

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title:	Agenda																		
Date:	Tuesday 2 December 2014																		
Time:	5.00 pm																		
Venue:	Conference Chamber West (FR109) West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds																		
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>Terry Clements</td> <td>Planning and Regulation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Anne Gower</td> <td>Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Griffiths</td> <td>Leader</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sara Mildmay-White</td> <td>Health and Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alaric Pugh</td> <td>Economic Growth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dave Ray</td> <td>Resources and Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sarah Stamp</td> <td>Leisure, Culture and Heritage</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Stevens</td> <td>Waste and Property</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	Terry Clements	Planning and Regulation	Anne Gower	Housing	John Griffiths	Leader	Sara Mildmay-White	Health and Communities	Alaric Pugh	Economic Growth	Dave Ray	Resources and Performance	Sarah Stamp	Leisure, Culture and Heritage	Peter Stevens	Waste and Property
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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 SEBC Cabinet Officer/Committee Administrator Tel: 01284 757176 Email: claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk																		

Agenda

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Procedural Matters

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

1 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2014 (copy attached).

Part 1 - Public

**3. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
22 October 2014**

11 - 14

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/001**

Chairman: Ian Houlder

Lead Officer: Christine Brain

**4. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny
Committee - 22 October 2014: Outdoor Advertisement and
Signs, St Edmundsbury Borough**

15 - 20

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/002**

Cabinet Member: Terry Clements

Lead Officer: Steven Wood

**5. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee:
26 November 2014**

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/003 TO FOLLOW**

Chairman: Sarah Broughton

Lead Officer: Christine Brain

**6. Recommendations from the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee - 26 November 2014: Delivering a
Sustainable Budget 2015-2016 and Budget Consultation
Results**

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/004 TO FOLLOW**

Cabinet Member: David Ray

Lead Officers: Davina Howes

Rachael Mann

**7. Recommendations from the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee - 26 November 2014: West Suffolk
Fees and Charges Policy**

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/005 TO FOLLOW**

Cabinet Member: David Ray

Lead Officer: Rachael Mann

- 8. Recommendations from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee - 26 November 2014: Accounting for a single West Suffolk staffing structure and the move to a West Suffolk Cost Sharing Model**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/006 TO FOLLOW**
Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Rachael Mann
- 9. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Technical Changes 2015/2016** **21 - 32**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/007**
Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Rachael Mann
- 10. Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2015/2016** **33 - 42**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/008**
Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Rachael Mann
- 11. Developing a Community Energy Plan** **43 - 60**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/009**
Cabinet Members: David Ray Lead Officer: Peter Gudde
Peter Stevens
- 12. Public Service Village Phase II, Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds** **61 - 68**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/010**
Cabinet Members: Terry Clements Lead Officer: Steven Wood
- 13. Bridging Loan to the Samaritans** **69 - 72**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/011**
Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Liz Watts
- 14. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Guidance and Standards** **73 - 88**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/012**
Cabinet Member: Anne Gower Lead Officer: Simon Phelan
- 15. Draft West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018** **89 - 116**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/013**
Cabinet Member: Anne Gower Lead Officer: Simon Phelan
- 16. West Suffolk Data Protection Policy** **117 - 136**
- Report No: **CAB/SE/14/014**
Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Joy Bowes

Summary and Reason for Recommendation

Compliance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) is monitored and enforced by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO has the power to impose fines of up to £500,000 for a serious breach of one or more of the data protection principles and where the breach is likely to cause substantial damage or distress. This is in addition to any penalties imposed by the courts against individuals who unlawfully breach the DPA. ICO guidance therefore stresses that it is vital for all Council employees, Members and contractors to understand the importance of protecting personal data; that they are familiar with the organisation's security policy; and that they put its security procedures into practice.

This joint policy, attached as Report No: **CAB/SE/14/014**, (based on that previously adopted by Forest Heath District Council) outlines the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and identifies how both Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (jointly referred to as West Suffolk Councils throughout the policy) comply with the Data Protection Act. It aims to give guidance on how the requirements of the Act apply to the work of the Councils.

Recommendation

It is **RECOMMENDED** that, subject to the approval of full Council, the West Suffolk Data Protection Policy, provided as Report No. CAB/SE/14/014, be adopted.

17. Recommendation from the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel: 29 October 2014

Amendments to Terms of Reference

Cabinet Member: Sara Mildmay-White Lead Officer: Alan Points

Summary and reasons for recommendation

On 29 October 2014, the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel considered a substantive item relating to proposed amendments to its Terms of Reference to reflect the change in officer responsibility for Emergency Planning; to empower the Vice-Chairman to act in the Chairman's absence and to clarify that the emergency planning arrangements apply across the area of both authorities.

It is proposed that the existing paragraph 2.7 of the Terms of Reference, which reads as follows:

'At the discretion of the Chairman, in the event that either:

- (a) *an emergency event arises which affects the area of either authority, or*
- (b) *the risk of an emergency that affects the area of either authority is assessed as significant by Suffolk County Council's Head of Emergency Planning,*

an extraordinary meeting of the Panel may be called.'

be amended to:

*'At the discretion of the Chairman, **or if absent the Vice-Chairman**, in the event that either:*

- (a) *an emergency event arises which affects the area of either authority, or both authorities, or*
- (b) *the risk of an emergency that affects the area of either authority, **or both authorities**, is assessed as significant by the **District Emergency Planning Officer**,*

an extraordinary meeting of the Panel may be called.'

Recommendation

It is **RECOMMENDED** that paragraph 2.7 of the Terms of Reference for the West Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Panel be amended in accordance with the above.

18. Proposals for the Commercial Development of West Stow Country Park **137 - 142**

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/015**

Cabinet Member: Sarah Stamp Lead Officer: Richard Hartley

19. Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs **143 - 146**

Report No: **CAB/SE/14/016**

Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Rachael Mann

20. 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 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.

Part 2 - Exempt

21. Exempt Appendices: Proposals for the Commercial Development of West Stow Country Park 147 - 274

Exempt Appendices 1-10 and A-C of Report No: **CAB/SE/14/015**

Cabinet Member: Sarah Stamp Lead Officer: Richard Hartley

(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 and business affairs of a particular organisation.)

22. Exempt Appendices: Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs 275 - 278

Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 to Report No: **CAB/SE/14/016**

Cabinet Member: David Ray Lead Officer: Rachael Mann

(These exempt appendices are to be considered in private under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as they contain information relating to an individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.)

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

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 21 October 2014 at 5.00 pm in the Conference Chamber West (F1R09), West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds

PRESENT: Councillor J H M Griffiths (Leader of the Council) (in the Chair)
Councillors Clements, Mrs Mildmay-White, Pugh, Ray,
Mrs Stamp and Stevens

BY INVITATION: Councillors Mrs Broughton (Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee) and Houlder (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Nettleton

53. Remembrance

The Cabinet observed a minute's silence in remembrance of the late Councillor Gordon Cox, a former Member of the Borough Council.

54. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Gower.

55. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 2 September and 16 September 2014 (Extraordinary meeting) were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

56. Declarations of Interests

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

57. Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 3 September 2014 ***Decisions Plan Ref: N/A Cabinet Members: All Portfolios***

The Cabinet received and noted Report F145 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2014:

- (1) Update on On-Street Parking in Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds;
- (2) Decisions Plan: September 2014 to May 2015; and
- (3) Work Programme Update

Councillor Houlder, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

**58. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee:
24 September 2014**

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A

Cabinet Members: All Portfolios

The Cabinet received and noted Report F146 (previously circulated) which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 24 September 2014:

- (1) Ernst and Young Presentation of 2013/2014 ISA 260 Annual Governance Report to those Charged with Governance;
- (2) Local Code of Corporate Governance / Annual Governance Statement 2013/2014;
- (3) 2013/2014 Annual Statement of Accounts; and
- (4) Work Programme Update.

Councillor Mrs Broughton, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that the Annual Governance Statement 2013/2014 and the Annual Statement of Accounts 2013/2014 had both been approved for signing, in accordance with the powers delegated to the Committee under the Council's Constitution. This was duly noted by the Cabinet and the Finance Team was commended for their work in reaching this point.

Councillor Mrs Broughton also paid tribute to Councillor Cox, a former Member of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

The Cabinet was then informed that a separate report relating to Item (2) above was included on the Cabinet agenda as this required separate consideration of the recommendation provided.

59. Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 24 September 2014: West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/12 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report F147 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that the Local Code of Corporate Governance set out the principles of how the Council would ensure compliance with statutory requirements and best practice guidance on corporate governance. Whilst the adoption of a Local Code was not a statutory requirement in itself, it represented best practice and was a key element of the Council's overarching governance arrangements and its commitment to good corporate governance.

The Code was subject to annual review to ensure it remained up to date. Minor adjustments had been made to the document, at Appendix A to Report F135, to reflect it was now a joint West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance between St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils.



RECOMMENDED:

That the West Suffolk Local Code of Corporate Governance, attached as Appendix A to Report F135, be adopted.

60. A Housing and Health Charter for Suffolk

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/07 Cabinet Members: Cllrs Anne Gower and Sara Mildmay-White

The Cabinet considered Report F148 (previously circulated) which sought endorsement of the principles and commitments of a new Housing and Health Charter for Suffolk.

Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Health and Communities, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board had commissioned the Suffolk Strategic Housing Partnership and the HWBB Programme Office to jointly produce a Housing and Health Charter. The Charter contained eight key commitments, which St Edmundsbury Borough Council, as a partner organisation was being asked to endorse, the key one of which was the development of a more integrated approach to the delivery of housing, health and social care.

A detailed discussion was held which culminated in a requirement for the following comments to be fed back to the Health and Wellbeing Board, as requested in the first recommendation:

- (a) the content of the Charter was acceptable in principle but its influence in practical terms was questioned. Discussion was held on the relationship between planning, housing and health and whether a more joined up approach should be adopted for these areas to meet the needs of the ageing population. Particular reference was given to such an approach being taken in respect of the redevelopment of Havebury Housing Partnership's Erskine Lodge sheltered housing accommodation site in Great Whelnetham. Discussion led to the housing and health sectors taking proactive engagement with developers during the preparation of the masterplan stage of the planning process to consider future privately-owned housing accommodation for older people; and
- (b) some of the wording in the document was not considered to be written in Plain English which made it difficult for some readers to understand its meaning. Particular reference was given to Commitment No.2 contained in Section 8 of the Charter which appeared to contain 'health' dominated language.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the content of the Housing and Health Charter for Suffolk be noted, and the comments made in connection with having a more joined up approach between planning, housing and health, as detailed further in the minutes of the Cabinet meeting, be fed back to the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board; and

- (2) the principles and commitments set out in the Housing and Health Charter for Suffolk, as contained in Appendix A to Report F148, be endorsed.

61. West Suffolk Street Naming and Numbering Procedure

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/09 Cabinet Member: Cllr Peter Stevens

The Cabinet considered Report F149 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the West Suffolk Street Naming and Numbering Procedure.

