities in the market and/or deal efficiently and effectively with opportunities that arise. Having a clear approach, combined with a clear plan of action (Asset Management Plan) provides a focus for our activity over the next year and a framework for assessing other opportunities that may also be presented by the market in our area.

Alongside this we have put in place delegated powers to enable us to respond quickly to opportunities while maintaining good governance. This means partners and the public can be confident in what we are trying to achieve and how we do it.

Wider approach

We work across the Suffolk public sector system with partners using One Public Estate principles as well as with private and voluntary sector organisations to deliver better ways of working, including improved services and outcomes.

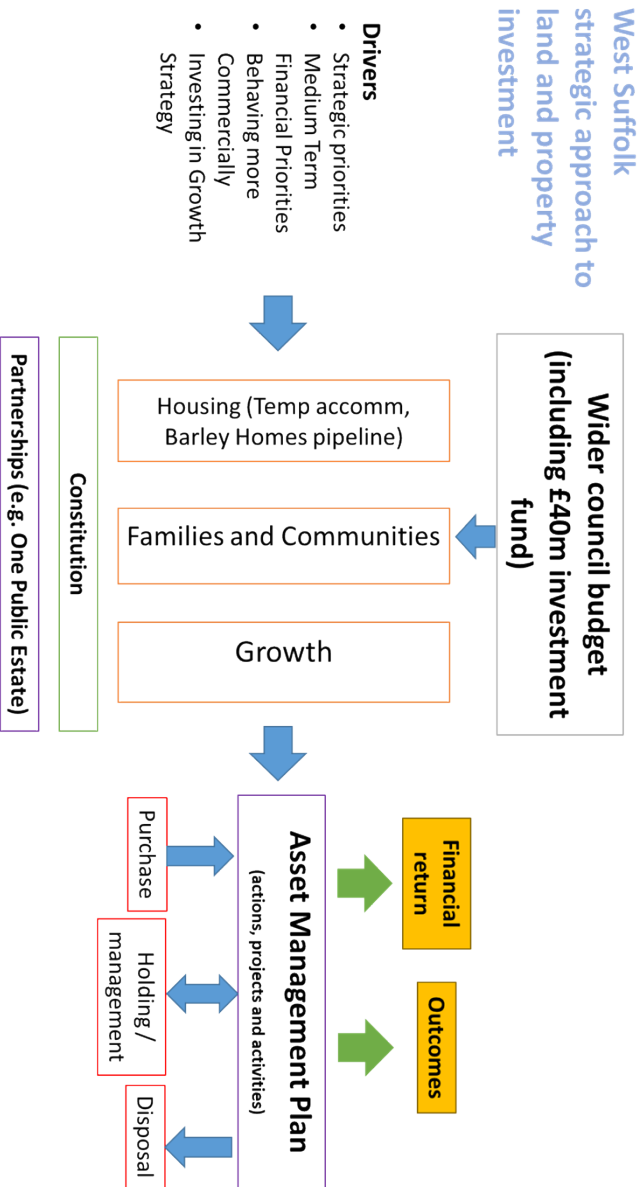
The Council will look strategically to make sure land and property assets are secured for future needs that the open market may not deliver. We are also seen as a trusted partner and investor that the market, organisations and individuals can work and invest with or provide opportunities to.

Property and land assets categories

Our plan is focused on a number of categories which drive our investment, management and disposal activities:

Operational Property	Land and property assets used to deliver Services
Commercial Investment and economic development	Held to promote SME businesses, business growth and support retention of key employers. This category of land and property assets and interests typically also provide revenue returns to the council to support the delivery of much valued Council services.
Specialist Housing and Homelessness	The Council is not a housing stock holding authority, however may own properties providing emergency or specially adapted residential accommodation. The council also owns a small number of community assets.
Barley Homes pipeline	Land owned or acquired by the Council to be developed by the Council's wholly owned development company, Barley Homes.
Strategic land for residential and commercial development	Land to facilitate any type of development, either directly by the Council for retention, or sold to the market. This includes small parcels of land which may help facilitate development.
Leisure, open space and recreation	Land and Property held for community, leisure and recreational uses.
Land for energy infrastructure	Land and property used to provide or support energy infrastructure such as solar farms and solar panels of Council owned properties.
Land without development potential	Majority of small land parcels owned by the Council as the result of legacy.
Legal or contractual	Legal agreements, contracts and covenants that add extra value or constraint to an asset.

