

# West Suffolk Council

## Cabinet Decisions Notice

(Published: Wednesday 27 November 2019)

The following decisions were taken by the Cabinet on **Tuesday 26 November 2019** and, if not called in by Councillors, will come into operation on Thursday 5 December 2019. This procedure does not however, apply to decisions that have been recommended to Council for a final decision (and which are also indicated within the decisions below). An executive decision may be called in, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules contained within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, by at least five Councillors submitting the required call-in request form to the Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services) (e-mail: [democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk)) **by 5.00 pm on Wednesday 4 December 2019.**

Should you have a query regarding any of the decisions taken, 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](mailto:firstname.surname@westsuffolk.gov.uk). Alternatively, you may also contact the relevant Portfolio Holder on the telephone number listed against their name, or via email using the format [firstname.surname@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@westsuffolk.gov.uk). Contact may also be made via Democratic Services, West Suffolk Council, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk, IP33 3YU, or College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Agenda Item and Report No.	Declarations of Interest/Dispensations Granted	Decision(s) (including recommendations to Council)	Reason(s) for Decision(s)	Other Options Considered and Reasons for Rejection	Contacts
Item No. 6 CAB/WS/19/040	None	<p><u>Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2020 - 2024</u></p> <p>DEFERRED:</p> <p>The Cabinet agreed to defer the consideration of the Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2020-2024 to 14 January 2020, to allow for the suggestions made by Cllr Ingwall-King, relating to the priority of protecting the environment and mitigating the impact of climate change, to be considered by the West Suffolk Environment and Climate Change Taskforce.</p>	<p>At their meeting on 14 November 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had made a number of suggested amendments to the draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework and these were set out within paragraph 3.1 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/040.</p> <p>However, given the timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 November 2019 and the circulation of the Cabinet agenda papers, the drafting suggestions put forward by Councillor Lisa Ingwall-King had not yet been addressed in the draft Strategic Framework. These comments had mainly related to the priority of protecting the</p>	Not applicable.	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr John Griffiths 01284 757136</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Ian Gallin Chief Executive 01284 757001</p>

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			<p>environment and mitigating the impact of climate change.</p> <p>The Cabinet considered that the West Suffolk Environment and Climate Change Taskforce would be best placed, in the first instance, to consider these suggestions. Therefore, the Cabinet agreed to defer their consideration of the draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework to their meeting on 14 January 2020, to allow for the Taskforce to consider these suggestions.</p>		
<p>Item No: 7</p> <p>CAB/WS/19/041 (with Exempt Appendix)</p>	None	<p><u>Investing in Housing Development Sites and Approval of the Barley Homes Business Plan 2019</u></p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (17 December 2019)</p> <p>That:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Taking into account the financial and risk implications set out in Report No: CAB/WS/19/041 and Exempt Appendix A, the Barley Homes Business Plan 2019 be agreed.</li> <li>2. In order to bring the Barley Homes Business Plan 2019 into effect: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) A revenue budget of £350,000 be established to fund the Council's share of</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>This report sought to set out the current development proposals being put forward for Barley Homes; the longer-term approach to developing a pipeline of developments for Barley Homes and was seeking Council's endorsement to the funding necessary to deliver these proposals.</p>	<p>In looking at the future of Barley Homes, several opportunities and future sites had been identified. Focus was being put on two further additional sites for development as part of the Business Plan, but others were emerging.</p>	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Sara Mildmay-White 01359 270580</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613</p>