Councillor Stevens, Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for street naming and numbering, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the new West Suffolk Street Naming and Numbering Procedure provided a framework in which St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils could operate their respective street naming and numbering function effectively for the benefit of its residents, businesses and visitors.

RESOLVED:

That the West Suffolk Street Naming and Numbering Procedure contained in Appendix 1 to Report F149, be approved.

62. Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 11 September 2014

Decisions Plan Ref: ARP14/02 Cabinet Member: Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report F150 (previously circulated) which sought approval for two recommendations emanating from the meeting of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee held on 11 September 2014.

On 11 September 2014, the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee considered the following substantive items of business:

- (1) Performance Report;
- (2) The Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Service Delivery Plan;
- (3) Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils;
- (4) Welfare Reform;
- (5) Forthcoming Issues;
- (6) Future of Counter Fraud Work of ARP; and
- (7) Enforcement Agency.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the majority of the report was for information only and provided the decisions of the Joint Committee; however, decisions of the Cabinet were required on Items (3) and (7) above.

Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils had a Section 113 agreement in place with the Anglia Revenues Partnership but did sit on the Joint Committee. By enabling these two councils to formally join the Partnership, they would have voting rights to influence decisions and equally were not constrained in making decisions independently that could affect all partners. Section 4.10 of the report outlined the main benefits for Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils joining the Partnership, including that the seven Councils would continue to generate savings through the strength of the Partnership.

Some discussion was held on the membership of the Joint Committee and whether it should continue with each authority being represented by two full Members making a total of 14 Members, which could potentially make it unwieldy. This issue had been discussed at a previous meeting of the Joint Committee and should all partner authorities approve the recommendation to accept Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils onto the Partnership, this was likely to be discussed further by the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee's proposal to establish an in-house Enforcement Agency, as outlined in Appendix A to Report F150, would provide the potential to ensure that residents were treated fairly where enforcement was necessary, and fees kept as low as possible, whilst retaining the income generated by enforcement actions for the Council Tax payers of the partner authorities. A shared Enforcement Agency offered the potential of a shared income in excess of £150,000 per annum from bailiff fees.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the majority of the content of Report F150, being the report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee, be noted;
- (2) (a) Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Councils become full members of the Anglia Revenues Partnership;
- (b) the Operational Improvement Board be given delegated authority to negotiate a new Anglia Revenues Partnership agreement to include Waveney District and Suffolk Coastal District Councils as full members of the Anglia Revenues Partnership; and



RECOMMENDED:

- (3) ***That, one of the two Directors, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, be given delegated authority to introduce a shared Enforcement Agency for the Anglia Revenues Partnership (St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Forest Heath District Council, Fenland District Council, Breckland Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council) Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council through discussion via the ARP Operational Improvement Board, as outlined in Appendix A to Report F150, and detailed in the full business case appraisal presented to the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee.***

63. West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guide: Consultation Draft

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A

Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report F151 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the draft West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design (SFDG) for consultation.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the draft SFDG provided detailed guidance on the design of new and replacement shop fronts throughout West Suffolk. It covered matters such as general design principles; materials and colour; signage and lighting; blinds and canopies; and security measures and had been jointly produced with Forest Heath District Council (FHDC).

Members noted that the Joint Development Management Policies Local Plan Document policies had not yet been adopted and may be subject to change as a result of consultation on any post hearing modifications proposed by the Planning Inspector. This may result in subsequent changes to Section 2 of the SFDG.

The Cabinet supported the document and commended its comprehensive content. It looked forward to seeing how this document complemented the emerging guidance for the display and management of so-called A-Boards that would shortly be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A request was made for the SFDG to be considered by the Borough Council's Sustainable Development Working Party and FHDC's Local Plan Working Group as part of the consultation process and prior to its adoption.

RESOLVED:

That the draft West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guide, as contained in Appendix A to Report F151, be approved for public consultation.

(Councillor Houlder left the meeting during the consideration this item.)

64. Recommendations of the Sustainable Development Working Party: 9 October 2014: Castle Manor Academy, Haverhill – Draft Concept Statement

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/06 Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report F152 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a recommendation emanating from the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party (SDWP) held on 9 October 2014.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the SDWP had considered the draft Concept Statement for the Castle Manor Academy in Haverhill following consultation and had recommended its adoption as non-statutory planning guidance.

Once adopted, the Concept Statement would have the status of planning guidance in accordance with the rationale agreed by the Council in 2006. The document was intended to clarify the Borough Council's expectations for the site and provide a framework for the preparation of a more detailed masterplan for the Castle Manor Academy site.

The Cabinet acknowledged the officers' work in preparing the draft Concept Statement and the positive discussions held with interested parties, including the Haverhill Area Working Party, as part of the consultation process.



RECOMMENDED:

That the draft Concept Statement for the Castle Manor Academy, Haverhill, as set out in Appendix A to Report F144, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance.

65. Recommendations of the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative

Panel: 15 September 2014

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/08 and Oct14/10

Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry Clements

The Cabinet considered Report F153 (previously circulated) which sought approval for recommendations emanating from the meeting of the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel held on 15 September 2014.

On 15 September 2014, the West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel considered the following substantive items:

- (1) West Suffolk Workforce Update – Presentation;
- (2) Workforce Strategy for West Suffolk 2014 – 2016;
- (3) West Suffolk Adoption Policy and Procedure, and West Suffolk Flexible Working Policy; and
- (4) Approval Request for West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel – Going Forward

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the West Suffolk Adoption Policy and Procedure, and West Suffolk Flexible Working Policy had been reviewed in accordance with current employment legislation and with ACAS best practice in mind. The proposed changes in the documents were due to changes in employment law and to align them with Forest Heath District Council as clear and accurate joint West Suffolk policies.

In addition, St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils had an approved shared Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy to support its delivery. The Workforce Strategy set out how the Councils would recruit and develop its workforce and work with its communities to make sure the Councils had the people, skills and behaviours required to make sure that the priorities in the West Suffolk Strategic Plan were delivered.

The Cabinet supported all three documents and thanked the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development for the work involved regarding their production. It was however, considered that there should be reference in the Workforce Strategy to working with councillors and the amendments provided in the resolution below were suggested and accepted. In addition, the officers identified that the values omitted from the introduction were required to be added, as shown in the resolution below.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Workforce Strategy for West Suffolk 2014-2016, contained in Appendix 1 to Report F153, be approved, subject to the following addition of the values, and

amendments, as shown in bold, italics under the relevant headings:

Introduction, third bullet point: *At the same time we are committed to being a fair and good Employer of Choice that values, recruits and supports people to be **Bold, Energetic, Responsible and Working Together...**;*

The Vision and Workforce Strategy, third paragraph:
*...We want everybody to feel involved in how we operate and how we deliver our services and to work together to deliver **what our councillors**, customers and residents need...;*

Our Workforce Strategy, 1. Skills and Behaviours, first bullet point:
*To have visionary and ambitious managers and leaders who can develop, motivate and lead our workforce, **and work with councillors within a political environment**, to deliver our services effectively in challenging times...;*
and

- (2) the West Suffolk Adoption Policy and Procedure, and West Suffolk Flexible Working Policy, contained in Appendices A and B to Report JSP14/009 respectively, be approved.

66. Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan: Issues and Options Consultation

Decisions Plan Ref: N/A **Cabinet Members:** *Cllrs Terry Clements and Anne Gower*

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which sought approval for appropriate delegations to be given to enable consultation on the Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan Issues and Options document to progress.

Councillor Clements, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. He emphasised that so as not to cause delay to the consultation timetable set, the draft Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan Issues and Options consultation document should be considered by the Haverhill Area Working Party and, subject to the Working Party being satisfied with its content, the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services should be delegated authority to approve the document for consultation, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders.

The Cabinet recognised the importance of keeping on track with the timetable and supported this approach.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services and the Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Haverhill, to approve the Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan Issues and Options document for consultation.

67. Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/02 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Report F154 (previously circulated) which provided the collection data in respect of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and sought approval for the write-off of debts as contained in the Exempt Appendices.

As at 30 September 2014, the total National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council (as the billing Authority) was nearly £46.3 million per annum. The collection rate as at 30 September 2014 was 58.40% against a profiled target of 58.13%.

As at 30 September 2014, the total Council Tax billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council (included the County, Police and Parish precept elements) was just under £53.1 million per annum. The collection rate as at 30 September 2014 was 58.27% against a profiled target of 58.74%

The Revenues Section collected outstanding debts in accordance with either statutory guidelines or Council agreed procedures. When all these procedures had been exhausted the outstanding debt was written off using the delegated authority of the Head of Resources and Performance (for debts up to £2,499.99) or by Cabinet (for debts over £2,500).

The specific reasons for recommending each write-off were included in Exempt Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

Councillor Ray, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that it was anticipated that the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee would shortly be analysing the current procedures for debt recovery and write-offs and whether any changes to existing practices should be recommended.

RESOLVED:

That the write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report F154, be approved, as follows:

Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax totalling £2,506.34
Exempt Appendix 2: Business Rates totalling £51,974.06
Exempt Appendix 3: Housing Benefit overpayments totalling £4,189.44

(Subsequent to the meeting, both Chairmen of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny (PASC) and Overview and Scrutiny (OAS) Committees agreed that the proposed review of the procedures for debt recovery and write-offs should be undertaken by the OAS Committee rather than PASC.)

68. Exempt Appendices: Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs

Decisions Plan Ref: Oct14/02 **Cabinet Member:** Cllr David Ray

The Cabinet considered Exempt Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to Report F154 (previously circulated), however no reference was made to specific detail and therefore this item was not held in private session.

The meeting concluded at 5.58 pm

**J H M GRIFFITHS
CHAIRMAN**

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 22 October 2014	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/001 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Chairman of the Committee:	Ian Houlder Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 01284 810074 Email: ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Christine Brain Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	On 22 October 2014, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items: (1) Outdoor Advertisements and Signs, St Edmundsbury Borough; (2) Quarter 2 Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications; (3) Decisions Plan: October 2014 to May 2015; and (4) Work Programme Update A separate report is included on this Cabinet agenda for Item (1) above.	
Recommendation:	The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the content of Report CAB/SE/14/001, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	

Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>		<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only.	
<i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>			
Consultation:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Alternative option(s):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Implications:			
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Risk/opportunity assessment: <i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>			
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
See Reports listed under background papers below			
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Report F156 to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Decisions Plan: October 2014 to May 2015; and Report F157 to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update	
Documents attached:		<i>(Please list any appendices.)</i> None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Quarter 2 Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications

- 1.1.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 requires that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis. In June 2010 it was agreed that this requirement should be fulfilled by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.1.2 The Monitoring Officer had advised that in Quarter 2 no such surveillance had been authorised.

1.2 Decisions Plan: October 2014 to May 2015 (Report F156)

- 1.2.1 The Committee considered the latest Decisions Plan, covering the period October 2014 to May 2015. Members reviewed the Decisions Plan in detail and asked a number of questions to which officers duly responded.
- 1.2.2 The Committee did not collectively request any involvement in any of the expected decisions on this occasion, and there being no decision required, **noted** the contents of the report.