Asset Management Strategy - Strategic Approach diagram



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West Suffolk Council Asset Management Plan - Policy Summary

APPENDIX B1



Summary and action plan table describing each category of asset and the policy and strategic context

POLICY SUMMARY

	1. Operational Property	2. Commercial Investment and Economic Development	3. Specialist Housing and Homelessness	4. Barley Homes Pipeline	5. Strategic land for Residential and Commercial Development	6. Leisure, Open Space and Recreation	7. Land for Energy Infrastructure	8. Land without development potential	9. Options, Overage, Covenants and other agreements on land and property not directly owned by the Council
Description	Property assets used to deliver Services	Held to provide commercial revenue returns. Also Promote SME businesses, business growth and support retention of key employers	The Council is not a stock holding authority, however may own properties providing emergency or specially adapted residential accommodation. The council also owns a small number of community assets.	Land owned or acquired by the Council to be developed out by Barley Homes.	Land to facilitate any type of development, either directly by the Council for retention, or sold to the market. This includes small parcels of land which may help facilitate development.	Land and Property held for community, leisure and recreational uses.	Land and property used to provide or support energy infrastructure such as solar farms, wind turbines, solar panels on Council owned and third party properties.	Majority of small land parcels owned by the Council normally as the result of legacy and which have no current or potential future value. In many cases this land may also form an ongoing liability for the Council.	Interests in land and property not directly owned by the Council,. Examples include sold land subject to covenants or containing overage provisions. May also include third party land where the Council retains a liability/ Also includes land under option by the Council.
Examples of property owned by West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk House; WS Operational Hub; College Heath Road; Mildenhall Hub; Car Parks; The Apex	Whole commercial portfolio (e.g., industrial units in Brandon; shopping parades in Newmarket); Harvey Adams Centre; Haverhill MENTA buildings; OMAR Homes site in Brandon	Abbotts House, Bury St Edmunds; 1 The Avenue, Newmarket	Castle Hill, Haverhill; Westfield; Haverhill* Bought directly by Barley Homes	College Heath Road	Parks and Gardens; Play Areas; Leisure Centres; Country Parks; Burial space provision; historic monuments; museums; allotments; amenity greens; Leisure facilities included under a community use agreement	Toggam; Solar for business sites	Misc. small parcels of land across the district	
How this asset type helps to deliver our Strategic Priorities	Through the delivery of services from our Operational Estate (both office-based and field-based) we support and enable the delivery of all of our strategic priorities.	By investing in commercial property, we can support growth in West Suffolk's economy, and the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	We can enable people to access suitable and sustainable housing through the provision of appropriate temporary, specialist and emergency accommodation to suit their needs. These assets, and our other community assets will support resilient families and communities.	Generate income for the Shareholders (100% West Suffolk Council) and increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk through delivery of land and housing.	The delivery of land and housing will lead to Increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk. This will also support growth in West Suffolk's economy through investment in development.	By using our community, leisure, open space and heritage assets to support wellbeing and education, we enable families and communities to be healthy and active.	By investing in clean energy infrastructure, we are growing the West Suffolk economy, energy resilience and improving the quality of the local environment for our residents and businesses.	Minimal to no contribution.	Such agreements may offer the Council the opportunity to help deliver services, support communities and create opportunities for growth.
Overarching Asset Strategy, linked to statutory duties and Council policy	Retain where meeting need. Look for OPE opportunities to share facilities and co-locate with other public sector bodies and relevant partners.	Maximise revenue returns but also understand the value of the wider benefits – e.g., jobs created; increased no' of start-ups; increased salary levels; increased skills and attainment; links with education providers. The Council can also invest in properties which promote and support start up enterprises; small to medium sized companies; or properties which generate business growth in the area. Other investments could be purchased to support the retention of key employers in West Suffolk.	Provision of appropriate housing in right locations to meet with identified need. Look for opportunities to reduce reliance on emergency accommodation and looks for opportunities which meet our statutory duties whilst also improving social outcomes for families.	Any potential residential sites will be assessed for suitability for Barley Homes before disposal to the wider market. Sites may be acquired as strategic land, but again Barley Homes will be given the opportunity to appraise and provide an in-principle view during the purchase appraisal process. Sites will be appraised on the basis of a full compliance scheme.	Understand and assess potential for viable development; Link to Housing Delivery Plan; Link to Barley Homes and/or Developer partners	Asset approach supports specific adopted community and leisure policies; including; Physical Activity Framework; Playing pitch assessment; Tree strategy; Supplementary Planning Guidance; Green infrastructure strategy (planning document). Also consider Conservation Area Management Plan for former Abbey site in Bury St Edmunds.	Long term, stable return on investment; Increased resilience for our communities; Removing a key barrier to growth; A higher skills sector for West Suffolk. Opportunities for the Council to demonstrate best energy practice/show leadership through the One Public Estate programme Strengthening the local energy network where it builds resilience Local energy purchasing and cost reduction opportunities for West Suffolk businesses. Maximise the contribution that energy can make in unlocking growth, strengthening local sustainability and supporting investment value allowing us to secure benefit for our residents and businesses. Whilst energy provision is fundamental to our growth ambitions for West Suffolk, there is also a financial business case for developing energy schemes. These offer us a commercial investment opportunity and we have seized the chance to invest since it makes sound financial, economic and environmental sense. See West Suffolk Energy Framework	Needs to be identified as a specific project; Assess for longer-term strategic potential. If none, then seek to transfer or sell liability	Update and maintain a centralised database of these types of agreement, with action triggers to be linked to the Estate Management system, when it is in place.