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		<p>costs to progress planning applications for the Mildenhall site and also the development of future pipeline sites;</p> <p>(b) A capital budget of £5m be established, funded from the Investing in our Growth Agenda, to support the issuing of equity and loan financing (to increase the existing £7.5m facility) to facilitate the development of the two additional sites identified in the Business Plan;</p> <p>(c) It is noted that in order to facilitate the developments within the Business Plan, the Council will be required to acquire sites from partners and subsequently dispose of these to Barley Homes.</p>			
Item No: 8 CAB/WS/19/042	None	<p><u>Recommendations of the Grants to External Organisations Review Group</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That:-</p> <p>1. A framework setting out West Suffolk's approach to grant funding and rate reliefs, attached as Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/042, be approved;</p>	On 25 June 2019, Cabinet had agreed to establish a group (entitled the West Suffolk Grants to External Organisations Review Group) to carry out a review of West Suffolk Council's Grants to External Organisations. The aim of the review was to ensure that locality budgets and grants made from 1 April 2020 and reliefs made from 1 April 2021 were aligned to	By establishing a Grants to External Organisations Review Group, the Council was ensuring that the way it allocated grant funding and rate reliefs continued to be fair, proportionate, in line	<p><u>Portfolio Holders:</u> Cllr John Griffiths 01284 757001</p> <p>Cllr Robert Everitt 01284 769000</p>

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		<p>2. The changes to future criteria and applications to grant funding and rate reliefs, as set out at paragraphs 2.4 to 2.6 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/042 and at Appendices B and C, be approved; and</p> <p>3. The changes made to the allocation of funding to each grant, as set out at paragraphs 2.7 to 2.8 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/042 be approved.</p>	<p>the Council's strategic objectives and offered value for money.</p> <p>Therefore, the Review Group had now made a number of recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, following their review, which were set out in Section 2 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/042.</p>	<p>with the Council's priorities and offering value for money.</p>	<p><u>Chair of the Grants Review Group:</u> Cllr Jim Thorndyke 01359 250271</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) 01284 757070</p>
Item No: 9  CAB/WS/19/043	None	<p><u>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2020-2021</u></p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (17 December 2019)</p> <p>The West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020-2021, as attached at Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/043, be approved, taking into account the proposed changes outlined within the report and the consultation undertaken.</p>	<p>Each year the Council was required to consider whether to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This report advised Cabinet on the conclusion of the 2019 annual review of, and the resultant proposed changes, which had been consulted on, to the LCTRS to take effect from 1 April 2020.</p> <p>Section 3 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/043 was recommending that a tolerance rule of +/-£15 be introduced into the West Suffolk Council scheme. This would have the effect of freezing a customer's assessment when a revised UCDS notification would otherwise trigger a reassessment. Changes in a customer's financial position of more than +/-£15 would be processed as usual, whereas changes within the tolerance level</p>	<p>Not to introduce a tolerance level. However, this would lose the opportunity to provide certainty to the claimant as anticipated with the scheme change, which was being proposed in Section 3 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/043.</p> <p>By increasing the contribution rate to more than 8.5%. The possible increase in Council Tax collected for the Council was considered to be less than the additional costs of recovery (additional staff,</p>	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Sarah Broughton 07929 305787</p> <p><u>Officers:</u> Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources &amp; Performance) 01638 719245</p> <p>Adrian Mills Strategic Manager, Billing and Benefits, ARP 01842 756491</p>

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			would not be updated, no correspondence issued to the customer and without amendment to Council Tax repayments.	postage and enquiries to Customer Services), including the inability to recover the debt in year by deduction from DWP benefits and, therefore, this was not being recommended.	
Item No: 10 CAB/WS/19/044	None	<p><u>Council Tax Technical Changes - Including Empty Property Reliefs and Premiums Changes</u></p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (17 December 2019)</p> <p>That:-</p> <p>(a) The continuation of the West Suffolk Council Tax Technical Changes set out in Section 2 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/044, be approved;</p> <p>(b) A Council Tax premium of 200% for properties that have been long term empty and unfurnished for five years and over from 1 April 2020, be approved;</p> <p>(c) A Council Tax premium of 300% for properties that have been long term empty and unfurnished 10 years and over from 1 April 2021, be approved; and</p>	<p>This report provided an overview of the current Council Tax technical changes for continuation from April 2020, alongside proposed changes to the long term empty property premium scheme from April 2020, in line with recent changes in legislation.</p> <p>New legislation came into effect from 1 April 2019 that provided local authorities with the ability to implement a scheme that enabled a 200% Council Tax charge on properties that had been empty for longer than two years. The charge rose to 400% Council Tax on properties that had been empty longer than 10 years from 1 April 2021.</p>	<p>The Council could consider not implementing the additional premiums that had been introduced in legislation. However, this would mean that the Council had not taken advantage of a significant policy instrument designed to encourage empty properties to be brought back into use. Given the level of housing need in West Suffolk, this would be a missed opportunity to increase the level of available housing. Not to implement the proposals would also mean that West Suffolk was out of</p>	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Sarah Broughton 07929 305787</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245</p>