1.3 Work Programme Update (Report F157)

- 1.3.1 The Committee has a rolling work programme, whereby suggestions for scrutiny reviews are brought to each meeting, and if accepted, are timetabled to report to a future meeting. The work programme also leaves space for Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action.
- 1.3.2 The Scrutiny Officer advised Members that following the Committee's meeting held on 3 September 2014, she had discussed with officers the Committee's resolution that the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider looking into the procedure for making write-offs. Following the discussions, it was felt that the scrutiny of the procedure for write-offs would be better suited to be carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Therefore, this item would be included in the Committee's work programme for future scrutiny.
- 1.3.3 Members were advised that Councillor Mrs Hind had submitted her completed work programme suggestion form relating to her proposal raised at the Committee's meeting held on 3 September 2014, suggesting a review of shared services as a whole. This would be included on the Committee's December agenda for further consideration and appropriate officers and Portfolio Holder(s) would also be invited to attend the meeting to aid the Committee's discussions.
- 1.3.4 Councillor Mrs Levack informed the Committee that she was finalising the wording for her joint suggestion with Councillor Beckwith, (also raised at the Committee's meeting held on 3 September 2014), suggesting a review of the Leader and Cabinet Model decision-making process; how it was operating and the role of Members across the Council.

1.3.5 The Committee reviewed the current position of the work programme and there being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the report.

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Outdoor Advertisements and Signs, St Edmundsbury Borough	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/002 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	Terry Clements Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation Tel: 01284 827161 Email: terry.clements@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Chairman of the Committee:	Ian Houlder Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 01284 810074 Email: ian.houlder@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Steven Wood Head of Planning and Regulatory Services Tel: 01284 757306 Email: steven.wood@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	This report asks the Cabinet to consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the display of "A-Boards" on the highway. Following the review of the proposals, it is considered that the Committee's aspirations regarding the regulation of "A" Boards might be better achieved through the use of the Outdoor Advertisement Regulations (2007). The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services already has the power to use these regulations and could exercise them to achieve the original objectives of the Committee.	

Recommendations:	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that in view of the Committee's wish to achieve the original objectives of its review of "A" Boards as quickly as possible:</p> <p>(1) the approach of using the Outdoor Advertising Regulation 2007 to control the use of "A" Boards through the Borough, as set out in Section 4 of Report F155, be approved;</p> <p>(2) the Street Vending Policy be amended by deleting the section relating to "A" Boards; and</p> <p>(3) the Council produces and publishes clear guidance to businesses on how the Outdoor Advertising Regulations would work in practice, including partnership working with the Highways Authority.</p>
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Implications:	
<p><i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<p><i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<p><i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<p><i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<p><i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
See Report F155			
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Report F155 to Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Outdoor Advertisements and Signs, St Edmundsbury Borough.	
Documents attached:		None.	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

- 1.1 On 20 January 2013, the Committee considered Report D249, which provided the findings of the Task and Finish Group set up by the Committee on 16 November 2011 to look at the issue of advertising boards on the highway ("A" Boards). The Group had looked at the issue in detail in order to try and strike a balance between the concerns of residents that the proliferation of "A" Boards was detracting from the amenity of the area, and the needs of businesses to advertise their goods. The Committee proposed a scheme under the Street Vending Regulations whereby the Policy would be changed to add "A" Boards to the permitting scheme.
- 1.2 On 22 October 2014, the Committee considered Report F155, which informed Members that the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services has since reviewed the proposal and feels that the Committee's aspiration in relation to "A" Boards could be better achieved through the use of the Outdoor Advertisement Regulations 2007. The use of these Regulations, instead of the Street Vending Policy, provides the Council with greater powers to enforce. The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services already has the power to use these Regulations and could use them in a way that would still achieve the original objectives of the Committee. The Council has recently agreed an increase in staff resources of the Planning Enforcement Team, which would help with the implementation.
- 1.3 Suffolk County Council (SCC) also has powers to restrict obstructions on the highway such as "A" Boards and this proposal would not prevent SCC continuing to use its powers as Highways Authority. It is also important to note that advertising receiving consent will need to also obtain agreement/licence from the Highways Authority if the sign is to be placed on the highway.
- 1.4 The Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party considered this issue at their 7 October 2014 meeting following a presentation detailing the process. The Working Party welcomed the proposed action and supported the proposal to use the Outdoor Advertising Regulations to control the use of "A" Boards.
- 1.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services provided comprehensive responses.
- 1.6 In particular, discussions were held on the work previously carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; the safety issues around "A" Boards sited on pavements; how the consultation on the Regulations would be undertaken with relevant retailers, Chambers of Commerce, Wards Members, Town and Parish Councils etc; and the process involved in applying for a permit from the Suffolk County Council Highways Authority.
- 1.7 The Committee suggested that a section could also be included in the West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guidance, which was about to go out to consultation. The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services explained that this document was a local planning document and agreed that a "rider" could be included setting out what retailers should and should not do with

regards to the design and size of "A" Boards.

- 1.8 The Committee was also concerned about the various stages/organisations that retailers had to go through in order to apply for an "A" Board and felt that clear guidance should be produced on how the process would work.
- 1.9 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has put forward recommendations as provided above.

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes 2015/2016	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/007 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
	Council	16 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	David Ray Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01359 250912 Email: david.ray@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officers:	Paul Corney Head of Anglia Revenues Partnership Tel: 01842 756437 Email: paul.corney@angliarevenues.gov.uk	
	Rachael Mann Head of Resources and Performance Tel: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>This report provides Members with an overview of the first year review (2013/2014) on the new Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) and the technical changes on some empty properties and second homes, introduced from 1 April 2013.</p> <p>This report also sets out recommendations for Members on the 2015/2016 LCTRS and the technical changes from 1 April 2015.</p>	

Recommendations:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that:</p> <p>(1) the first year review for 2013/2014 be noted;</p> <p>Subject to the approval of full Council:</p> <p>(2) no change be made to the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/2016;</p> <p>(3) the 5% second homes discount be removed from 1 April 2015; and</p> <p>(4) a change to a one week exemption for Class C empty property from 1 April 2015 be approved, subject to the conditions contained in Table 2 of paragraph 6.1 of Report No: CAB/SE/14/007.</p>
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As detailed in the body of the report
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing the current LCTR scheme is not required from a financial perspective, as the current schemes are operating effectively, delivering a cost neutral position. Leave the empty property technical changes as the current year scheme, however we would continue to face both administration and collection challenges.
Implications:	
<p><i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As outlined in the body of the report.
<p><i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p><i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p><i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As outlined in the body of the report

<p>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An equality impact assessment was undertaken as part of the development of the 2013/2014 scheme in 2012. As there are no changes to the LCTR scheme the equality impact assessment is unchanged. 	
<p>Risk/opportunity assessment:</p>		<p><i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i></p>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
<p>Recovery of Council Tax. There is a risk of a lower level of collection of Council Tax</p>	High	Continue with the 2014/15 scheme. ARP to closely to monitor non-payment from working age claimants.	Medium
<p>Recovery of administration costs. The number of people paying Council Tax may increase and we will need to consider the impact on resources needed to collect this money.</p>	Medium	Monitor resources. A range of measures will continue to be offered to affected people to help them pay, such as Direct Debit	Low
<p>Demand. There is a risk of a higher demand on the LCTR Scheme.</p>	High	ARP to closely monitor caseload. The major precepting authorities will share the financial risks associated with LCTRS. Representatives from St Edmundsbury and other Suffolk billing authorities and Suffolk County Council are continuing to work together to monitor the county-wide framework.	Medium
<p>Ward(s) affected:</p>		All Wards	
<p>Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i></p>		<p>D224 Local Council Tax Support 2013/2014</p> <p>D277 Council Tax Technical Changes and Tax Base 2014/2015</p> <p>E197 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes 2014/2015</p>	
<p>Documents attached:</p>		<p>Appendix A: First Year Review data</p>	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

- 1.1 The Government replaced Council Tax Benefit with a Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) from 1 April 2013. This meant that St Edmundsbury Borough Council had to decide upon a local means tested scheme to replace Council Tax Benefit.
- 1.2 The Government's aims in making this change were:
 - To transfer the system to local control; and
 - To reduce by 10% the amount of support paid to those finding it hard to pay council tax, in order to meet the Government's funding cut.
- 1.3 In creating a local scheme St Edmundsbury also aimed to:
 - Make provision to protect vulnerable people; and
 - Support work incentives for claimants created by the Government's wider welfare reform.
- 1.4 At the same time, councils were given the discretion to increase Council Tax income; to charge up to 100% for some previously exempt properties; to charge up to 100% in respect of furnished empty properties (usually referred to as holiday homes); to charge up to 100% in respect of second homes and to charge up to 50% empty homes premium for properties that had been empty for over two years.
- 1.5 In offering these new powers to increase Council Tax income from empty properties, the Government were seeking to influence owners to bring empty homes back in to use.
- 1.6 Following consultation, the Council decided to meet the cost of the Government's 10% cut by requiring working age claimants to pay 8.5% more of the Council Tax charge than previously; and by changing the discounts/exemptions available to owners of second homes and empty properties as detailed in paragraph 1.8.
- 1.7 Limiting the increase for working age claimants meant that the council received a year one transitional grant of £154,000 from Government, however the funding has not been offered again in 2014/2015. Without this grant the financial modelling of the scheme showed that the cost would have been in the region of £85,000 for the first year. St Edmundsbury protected War Pensioners from the reduction in maximum benefit and also removed Second Adult Rebate for working age claimants from our schemes.
- 1.8 St Edmundsbury also used their powers to increase Council Tax income as follows:

Table 1

Discounts	2012/13	2013/14 & 2014/15
Class A, empty, unfurnished and undergoing major repairs to render habitable	100% exemption for 12 months maximum	10% discount for a twelve month period
Class C, empty, substantially unfurnished	100% exemption for 6 months maximum	10% discount for a six month period
Second homes	10% discount	5% discount
Empty homes premium (property empty for more than 2 years)		Pay 150%

2. First Year Review 2013/2014 – behavioural and administrative impacts

- 2.1 A number of customers receiving LCTRS had not had to pay any Council Tax in the past. Having to pay 8.5% of the Council Tax charge represented a significant cultural change and this led to a very large increase in calls to the offices and over the phone in 2013/2014. Anecdotally, national and local welfare groups have commented that working age welfare customers have struggled to adjust to the introduction of this and the wider Welfare Reforms simultaneously.
- 2.2 As can be seen in Appendix A, the number of reminders and summons increased greatly and the amount of further recovery work increased too. In 2014/2015 the number of customers querying bills and the issue of reminders and summons has reduced back to the sort of levels we saw in 2012/2013.
- 2.3 The Council's aim was to achieve a balance in charging an amount of Council Tax to encourage working age claimants back in to work whilst setting the amount charged at an affordable and recoverable level.
- 2.4 By setting the amount payable on LCTRS at 8.5% of the charge, in most cases, where a customer is not paying we can effect recovery through attachment to benefit within a year and so the charge, with costs, is recoverable. If the amount payable was much higher than it is likely that debt would not be recoverable and there would be a danger of creating a culture of non-payment of Council Tax.
- 2.5 National research shows that any further increase in the amount payable for working age LCTRS customers could increase administration costs and have a detrimental effect on collection rates.
- 2.6 One of the areas which resulted in an increase in queries and complaints from the public and landlords is the removal of 100% exemption for a six month period once a property becomes empty. St Edmundsbury opted for an immediate charge, allowing a discount of 10% for six months which has generated the queries and complaints especially from Landlords as there is no charge free period to allow for a "turn-around" between tenants.
- 2.7 Appendix A details the number of empty property accounts raised for short periods and the collection achieved. It is suggested that amending the discount to a 100% discount for one week followed by a full charge would reduce the

number of small balances, the queries, and consequent administrative costs. In order to make this change cost neutral, the discount on second homes could be removed.