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West Suffolk Council Asset Management Plan - Estate Management

Summary and action plan table of how we manage the Councils land and property assets and interests

APPENDIX B3



ESTATE MANAGEMENT

	1. Operational Property	2. Commercial Investment and Economic Development	3. Specialist Housing and Homelessness	4. Barley Homes Pipeline	5. Strategic land for Residential and Commercial Development	6. Leisure, Open Space and Recreation	7. Land for Energy Infrastructure	8. Land without development potential	9. Options, Overage, Covenants and other agreements on land and property not directly owned by the Council
Estate Management Approach	Maintain and seek efficiencies on operational running costs. Ensure efficiency of space and use. Maintain and extend the lifespan of our buildings and infrastructure	Ensure lease events kept up to date and rents agreed are at Market levels. Respond swiftly to non-paying tenants and ensure lease terms adhered to in order to maintain the value of the individual asset.	Review the estates portfolio for conversion of the commercial and operational portfolio to appropriate short term accommodation for residential lettings	Identify potential sites in the operational and non operational estate portfolio of the Council that may be redeveloped to meet the Barley Homes pipeline.	Identify any potential upcoming surplus land and property on the estate and appraise for possible re-development to generate revenue and/or disposal to generate a capital receipt.	Management of playgrounds, pitches, etc. Part of Operations, but separate from management of estate and commercial portfolio.	To manage existing land holdings used for the purpose of providing energy infrastructure and consider future opportunities. Managed by Environmental Health team.	Mange any liabilities as appropriate – seek to dispose/transfer where possible	Management of options, overage agreements, covenants and other agreements on assets not directly owned by the Council.
Actions over the next 12 months	<p>Repairs and investment to ensure that properties meet the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations 2015</p> <p>Commence a 3 year programme of maintenance on our network of footpaths</p> <p>Purchase and implementation of a Property Management System</p> <p>Structural Surveys at Parkway and Guineas Car Parks</p> <p>Anglian Lane - site alterations to provide additional parking</p> <p>Bus shelter refurbishments and repairs</p> <p>Estate and Building Surveyor support to Mildehall Hub and Western Way Development including new leases, facility management and building works.</p>	<p>Refurbishment of James Carter Road units (Mildenhall) including modernisation of front units and more efficient configuration of outside space and parking.</p> <p>14/15/16 Chiswick Avenue (cul-de-sac) – Review opportunities for upgrade or possible redevelopment- linked to 2020 lease expiry of unit 16.</p> <p>Gregory Road Re-roofing</p> <p>Wimbledon Avenue/Norwood Road, Brandon - review options ahead of lease renewal including potential refurbishment against impact of potential loss of tenant.</p> <p>Piperall Way - appraise options for smaller units</p> <p>Management of the Council's 300 commercial properties including rent reviews, new lettings and renewed leases, assignments, break options and debt recovery.