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		(d) Properties that fall into the classes, set out in Section 3 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/044, will not attract the Long Term Empty Premium for the period(s) detailed.		step with surrounding local authorities who had already implemented the proposals.	
Item No: 11 CAB/WS/19/045	None	<p><u>Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2020/2021</u></p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (17 December 2019)</p> <p>That:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The tax base for 2020/2021, for the whole of West Suffolk is 56,138.14 equivalent Band D dwellings and for each of the predecessor areas is: Forest Heath 18,879.62 and St Edmundsbury 37,258.52, as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of Report No: CAB/WS/19/045; and</li> <li>2. The tax base for 2020/2021 for the different parts of its area, as defined by parish or special expense area boundaries, are as shown in Appendix 2 to Report No: CAB/WS/19/045.</li> </ol>	<p>The Council Tax base was the total taxable value, at a point in time, of all the domestic properties in the Council's area. It was a yearly calculation and represented the estimated number of chargeable dwellings after allowing for exemptions and discounts, projected changes in the property base and after applying an estimated collection rate.</p> <p>The Council Tax base was used in the calculation of Council Tax. Orders had been laid allowing West Suffolk to harmonise the Council Tax of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury over a period not exceeding seven years.</p>	<p>The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 set out the requirements for the calculation of the Council Tax base for tax setting purposes. Therefore, there were no alternative options.</p>	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Sarah Broughton 07929 305787</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245</p>
Item No: 12 CAB/WS/19/046	None	<p><u>West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2024</u></p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: (17 December 2019)</p>	<p>This report set out the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) context against which the 2020-2021 budget and medium term financial plans 2020-2024 were proposed to be developed between</p>	<p>It was not compulsory for councils to have strategic planning documents in place. However, this could</p>	<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Sarah Broughton 07929 305787</p> <p><u>Officer:</u></p>

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		That the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy, contained at Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/046, as its strategic financial framework from 1 April 2020, be adopted.	<p>now and the formal Council Tax and budget adoption meeting of the Council in February 2020.</p> <p>The MTFS 2020-2024 assessed and evaluated the final resources expected to have and the expenditure in order to deliver the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Council's West Suffolk Strategic Framework (which would now be due for adoption in January/February 2020).</p> <p>As part of good financial planning the West Suffolk Council in February 2020, would be asked to set a balanced budget for 2020-21 (its statutory obligation) alongside a medium term financial plan for the period 2021-2024.</p>	result in a lack of strategic direction and agreement on the vision and purpose of the organisation or the outcomes that Councillors and Staff were working towards.	Rachael Mann Assistant Director (Resources and Performance) 01638 719245
Item No: 17  CAB/WS/19/048 (Exempt)		<p><u>Investing in our Commercial Asset Portfolio (para 3)</u></p> <p>WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA</p> <p>In private session, the Cabinet were informed of the reasons as to why this item had now been withdrawn from the agenda.</p>			<p><u>Portfolio Holder:</u> Cllr Susan Glossop 01284 728377</p> <p><u>Officer:</u> Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) 01284 757613</p>

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27 November 2019