- 2.8 Appendix A details the number of empty properties recorded between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. The data indicates that the policy change may have had some influence on owners to bring empty homes back in to use.

3. First Full year review 2013/2014 – financial impacts

- 3.1 Appendix A to this report shows the collectable Council Tax for any case that has at some point in the year received a discount under the CTRS. The debit shown in Appendix A includes the whole amount charged for in the year including the discounted periods.
- 3.2 Council Tax accounts where there has been a period of LCTRS awarded show a collection rate of nearly 90% in year one of the scheme, whilst the target was to achieve this level of collection after two years. As expected, collection has partly relied upon a significant increase in arrangements to deduct Council Tax from DWP Benefits (see Appendix A - attachments to benefit). For comparison purposes, the in-year collection was 97.12%.
- 3.3 St Edmundsbury has seen a reduction in LCTRS caseload of 6% compared to early 2012/2013 levels. A very small number of LCTRS customers have also received Housing Benefit reductions attributed to the Welfare Reform changes from April 2013, namely the Spare Room Subsidy Restriction and the Benefit Cap, with little demand for Exceptional Hardship payments which can be applied for using a specific application form available for this purpose.
- 3.4 In assessing the anticipated LCTRS expenditure for 2013/2014 a growth in caseload was anticipated and an assumption for bad debt was factored in to the budget. The actual LCTRS expenditure was £315,000 less than the budget. Going forward we assume neutral changes to the caseload as, whilst unemployment is decreasing, a major employer reducing staff significantly, ceasing to trade or relocating is difficult to predict.
- 3.5 The recovery in respect of the changes to other discounts, as detailed in Appendix A has also performed at estimated levels. Collection in respect of second homes has been particularly successful. The effect of withdrawing the 5% discount on second homes, like many other authorities, is also shown.

4. Financial and resource implications

- 4.1 St Edmundsbury continues to come under significant pressure from Central Government grant reductions. The Local Council Tax Support Grant received in 2013/2014 was a separately identifiable grant amount received as part of the Council's grant settlement and therefore the Council was able to identify the amount by which it had been reduced (10%). However, it has been confirmed by the Department of Communities and Local Government that this amount will not be separately identifiable going forward. St Edmundsbury is anticipating, based on our provisional 2015/2016 settlement figure, up to a 24% reduction in our Central Government grant.

4.2 The recommended continuation of the current schemes covered by this report is intended to continue to deliver a 'cost neutral scheme' against the original 10% Government grant reduction. The impact of the 2015/2016 24% reduction in Central Government grant is therefore required to be addressed elsewhere and will form part of the Council's wider Medium Term Financial Strategy review and 2015/2016 budget setting process.

5. Proposals for 2015/2016 LCTR scheme

5.1 Based on the overall findings of the first year review outlined above in Sections 2 and 3, and the monitoring information for 2014/2015 contained at Appendix A, the recommendation is to continue the LCTR scheme in its current form, including applying the current 2014/2015 level of applicable amounts # within the LCTRS, for 2015/2016.

5.2 # An applicable amount is the amount that the Government says that a family needs to live on each week. When your applicable amount has been calculated it is then compared with your income to work out the council tax reduction entitlement for which you are eligible.

5.3 Due to the fact that the LCTRS is not changing this year there is no requirement to undertake specific consultation.

6. Proposals for 2015/2016 technical changes

6.1 Based on the overall findings of the first year review outlined above in Sections 2 and 3, and the monitoring information for 2014/2015 contained at Appendix A, the recommendation is to:

- Remove the current 5% discount for second home owners (this brings us in line with many other ARP partners);
- change the Class C empty property to one week exemption followed by 100% charge; and
- to continue the empty homes technical changes as per the current year's 2014/2015 scheme.

Table 2

Discounts/exemptions	2015/2016
Class A, empty, unfurnished and undergoing major repairs to render habitable (formally exempt Class A)	30% discount for a twelve month period
Empty, substantially unfurnished properties, which have been so for less than one week since the property was last occupied. For the purposes of determining when the property was last occupied, any period of less than 6 weeks within which the property was occupied will be disregarded. (formally exempt Class C)	Proposal for one week exemption followed by a 100% charge (Conditions detailed to the left)
Second homes	Proposal to charge 100%
Empty homes premium (property empty for more than 2 years)	Pay 150%

7. Legal and policy implications

- 7.1 The National Council Tax Reduction Scheme for Pensioners will be determined by Central Government whilst the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for people of working age is determined by each local authority. The scheme may be altered each year, giving the Council the opportunity to take into consideration any local factors or budget constraints. Subsequent amendments may require further consultation and agreement.
- 7.2 The Council's Constitution gives the Head of Resources and Performance delegated power 'to manage the Revenues and Benefits function' including appointing officers of Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) to carry out debt recovery and criminal prosecutions and for the administration of the Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS).

APPENDIX A

St Edmundsbury Recovery of debt				2014/2015 (full year comparison) @7/10/14
LCTRS awarded	Expenditure £5,980,000	Budget £6,295,000	Difference £315,000	£5,607,765
LCTRS Exceptional Hardship	£123	£50,000	£49,877	
Ctax Technical change	Revenue Generated	Budget	Difference	
Second Homes	£20,761.02	£19,580.30	£1,180.72	£19,983.11
Long term empty – empty/unoccupied for over 6 months	No change	No change	-	-
Long term premium – additional 50% - empty more than 2 years	£49,770.88	£36,239.74	£13,531.14	£41,247.62
Class A – empty and unoccupied due to major repairs	£61,899.60	£96,900.52	(£35,000.92)	£39,514.46
Class C empty and unoccupied	£479,030.29	£480,875.13	(£1,844.84)	£502,017.16
Total	£611,461.79	£633,595.69	(£22,133.90)	£602,762.35
Type of additional charge	Percentage collected			
LCTRS 8.5% charged to claimant	90.32%			
Second Homes	99.69%			
Long term empty – empty/ unoccupied for over 6 months	94.94%			

APPENDIX A

Type of additional charge	Percentage collected
Long term premium – additional 50% - empty more than 2 years	91.71%
Class A – empty and unoccupied due to major repairs	95.44%
Class C empty and unoccupied	96.96%
Total	93.43%

Modelling for changes:

Discount	Discount amendment	Change + income/ (cost)
Second Home	0%	+ £20,761
Empty	100% for 1 month	(£126,556.83)
Empty	100% for 2 weeks	(£74,378.64)
Empty	100% for 1 week	(£24,541.80)

St Edmundsbury Recovery	2012/13	2013/14
Reminders and final notices	20,390	23,228
Summons	2,605	3,676
Liability Orders	2,050	2,898
7 & 14 day letters	2,556	3,557
Attachment to Earnings	753	788
Attachment to Benefit	534	809
Bailiff	962	1,078
Total	29,850	36,034

APPENDIX A

St Edmundsbury number of properties	2012/13	2013/14
Second Homes	261	259
Empty/unoccupied < 6 months	379	319
Empty/unoccupied > 6 months	225	226
Empty unoccupied – major repairs	31	36
Empty/unoccupied > 2 years	73	72
Total	969	912

Bills with an empty period					
Days of empty charge	No:	Total empty charge	Average Empty charge	Paid (minimum of empty charge amount)	%
1	186	591.33	3.18	131	70.4
2 – 7	839	11419.37	13.61	787	93.8
8 – 14	560	19094.02	34.10	519	92.7
15 – 31	803	57362.98	71.44	768	95.6
1 – 3 months	948	168613.95	177.86	892	94.1
3 – 6 months	459	221948.44	483.55	431	93.9

Of which:-

Bills for whole of empty period					
Days of empty charge	No:	Total empty charge	Average charge	Paid (minimum of empty charge amount)	%
1	113	359.57	3.18	62	54.9
2 – 7	524	7250.00	13.84	481	91.8
8 – 14	391	13359.85	22.60	356	91.0
15 – 31	576	40861.31	70.94	546	94.8
1 – 3 months	703	122856.32	174.76	658	93.6
3 – 6 months	233	98808.26	424.07	220	94.4

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2015/2016	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/008 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
	Council	16 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	David Ray Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01359 250912 Email: david.ray@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Rachael Mann Head of Resources and Performance Tel: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To set out the basis of the formal calculation for the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2015/2016.	
Recommendation:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that, subject to the approval of full Council:</p> <p>(1) the tax base for 2015/2016, for the whole of St Edmundsbury is 34,839.29 equivalent Band 'D' dwellings, as detailed in paragraph 1.4 of Report No: CAB/SE/14/008; and</p> <p>(2) the tax base for 2015/2016 for the different parts of its area, as defined by parish or special expense area boundaries, are as shown in Appendix 2.</p>	
Key Decision: (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)	<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 key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>		

Consultation:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tax base figures provided within Appendix 2 of the report have been communicated to town and parish councils so they can start to factor these into their budget setting process. 	
Alternative option(s):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council Tax Base calculations are used to determine the Revenue Support Grant received by the Council, and the level of Council Tax set by the Council. Once approved, the Tax Base for Council Tax collection purposes of 34,839.29 will be included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. 	
Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
The Council's ability to collect Council Tax income in the current economic climate.	High	Two separate collection rates have been applied to the taxbase calculations in respect of collectability. Communication plan in place.	Medium
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
Documents attached:		Appendix 1: CTB1 Return made to Central Government on 17 October 2014. Appendix 2: 2015/2016 Tax Base for each Parish and Town Council and for St Edmundsbury Borough Council.	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 The Council Tax Base

- 1.1.1 The Council Tax Base of the Council is the total taxable value at a point in time of all the domestic properties in its area, projected changes in the property base and the estimated collection rate.
- 1.1.2 The total taxable value referred to above is arrived at by each dwelling being placed in an appropriate valuation band determined by the Valuation Office, with a fraction as set by statute being applied in order to convert it to a Band 'D' equivalent figure. These Band 'D' equivalent numbers are then aggregated at a district wide level and are also sub totalled for parishes. This has to be done by the Council responsible for sending the bills out and collecting the council tax ('the billing authority'). In two tier areas, district councils fulfil this function.
- 1.1.3 The Council Tax Base is used in the calculation of Council Tax. Each authority divides its total Council Tax required to meet its budget requirements by the Tax Base of its area to arrive at a Band 'D' Council Tax.