</p> <p>Maintain a commercial portfolio void rate of less than 7%empty properties ensuring that they are marketed, let or sold at earliest opportunity.</p> <p>A review of neighbourhood precincts to identify whether there may be opportunities for rationalisation, or sale or re-gearing of individual interests where any receipts could be potentially be re-invested with greater effect elsewhere.</p> <p>Gloucester Road Haverhill repairs</p>	<p>Residential conversion of Palace Cottage, Newmarket</p> <p>Kellys Meadow Traveller Site</p> <p>The Avenue, Newmarket - ongoing works to make site compliant with H&S standards and suitable for HMO use.</p>	<p>Sites identified across car parks in Bury Town Centre - subject to parking capacity and potential redevelopment of Ram Meadow/ St Andrews</p>	<p>Eastern Way – Consider options for acquiring adjacent sites to allow potential commercial redevelopment for B1/2/8 uses of wider site.</p>	<p>Review of our open space holdings</p> <p>Project management of the Eastgate Nursery development.</p> <p>Complete Abbeycroft/Skyliner leases.</p> <p>Abbey Gardens Plan Sale Building construction</p> <p>Brandon L/C - GP Surgery/Pre School and Receptions Feasibility scheme</p> <p>Moreton Hall Community Centre refit and extension - Library and office areas</p> <p>Athenaeum Heating plant renewal</p>	<p>The Environment team will continue to manage the existing energy portfolio. A new O&M contract for the solar farm begins in 2019.</p>	<p>Review all known records of options, overage, covenants and other agreements on non-owned WS land</p> <p>Arrange for the Land Registry to undertake a review for its records on land registered to WS and non owned holdings that WS has an option,</p>	

Purpose / Outcomes	(i) Meet MEES Regulations (ii) Reduces Energy Costs (iii) Reduce whole life costs of asset (iv) Mitigate Health and Safety issues	(i) Optimise income (ii) Maximising rental income (iii) managing debt (iv) Meeting market demand for unit size/ fit out (v) Upgrade Units to meet maintenance liabilities (vi) Minimise risk of void units	(i) Support Council Housing priorities' (ii) Increase the number of short term lettings		(i) Complete investigations on possible acquisition of neighbouring sites (ii) Viability of options including commercial and residential (iii) Develop business case	Establish all open space holdings of the Council with a view to evaluating the need and value of the assets	Ensure all energy assets are maintained and enhanced to operate as efficiently as possible		A planned response to exercise an option and improved financial management for overage receipts
Resource implications	Funded from approved building maintenance programme. The level of support needed for business case development for new acquisitions has the potential to impact on work programme.	Funded from approved budgets. External support for valuation/ marketing agents may be needed from time to time. The level of support needed for business case development for new acquisitions has the potential to impact on work programme.	Business cases approved including resources	Resources provide by Barley Homes	No additional resources needed	Funded from approved building maintenance programme and relevant business cases. The level of support needed for business case development for new acquisitions has the potential to impact on work programme	Business as usual for the environment team.		

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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