1.2 Calculation of the tax base for tax setting purposes

- 1.2.1 The calculation of the tax base for tax setting purposes consists of three stages:
- (a) Calculation of the tax base for Revenue Support Grant purposes as at 6 October 2014;
 - (b) analysis of Band 'D' equivalents over each of the Parish areas; and
 - (c) adjustment of the Band 'D' equivalents to reflect changes in the tax base as a result of valuation changes, exemptions, discounts and a collection rate.

1.3 Tax base for Revenue Support Grant purposes

- 1.3.1 The Tax Base return CTB1 is summarised at Appendix 1. This shows the analysis of properties across the eight Bands for the following classifications of liability:
- (a) properties attracting 100% liability;
 - (b) properties with an entitlement to a 25% discount;
 - (c) properties with an entitlement to a 50% discount;
 - (d) properties with an entitlement to a 100% discount;
 - (e) exemptions;
 - (f) discounts, including Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts; and
 - (g) Disabled Relief Adjustments.
- 1.3.2 The figures used to make the above calculations are derived from the Valuation List as deposited on 8 September 2014, and as amended to reflect any errors or omissions so far detected in reviewing that list.

1.4 **Analysis of Band 'D' Properties**

1.4.1 The Band 'D' Properties figure as at 6 October 2014 of 35,281.1 as quoted in the CTB1 form has been updated as at 6 November 2014 to allow for:

- (a) technical changes outlined in Report No: CAB/SE/14/007, contained elsewhere on this Cabinet agenda; and
- (b) potential growth in the property base during 2015/2016 taken from an average of the housing delivery numbers for those sites within the local plan and those that have planning permission, adjusted for an assumed level of discounts/exemptions within that growth of property base.

1.4.2 An allowance is then made for losses on collection, which assumes that overall collection rates will be maintained at approximately 98%. In addition to this collection rate change, an adjustment has been made to allow for the collectability of the council tax arising from the Local Council Tax Support scheme, which has been assessed at 90%. **The resulting Tax Base for Council Tax collection purposes has been calculated as 34,839.29** which is an increase of 114.29 on the previous year.

1.4.3 The Table below shows the actual number of dwellings in each tax band based on the current valuations which are discounted to 1 April 1991 and the percentage in each band. There has been no national revaluation since that date.

Band	Number of Chargeable dwellings adjusted for discounts etc	Relevant Proportion	Relevant Amount	Tax Band values as at 01/04/1991 (£)	Actual Number of dwellings (on Valuation List)	Actual Number of dwellings as a percentage
@ *	5.64	5/9	3.1			
A	2,817.19	6/9	1,878.1	Up to 40,000	5,286	11.1%
B	12,988.75	7/9	10,102.4	40,001 to 52,000	17,565	37.0%
C	7,859.93	8/9	6,986.6	52,001 to 68,000	9,390	19.8%
D	6,350.97	9/9	6,351.0	68,001 to 88,000	7,281	15.3%
E	3,957.14	11/9	4,836.5	88,001 to 120,000	4,363	9.2%
F	1,778.98	13/9	2,569.6	120,001 to 160,000	1,926	4.1%
G	1,404.98	15/9	2,341.6	160,001 to 320,000	1,497	3.2%
H	106.10	18/9	212.2	Over 320,000	133	0.3%
Total	37,269.68		**35,281.1		47,441	100.0%
Actual taxbase after applying technical changes and collection rate			34,839.29			

* Disabled reduction results in charging the property at one band lower (1/9th) than its actual band. The @ figure relates to Band A properties (1/9th below a band A charge) which are eligible for a disabled reduction.

** This is the relevant amount as shown on line 31 of the CTB return at Appendix 1. The final figure for Revenue Support Grant setting purposes (35,579.5 – line 33) is arrived at after making an adjustment for contributions in lieu of MOD properties (line 32).

1.5 **Precept Payment Arrangements for 2015/2016**

- 1.5.1 In line with the delegated authority to administer the Council's financial affairs as outlined in the Constitution, the arrangements for the scheduling of the precept payments for 2015/2016, will be determined by the Head of Resources and Performance (Chief Financial Officer).
- 1.5.2 It is expected that the payments schedule for Parish and Town Councils will take the same form as previous years of full payment by 30 April 2015.

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CTB(October 2014)

Calculation of Council Tax Base

Please e-mail to : ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

Please select your local authority's name from this list

Check that this is your authority :	St Edmundsbury
E-code :	E3535
Local authority contact name :	Sharon Goddard
Local authority telephone number :	01842 756464
Local authority fax number :	01842 756513
Local authority e-mail address :	sharon.goddard@angliarevenues.gov.uk

CTB(October 2014) form for St Edmundsbury

Completed forms should be received by DCLG by Friday 17 October 2014

Dwellings shown on the Valuation List for the authority on Monday 8 September 2014	Band A entitled to disabled relief reduction COLUMN 1	Band A COLUMN 2	Band B COLUMN 3	Band C COLUMN 4	Band D COLUMN 5	Band E COLUMN 6	Band F COLUMN 7	Band G COLUMN 8	Band H COLUMN 9	TOTAL COLUMN 10
Part 1										
1. Total number of dwellings on the Valuation List		5,286	17,565	9,390	7,281	4,363	1,926	1,497	133	47,441
2. Number of dwellings on valuation list exempt on 6 October 2014 (Class B & D to W exemptions)		313	532	316	289	125	51	22	7	1,655
3. Number of demolished dwellings and dwellings outside area of authority on 6 October 2014 (please see notes)		3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
4. Number of chargeable dwellings on 6 October 2014 (treating demolished dwellings etc as exempt) (lines 1-2-3)		4,970	17,033	9,073	6,992	4,238	1,875	1,475	126	45,782
5. Number of chargeable dwellings in line 4 subject to disabled reduction on 6 October 2014		8	75	50	50	38	21	20	14	276
6. Number of dwellings effectively subject to council tax for this band by virtue of disabled relief (line 5 after reduction)	8	75	50	50	38	21	20	14		276
7. Number of chargeable dwellings adjusted in accordance with lines 5 and 6 (lines 4-5+6 or in the case of column 1, line 6)	8	5,037	17,008	9,073	6,980	4,221	1,874	1,469	112	45,782
8. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a single adult household 25% discount on 6 October 2014	3	3,270	6,042	2,522	1,509	689	248	163	12	14,458
9. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 25% discount on 6 October 2014 due to all but one resident being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	23	163	81	65	30	18	16		396
10. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 50% discount on 6 October 2014 due to all residents being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	5	11	8	6	6	13	15	6	70
11. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as second homes on 6 October 2014		34	54	40	35	39	22	28	2	254
12. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a zero% discount on 6 October 2014		51	69	38	17	18	8	8	1	210
13. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a discount on 6 October 2014 and not shown in line 12.		78	176	82	51	27	11	13	3	441
14. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and being charged the Empty Homes Premium on 6 October 2014.		27	17	8	12	2	2	1	1	70
15. Total number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty on 6 October 2014 (lines 12, 13 & 14).		156	262	128	80	47	21	22	5	721
16. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 6 October 2014 and have been for more than 6 months. NB These properties should have already been included in line 15 above.		75	90	51	32	25	11	11	3	298
16a. The number of dwellings included in line 16 above which are empty on 6 October 2014 because of the flooding that occurred between 1 December 2013 and 31 March 2014 and are only empty because of the flooding.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 6 October 2014 and have been for more than 6 months and fall to be treated under empty homes discount class D (formerly Class A exemptions). NB These properties should have already been included in line 16 above. Do NOT include any dwellings included in line 16A above.		0	5	3	3	5	1	2	1	20
18 Line 16 - line 16a - line 17. This is the equivalent of line 16c on the CTB(October 2013) and will be used in the calculation of the New Homes Bonus.		75	85	48	29	20	10	9	2	278
19. Number of dwellings in line 7 where there is liability to pay 100% council tax	5	1,600	10,545	6,332	5,302	3,428	1,560	1,233	88	30,093
20. Number of dwellings in line 7 that are assumed to be subject to a discount or a premium	3	3,437	6,463	2,741	1,678	793	314	236	24	15,689
21. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate taxbase	7.3	4,215.3	15,439.0	8,411.6	6,582.7	4,034.2	1,799.8	1,414.6	106.1	42,010.35

CTB(October 2014)

Calculation of Council Tax Base

Please e-mail to : ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

22. Reduction in taxbase as a result of the Family Annex discount	0.00	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3
23. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9		
24. Total number of band D equivalents (to 1 decimal place) ((line 21 - line 22) x line 23)	4.0	2,808.0	12,008.1	7,477.0	6,582.7	4,930.6	2,599.7	2,357.6	212.2	38,979.9	
25. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2013-14 (to 1 decimal place)											298.4
26. Tax base (to 1 decimal place) (line 24 col 10 + line 25)											39,278.3

Part 2

27. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate taxbase	7.25	4,215.25	15,439.00	8,411.60	6,582.65	4,034.15	1,799.80	1,414.55	106.10	42,010	
28. Reduction in taxbase as a result of the Family Annex discount	0.00	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.25	
29. Reduction in taxbase as a result of local council tax support	1.61	1,394.81	2,450.25	551.67	231.68	77.01	20.82	9.57	0.00	4,737.42	
30. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9		
31. Total number of band D equivalents after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) ((line 27 - line 28 - line 29) x line 30)	3.1	1,878.1	10,102.4	6,986.6	6,351.0	4,836.5	2,569.6	2,341.6	212.2	35,281.1	
32. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2013-14 (to 1 decimal place)											298.4
33. Tax base after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) (line 30 col 10 + line 31)											35,579.5

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the information provided on this form is based on the dwellings shown in the Valuation List for my authority on 8 September 2014 and that it accurately reflects information available to me about exemptions, demolished dwellings, disabled relief, discounts and premiums applicable on 6 October 2014 and, where appropriate, has been completed in a manner consistent with the form for 2013.

Chief Financial Officer : Date :

Ver 1.0

Local authority contact name : Sharon Goddard
Local authority telephone number : 01842 756464
Local authority fax number : 01842 756513
Local authority e-mail address: sharon.goddard@angliarevenues.gov.uk

Now open the sheet called Validation to see if there are any inconsistencies in your form

Parish Estimates 2015/2016

APPENDIX 2

Taxbase

Parish/Town	Taxbase 2015/2016 (Number of Band D Dwellings)
Ampton, Timworth & Lt Livermere	48.01
Bardwell	285.06
Barnardiston	56.80
Barnham	225.89
Barningham	317.33
Barrow cum Denham	625.48
Barton, Great	927.63
Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield	213.56
Bradfield St Clare	67.73
Bradfield St George	146.88
Bradley, Great	156.04
Bradley, Little	19.63
Brockley	125.39
Bury St Edmunds	12,653.46
Cavendish	414.99
Chedburgh	249.57
Chevington	266.12
Clare	760.58
Coney Weston	162.70
Cowlinge	131.21
Culford	179.07
Wordwell	8.43
West Stow	73.60
Denston	54.00
Depden	79.82
Euston	58.89
Fakenham Magna	59.20
Flempton-cum-Hengrave	132.08
Fornham All Saints	295.34
Fornham St Martin-cum-St Genevieve	482.05
Hargrave	113.69
Haverhill	6,950.11
Hawkedon	64.32
Hawstead	130.82
Hepworth	206.91
Honington-cum-Sapiston	285.07
Hopton	242.49
Knettishall	10.49
Horringer	404.10
Ickworth	9.11
Hundon	431.72
Ingham	157.57
Ixworth cum Ixworth Thorpe	748.08
Kedington	623.67
Lackford	103.75

Parish Estimates 2015/2016

APPENDIX 2

Taxbase

Parish/Town	Taxbase 2015/2016 (Number of Band D Dwellings)
Lidgate	98.57
Livermere, Great	71.95
Market Weston	95.74
Nowton	68.87
Ousden	113.26
Pakenham	333.59
Poslingford	83.77
Rede	50.20
Risby	268.47
Rushbrook with Rougham	395.29
The Saxhams	127.54
Stansfield	85.31
Stanton	813.87
Stoke By Clare	216.92
Stradishall	151.45
Thelnetham	97.97
Thurlow, Great	82.43
Thurlow, Little	104.05
Troston	266.34
Westley	96.82
Whelnetham, Great/Little	365.58
Whepstead	208.35
Wickhambrook	464.47
Withersfield	203.26
Wixoe	65.98
Wratting, Great	85.22
Wratting, Little	65.58
Total	34,839.29

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Developing a Community Energy Plan	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/009 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
	Council	16 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	<p>David Ray Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01359 250912 Email: david.ray@stedsbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Peter Stevens Portfolio Holder for Waste and Property Tel: 01787 280284 Email: peter.stevens@stedsbc.gov.uk</p>	
Lead officer:	<p>Peter Gudde Environment Manager Tel: 01284 757042 Email: peter.gudde@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p>	
Purpose of report:	<p>To put forward investment proposals to develop a Community Energy Plan based on an appraisal of options for renewable energy generation.</p> <p>This report summarises the business case and makes recommendations regarding the viable options which, if approved, would establish for the first time a long term energy investment plan generating stable revenue and energy cost savings for the Council alongside its existing support for improved community energy efficiency. This would form the West Suffolk Councils' Community Energy Plan.</p>	

Recommendations:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the development of a West Suffolk Community Energy Plan, be supported; (2) appraisal of other energy-related options set out in the report with a view to receiving further investment proposals, be supported; (3) subject to the approval of full Council, the following be allocated: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) £15,000 to continue the West Suffolk Greener Business Grant in support of energy efficiency improvements, as outlined in paragraphs 1.1.4 and 1.1.5 of Report No: CAB/SE/14/009; (b) £85,500 to improve business resource efficiency and install the next phase of solar schemes on Council property (Option 1), as outlined in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/SE/14/009; (c) as part of the 2015/2016 budget setting process, £1.62 million over three years to develop rent-a-roof solar schemes in partnership with local businesses (Option 3), as outlined in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/SE/14/009; and (d) as part of the 2015/2016 budget setting process, £50,000 to cover the identification, detailed feasibility and associated community engagement activities in support of potential sites for larger scale solar and renewable energy generation technologies (Option 5) where supported and/or led by communities in the Borough, as outlined in paragraph 1.3.5 to Report No: CAB/SE/14/009.
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> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>	
Consultation:	See paragraphs 3.1 – 3.3
Alternative option(s):	See paragraph 4.1
Implications:	

<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See paragraphs 5.1 – 5.5	
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See paragraphs 6.1 – 6.2	
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>		No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See paragraphs 7.1 – 7.3	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See paragraphs 8.1 – 8.3	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Financial - The projects do not achieve the predicted financial returns	High	Conservative assumptions made. Industry advice has been sought in developing the financial models. Project investment will be tightly controlled to achieve highest Feed-In Tariffs, or cease project investment should Government cut the tariffs to make the financial model unsustainable	Medium
Legal - Gain permissions and licences to operate	High	Seek legal advice before progressing options	Medium
Economic – lack of market demand	Medium	Carry out soft market testing. Refine the offer and go to test market again before launching	Low
Technological – Complexity of the technologies	Medium	Initial focus is on a mature, low technological risk.	Low
Community – Lack of effective engagement and communication to explain and win support	High	Develop an engagement and communications plan	Medium
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		None	
Documents attached:		Appendix A: Outline of the options considered Appendix B: Summary of the options appraisal	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background and Key issues

1.1.1 In the recently published Community Energy Strategy, the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change has called on local authorities to provide the stimulus and support to community renewable energy. The Government has also re-iterated its policy on solar energy that it wishes to see the "Big 6" energy companies become the "Big 60,000" with community-owned solar. Government sees local authorities as key to this "democratisation" of the energy supply.

1.1.2 Every Council in England has a responsibility under the Home Energy Conservation Act, alongside wider health and wellbeing responsibilities, to tackle fuel poverty and help households become more energy efficient. Through our participation in the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, St Edmundsbury Borough Council has been able to help local households, communities and businesses access independent advice and support to make sustainable energy choices, reduce the impact of energy cost volatility and move from fossil fuels.

1.1.3 The Council has already demonstrated leadership by:

- Improving energy efficiency across its property portfolio;
- installing 227kWp¹ of renewable energy generation on its own property;
- publishing its Home Energy Conservation Act Plan setting out the help the Council will provide to help householders insulate their homes;
- actively participating in initiatives including the Warm as Toast and Suffolk Energy Action insulation programmes and the multi-award winning Suffolk Warm Homes Healthy People winter fuel poverty project;
- offering Greener Business Grants to small and medium sized businesses to assist them become more energy efficient and save money; and
- supporting and promoting community and business support services provided by Suffolk Climate Change Partnership.

Excluding officer time, all the community-focussed initiatives are delivered at an annual revenue cost to the Council of £17,000.

1.1.4 Improvements in energy efficiency deliver immediate savings generally with short financial paybacks. In addition, achieving certain levels of building energy efficiency is a requirement for the highest renewable energy tariffs. Since its launch in 2011, the West Suffolk Greener Business Grant has contributed to the improvement in efficiency of 62 businesses in West Suffolk from a pot of £60,000 provided by West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership. The performance of this fund is set out in Table 1.

¹ kWp – kilowatt peak – the generating capacity of the installation

Number of businesses supported	Amount granted	Predicted value of energy savings to the businesses		Predicted CO ₂ savings	
		Annual	Over the expected lifetime of the measures	Annual	Over the expected lifetime of the measures
62	£46,165	£52,500	£827,000	220 tonnes	4,150 tonnes

Table 1 – West Suffolk Greener Business Grant

The fund has been used by businesses to match-fund either their own capital or other funds, for example Grants for Growth funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

1.1.5 It is proposed, therefore, that as part of the broader support to business in the Community Energy Plan that the Council allocates £15,000 to top up the grant pot. A similar amount will be sought from Forest Heath District Council so that the grant can continue to be offered to help cut local business costs which in turn will support our strategic priority to stimulate economic growth across West Suffolk.

1.1.6 By combining our current energy efficiency work with a renewable energy investment programme, the Council would be able to fulfil the following outcomes:

- A long term, sustainable source of revenue for the Council
- Households, businesses and communities in West Suffolk which are less reliant on fossil-based energy
- Locally-owned renewable energy generation to the benefit of the local taxpayer

1.1.7 With Forest Heath, this can form the basis of a West Suffolk Community Energy Plan comprising:

- Continued support to residents to insulate their homes and improve energy efficiency – delivered through our participation and promotion of Suffolk Energy Action and other schemes as they become available
- Continued support to vulnerable residents during the winter – delivered under the Suffolk Warm Homes Healthy People programme
- Continued resource efficiency advice and support to businesses and communities – delivered through our participation in the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership
- Subject to Council approval, continued capital funding to improve business energy efficiency – using the West Suffolk Greener Business Grant to unlock other capital within the business or from elsewhere
- Subject to Council approval, capital financing of renewable energy in the community.

1.2 **Options appraisal**

1.2.1 Following informal discussion with Cabinet Members over the summer and autumn 2014, officers have undertaken an options appraisal of a range of renewable energy generation opportunities in order to develop a business case for the renewable energy investment programme. The appraisal has focussed on solar photovoltaics (solar PV) since the technology is now mature in the UK market and has a relatively low technological risk.

1.2.2 The following options have been considered in the appraisal:

- (a) Developing more solar on Council property
- (b) Developing a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for homes
- (c) Developing a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for local business
- (d) Brokering investment in renewable energy on behalf of local communities
- (e) Other renewable energy technologies.

A description of each option and an outline of the appraisal findings are given in Appendix A.

1.2.3 A summary of the options appraisal is set out in Appendix B. The options appraisal shows that there are opportunities to develop a portfolio designed to deliver the outcomes set out in 1.1.6.

1.3 **Proposals based on the findings from the options appraisal**

1.3.1 It is recommended that the Council approves the proposal to develop more solar on council property (Option 1) and to develop a rent-a-roof scheme for local businesses (Option 3).

1.3.2 Further market research is required on the option to develop a rent-a-roof scheme for homes (Option 2) and the option to broker investment in renewable energy on behalf of local communities (Option 4); a future report will be provided for Cabinet to consider on these two options.

1.3.3 In addition to the options, an "Invest-to-save" proposal has been identified for water efficiency improvements to the Haverhill Depot which are not included within existing budgets or the Council's Repair and Maintenance Programme provisions.

1.3.4 Based on a capital investment of £1,705,500 and assuming lower end returns and upper end costs, the viable options could deliver potential revenue of £152,500 per annum in Year 1, moving towards £213,000 per annum in Year 10. This Feed-In Tariff component would be index-linked over a 20 year period. The predicted Internal Rate of Return from this investment has been calculated and presented in this report BEFORE taking account of loan interest and principal repayment BUT after taking account of operating costs. Taken together, these proposals are close to achieving the 10% threshold in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Additional value will be gained where the energy is used onsite, displacing grid supply.

1.3.5 Initial analysis is also underway of the potential opportunities that arise

from renewable heat technologies such as Anaerobic Digestion and biomass (Option 5). These are now supported through the Renewable Heat Incentive and can generate commercial returns in the region of 15% compared to around 8-10% for solar PV. Renewable heat technologies also make a significant carbon saving contribution given that most of the energy used in buildings is for heating and cooling. The findings of this options appraisal will be presented in a future report.

1.3.6 A summary of the costs and financial returns of each option is presented in the Table 2. These exclude the additional value to the consumer of any tariff discount which the Council may be able to offer.

Option	Capital cost	IRR ²	Revenue/Saving after operating costs	
			Year 1	Year 10
Improve water efficiency	£21,000 ³	21%	£2,000	£2,500 ⁴
Option 1 Develop more solar on council property	£64,500	9%	£6,500	£9,500
Option 3 Develop a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for local businesses	£1.62 million over three years (£540,000 pa)	9.5%	£144,000 (by year 3)	£201,000
Total	£1,705,500		£152,500	£213,000

Table 2 – Investment returns

1.3.7 Investing in the viable options would open up associated opportunities and benefits for both the Council and local communities:

- Energy generation in community ownership – the initial delivery model is based on the Council being the primary investor. The Council could retain ownership or look to develop a shared ownership model whereby individuals or community groups take an investment stake
- Sell electricity to local consumers – where energy generation is at a business or community building as in the Option 3, the electricity could be sold for use on site

Energy security and carbon savings – the proposed options, if developed, would make a valuable contribution in both cases.

1.3.8 By developing an investment programme, the Council will be in a strong position to be able to offer householders and local businesses an integrated energy advice and support service through our work with the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership. This would also help support inward investment by helping communities and businesses gain more effective access to support funding like the Energy Companies Obligation and Grants for Growth.

² an indicator of the net benefits expected from a project over its lifetime, expressed as a percentage comparable to the interest rates

³ The total scheme cost is £100,000 with the remaining £25,00 already funded from a S106 agreement

⁴ Assuming 5% per annum indexation of energy costs

2. Additional supporting information

2.1 The proposals bring together economic, social and environmental benefits by:

- delivering sustainable, long term financial benefit for the Council to achieve its Medium Term Financial Strategy
- showing community leadership by helping to deliver legally-binding national targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to generate more electricity from renewable energy
- Developing wider economic benefits, for example by using local suppliers during the construction phase, and supporting local businesses taking up energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Helping local communities access low cost energy.

2.2 Option 4 may, when fully evaluated, allow the Council establish an electricity tariff offer to local residents.

2.3 The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership is leading nationally on the green economy. These proposals support this aspiration and could in the longer term allow local businesses take economic advantage from the energy savings that may accrue, while some may move into the energy sector to build a local supply chain.

3. Consultation

3.1 Although no formal consultation has been undertaken on the options, informal discussions have been held with a range of potential stakeholders to gather information to assess each option and test the market.

3.2 Should the Council approve any of the options, an engagement and communications plan will be put together. This will support any formal consultations required by the planning process should any larger schemes be brought forward.

3.3 Several of the options can be delivered with our partner, Forest Heath District Council. A separate report will be considered by Forest Heath's Members and should both Councils approve the proposals, discussions will be held with internal and external stakeholders to shape the shared delivery model.

4. Alternative option

4.1 Doing nothing

Lack of investment capital has been cited as a block to householders, communities and business taking action to improve energy efficiency and uptake of renewable energy generation themselves. This block would continue to hold back our communities and businesses if the Council chose not to support the opportunities presented in this report.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 The predicted financial returns to the Council are summarised in 1.3.6. The revenue from the Feed-In Tariff is index-linked according to OFGEM-approved contracts for 20 years while electricity will continue to be developed so long as the panels remain operational. The viable options are predicted to generate stable, long term revenue which would contribute to meeting the Council's Medium Financial Strategy.
- 5.2 In addition, local communities and businesses partnering with the Council could receive discounted electricity, enhancing the overall value of the projects. Typically, it is considered that electricity from roof-mounted solar could be offered at a tariff at least 10% cheaper than the current grid offer.
- 5.3 It is difficult to predict long-term trends of energy prices. The demand for energy is probably the single most significant factor affecting price. UK Government predicts that average domestic dual fuel bills, for example, will increase by 18% in real terms between 2010 and 2020⁵. Other energy commentators are predicting higher increases and significant price volatility for domestic and commercial energy consumers.
- 5.4 The ability to hedge against electricity price volatility could be advantageous to the Council; this may be possible through developing a portfolio of energy generation schemes. Prices could be linked to a less volatile index compared to market prices for electricity, allowing the Council and participating businesses the ability to plan their utility budgets with more confidence.
- 5.5 The Council may need to borrow in order to finance the majority of these proposals and the most likely source of external financing would be prudential borrowing which is currently available at a rate of approximately 3.5%. These investments have been assessed against the Internal Rate of Return needed to cover borrowing. However, the Council's Treasury Management activities will determine when the Council will actually need to enter into external borrowing.

6. Staffing implications

- 6.1 Should the proposals be approved, there will be pressure placed on the Council's capacity and technical capability to deliver, particularly with larger more complex schemes. However, the financial models supporting the options incorporate an allocation of resources (staff and operational budget) for the management of the projects should they be taken forward.
- 6.2 Subject to Council approval, a project delivery team will be put together which will move any proposals that are viable forward to the point of delivery. Once schemes are operational, the size and nature of this team will be kept under review to ensure that it reflects the resources required and financial returns generated.

⁵ Energy Prices -Standard Note: SN/SG/4153 House of Commons Library. 31 January 2014

7. Legal and policy implications

- 7.1 The Council has the power to generate and sell electricity and heat as described in this report by virtue of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (as amended in 2010).
- 7.2 Legal advice has been sought to establish whether any of the options would require a trading company to be established. Furthermore, there may be circumstances where a special purpose vehicle may be required, for example where a joint venture is the best approach to delivering one of the viable options. Neither of these structures is likely to be needed at the initial stages of developing any of the options. However, these may be required at a later date. Advice has, therefore, been sought to understand the costs and benefits including taxation implications.
- 7.3 The proposals contribute positively to all three of the Council's strategic priorities as outlined previously.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1 An initial screening Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken which has determined that there will be no differential impact on any diversity group arising from the proposals.
- 8.2 The proposals could deliver significant financial value to the Council which would benefit local communities in the Borough; directly where renewable energy could be developed further; and indirectly with the revenue reducing the Council Tax burden.
- 8.3 In the longer term, where excess energy generation can be exported to the grid, the Council could explore the development of a social electricity tariff, which could be offered to households struggling to afford their energy bills.

Appendix A – Outline of the options considered

Option 1: Developing more solar on Council property

Council properties have been identified which could accommodate the next phase of solar installations. At the same time, an energy efficiency improvement has been identified for which there is no funding in the Council's Property Maintenance programme. A "without commitment" procurement process has been undertaken; the financial and carbon savings are set out in Table 1.

Site/item	Capital investment	Annual income/Savings for the Council ⁶		IRR for the Council	Estimated value to the tenant(s) (Year 1)	Estimated CO ₂ saving
		Year 1	Year 10			
21-27 Hollands Road, Haverhill Solar PV ⁷	£64,500	£5,000	£7,500	9.6%	£850	7 tonnes
Haverhill Depot Water efficiency	£21,000	£2,000	£2,500	7%	N/A	N/A
Total	£85,500	£8,500	£12,000		£850	9 tonnes

Option 2: Developing a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for homes



Larger housing developers are arguing that renewables jeopardise the viability of development. A potential solution could be that the local authorities in effect rent the roof space to install solar panels on new built homes, taking the Feed-In Tariff while the homeowner saves energy so reducing their bill.

Economies of scale would be achieved and much of the procurement risk would be transferred since it would be for the developer, rather than the Council, to use its buying power and supply chain. The Councils would also have the ability potentially to set local employment conditions by negotiation with the developers.

To date, informal discussions have been held with, amongst others a major utility connection company a local housing association and a local authority already offering the scheme to its residents, to understand whether a model is viable.

⁶ The Feed-In Tariff is index linked over 20 years.

⁷ In addition to the financial returns for the Council, it will be possible to offer any generated electricity to the tenant under contract at a cheaper rate than they currently pay for grid supplied electricity.

Option 3: Developing a “rent-a-roof” solar scheme for local business



One of the barriers to businesses installing renewable energy technologies is access investment capital. Using its prudential borrowing, the Councils could work with local businesses by investing in a solar installation on their building. The Council would receive the Feed-in Tariff and the business would be supplied the generated electricity at a cheaper rate through some form of roof rental agreement.

The rent-a-roof offer would be open to all businesses across the district although to ensure value for money, it would be necessary to apply eligibility criteria. This would include technical criteria relating to the size, type and design of the host building and criteria regarding the ownership of the building and business electricity use.

Market research has shown that there is interest from businesses, although this may be limited by technical aspects, like business energy profile and building characteristics, the appetite of the key decision makers in the business and the level of financial return that could be offered.

Based on the appraisal, it is considered that the equivalent of three to five medium scale (150KWp) schemes could be progressed a year. For budgeting purposes, it has been assumed that the equivalent of three medium scale schemes could be advanced each year over a three year period. The predicted financial investment and returns are set out below.

Year	No. of schemes developed each year	Capital investment	IRR	Annual income for the Council	
				Year 1	Year 10
1	3	£540,000	9.75%	£48,000	£67,000
2	3	£540,000	9.75%	£48,000	£67,000
3	3	£540,000	9.75%	£48,000	£67,000
Total	9	£1.62 million	9.75%	£144,000	£201,000

Option 4: Brokering investment in renewable energy on behalf of local communities

Community energy schemes are one of the most effective ways of getting people engaged with energy issues. Energy companies are starting to offer support to communities to develop a package of energy-related benefits.

One company, OVO Energy⁸, offers four key elements to energy projects developed for the benefit of the local community:

- energy supply - set up their own supply business, from front to back office, from trading to marketing
- smart metering - customers will be able to see real time energy usage, which can be used to compare portfolios of homes to identify the most energy efficient or inefficient properties
- energy efficiency – companies are offering funding through the Energy Companies Obligation
- Power generation - can buy energy from local generators.

This offer is available to local authorities; appropriately scaled schemes have yet to be identified. Option 4 may, when fully evaluated, allow the Council establish an electricity tariff offer to local residents.

Option 5: Other renewable energy technologies

Initial work is underway and, where viable, proposed schemes will be brought forward for consideration.

⁸ <http://www.ovoenergy.com/blog/2013/11/community-owned-energy/#sthash.EnTW0x2D.dpuf>

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Appendix B – Summary of the options appraisal

	Work stream	Evaluation	Key risks	Recommendation/reason
1	Developing more solar on Council property	<p>VIABLE PROJECT</p> <p>The project is technical feasible and predicted to deliver a viable rate of return as well as benefitting tenants with cheaper electricity.</p> <p>Subject to approval the work would be programmed for completion by March 2015.</p> <p>Sites proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Apex, Bury St Edmunds • Hollands Road Business Units, Haverhill <p>In addition, there is an invest-to-save opportunity by improving water efficiency at Haverhill Depot</p>	<p>Failure to gain political support</p> <p>Poor performance of system</p> <p>Failure to complete all permissions and approvals</p> <p>Feed-In Tariffs not secured/or delayed</p> <p>Financial returns not achieved</p>	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Cabinet seeks Council approval to invest £104,500 to improve energy efficiency and install the next phase of solar schemes on Council property.</p> <p>Reason:</p> <p>To generate an investment return and deliver energy savings</p>
2	Developing a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for homes	<p>VIABLE PROJECT TO BE DETERMINED</p> <p>Further research required. Initial findings indicate that new build development could be potentially viable but existing homes not.</p> <p>Discussions with a housing developer and utilities infrastructure provider suggest that a viable model could be developed which would generate acceptable investment returns for the Council while giving households the generated electricity at no cost.</p>	<p>No market demand.</p> <p>Failure to negotiate legal permissions</p> <p>Financial model does not stand up following market testing.</p> <p>Failure to gain political support</p>	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>A further report be considered by Cabinet following further research and market testing by your officers</p> <p>Reason:</p> <p>To fully understand the approach and its merits</p>
3	Developing a "rent-a-roof" solar scheme for local	<p>VIABLE PROJECT</p> <p>Potential market would be owner occupiers of larger sized industrial buildings in the</p>	<p>Failure to gain political support</p> <p>Not gaining permission to</p>	<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Cabinet seeks approval to invest £1.62 million over three years to install solar on eligible local</p>

	business	<p>Borough.</p> <p>Feasibility and soft market testing has been undertaken completion. A small potential market exists in the Borough based around free installation of solar PV by the Councils offering either a rental payment or discounted electricity for the building owner.</p> <p>Initial interest has been shown by three third parties with large scale opportunities.</p>	<p>lease the roof</p> <p>Capital costs above target price for PV</p> <p>Poor performance of system</p>	<p>businesses</p> <p>Reason To generate an investment return and support local economic growth</p>
4	Brokering investment in renewable energy on behalf of local communities	<p>VIABILITY TO BE DETERMINED Initial investigation has shown that the principle opportunity centres on selling electricity to a licensed electricity company.</p> <p>The Council would need to develop a portfolio of generating sites for it to be worthwhile progressing this opportunity.</p> <p>Further investigation is still required to confirm or understanding across the market.</p>	<p>No market demand.</p> <p>Financial model does not stand up following market testing.</p> <p>Failure to gain political support</p>	<p>Recommendation: A further report be considered by Cabinet following further research and market testing by your officers</p> <p>Reason: To fully understand the approach and its merits</p>
6	Other renewable technology opportunities	<p>VIABILITY TO BE DETERMINED</p> <p>Biomass heating/Anaerobic Digestion: Further investigation is still required to confirm opportunities and understanding across the market. Further investigation is still required to confirm or understanding across the market.</p> <p>Renewable Heating and Power: The Public Service Village 2 (PSV2) project has been identified as a major significant opportunity to invest with partners in renewable energy to develop a site which is</p>	<p>No market demand or viable feedstock</p> <p>Financial model does not stand up following market testing.</p> <p>Failure to gain political support</p>	<p>Recommendation: a) A further report on the opportunities be considered by Cabinet following further research and market testing by your officers b) A bid be submitted to the Government's Heat Networks Delivery Unit and any findings be incorporated into the business case for the PSV2 project</p> <p>Reason: To fully understand the approach</p>

		<p>both self-sustaining in energy and generates a viable rate of return using the Feed-In Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive.</p> <p>Further feasibility is required. The Government is currently offering support funding for feasibility studies via its Heat Networks Delivery Unit. The latest tranche of funding is available based on competitive applications</p>		<p>and the merits of Renewable Heat</p>
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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Public Service Village Phase II, Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/010 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
	Council	16 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	Terry Clements Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation Tel: 01284 827161 Email: terry.clements@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Steven Wood Head of Planning and Regulatory Services Tel: 01284 757306 Email: steven.wood@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>The Public Service Village concept was approved and adopted by the Council in 2006. Phase I has been successfully completed by the construction and occupation of West Suffolk House. The improving economic climate and the possible relocation of the Council's depot together with a change of ownership of the DHL logistics building, present an opportunity for the Council to progress Phase II of the project.</p> <p>To do this the Council will need to review the adopted Masterplan to bring it up to date with the changes since 2006 and to put in place resources to help deliver this ambitious plan. This report asks, therefore, for £100,000 towards the appointment of specialist recourses to help formulate the project and ensure that the Council obtains Best Consideration.</p>	

Recommendations:	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that, subject to the approval of full Council,</p> <p>(1) the Masterplan for the Public Service Village, Bury St Edmunds (2006) Masterplan, be reviewed; and</p> <p>(2) £100,000 be allocated from earmarked reserves (invest to save) to support the appointment of project management, legal and property expertise, as detailed in Section 1.4 of Report CAB/SE/14/010;.</p>
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
Consultation:	<p>Extensive consultation will be undertaken as part of the review of the Masterplan for this site. In addition, stakeholders will be incorporated into the project management governance structure.</p>
Alternative option(s):	<p>The Masterplan process in June 2006 will have sequentially looked at a variety of uses and alternative sites but found this site as the best place for the development of the Public Service Village.</p>
Implications:	
<p><i>Are there any financial implications?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The initial financial commitment is £100,000 to commission legal and property experts to properly assess the potential commitment going forward. This will include the revision of the Masterplan. There will be some internal establishment costs focused on leading and managing the different stages of the project. The commitment of internal resources can only be properly assessed once the initial commitments have been negotiated with other stakeholders have been agreed together with the result of agreed commitments in any development agreement.</p>
<p><i>Are there any staffing implications?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above.

<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Town and Country Planning Act for all the planning considerations. Localism Act 2011 to ensure the Council gets "best consideration"	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Equality issues will be tested at each stage of the project and an Equality Impact Assessment will be part of the initial stages of revising the Masterplan.	
<i>Is there any other impact? If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> This project is linked to the plan for the relocation of the depot and therefore relies on the success of that project. The commitment of stakeholders to the project will be critical and the close association of this project with Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre and the West Suffolk College.	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Not appointing legal and property expertise or dedicated project Manager	High	Make appropriate professional appointments to protect the council's interests. Appoint a dedicated Project Manager.	Medium
Achieving best consideration.	High	Make appropriate professional appointments to protect the council's interests. Adopt strict project management principles to manage the project. At the appropriate stage appoint a project board.	Medium
Achieving project delivery with a start date of end of 2016	High	Gateway project management, appropriate level of resources at each stage of the project. Good project management and corporate commitment.	Medium
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		None	
Documents attached:		Appendix A: Masterplan (2006) for the Development of the Public Service Village, Bury St Edmunds.	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Key issues

- 1.1.1 The Public Service Village is a linked cluster of buildings to house a number of Public Service users on a single site, closely related with the existing Leisure Centre and West Suffolk College, and near to upper schools.
- 1.1.2 The concept of a public service village was contained in a Masterplan approved in June 2006, as attached at Appendix A. The first phase of this ambitious project was the completion of West Suffolk House. West Suffolk House (WSH) has successfully achieved its objectives in accommodating staff from Bury St Edmundsbury Borough Council (and now both West Suffolk Councils) and Suffolk County Council together with other public sector organisations.
- 1.1.3 There is now a desire to progress the next phases of this project to include the rest of the site. This is now possible because of the plans to relocate the Council's depot and changes in ownership of the DHL (NHS Logistics) building. An officer project team has been formed to initiate the Phase II of the Public Service Village in partnership with the new owners of the NHS logistics building.
- 1.1.4 The project therefore has two key components:
- (a) The review of the Masterplan to include the DHL Building and any changes in the economic environment since the adoption in 2006 and importantly provide planning certainty; and
 - (b) development phase to deliver the aspirations contained in the revised Masterplan by entering into partnership with key stakeholders and the new landowners of the DHL building.
- 1.1.5 The project has been scoped and, for the scheme to progress further and have a start on site by the second half of 2016, approval is sought for funds to appoint a dedicated project manager, legal and property consultants.

1.2 Masterplan

- 1.2.1 The existing Masterplan currently excluded the site operated by DHL, however it was now proposed that the DHL site be included in a revised Masterplan.
- 1.2.2 If the Council is to achieve the start on site deadline estimated to be the later part of 2016, the present Masterplan is required to be revised. This revision work requires to be started immediately and to this end Pick Everard have been identified to carry out this work. Pick Everard were the consultant team used to deliver the Masterplan in 2006 and were the architects involved in the WSH construction. It is therefore felt appropriate to utilise them for the revision work procured using a National Government framework to ensure value for money.
- 1.2.3 The project team have estimated that the work will be completed for adoption of the revised Masterplan by full Council in July 2015. This, however, did not preclude property and development interests being pursued in the interim; it

did however, mean that once the revised Masterplan had been adopted, a greater degree of planning certainty would be achieved.

1.3 **Delivery Stage**

- 1.3.1 The delivery of this project is both complex and ambitious and requires a number of agreements to put in place. The developer partners will require a development agreement outlining, in some detail, the critical time line, responsibilities, the detail of the individual development parcels and critically the financial commitments and return on investment.
- 1.3.2 The Council will also need to formally demonstrate Best Consideration for the whole project.

1.4 **Resources**

- 1.4.1 Phase II of the Public Service Village project will be a major investment opportunity and one of the largest developments in the Borough and a catalyst for other neighbouring sites. It is important that in recognising this appropriate resources are committed at this early stage.
- 1.4.2 The specialist expertise needed at this stage and moving forward is not freely available within the present establishment, as it wasn't with phase 1 of the project. To ensure, therefore, the Council gets Best Consideration through negotiation with the developer partner and achieve its objectives contained within the revised Masterplan, legal and property consultants need to be commissioned at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4.3 This is an important stage of the project and therefore it is estimated that for this initial commission the project will need £100,000 allocated from earmarked reserves (invest to save) to appoint these key advisors together with a project manager to manage the scheme.
- 1.4.4 Time is critical no more so than to ensure this project is aligned with the proposed Depot move.
- 1.4.5 As part of the initial discussions officers have had meetings with potential partners who wish to occupy parts of the site. The Head of Housing has also identified the possibility for a strategic housing site and GVA Grimley is assessing this as part of their existing work programme on delivery of the Housing Strategy to see whether the site will attract Central Government grant.

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Masterplan Sheet 1

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Bridging Loan to Samaritans	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/011 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	David Ray Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01359 250912 Email: david.ray@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Liz Watts Director Tel: 01284 757252 Email: liz.watts@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To outline the request by Samaritans for a further £25,000 in addition to the bridging loan of £150,000 already approved by full council on 23 September 2014	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that a further £25,000 be loaned to Samaritans (bringing the total secured loan to £175,000) subject to the appropriate level of due diligence being undertaken by the Chief Finance Officer as already agreed by full Council on 23 September 2014.	
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 key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>		
Consultation:	Portfolio Holder, Samaritans	
Alternative option(s):	To not increase the existing loan.	
Implications:		
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A secured interest-bearing loan (at 3% above bank base rate) 	

Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The loan will be secured by a legal charge on 46 Well Street, Bury St Edmunds 	
Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
The loan is not repaid	Low	The first charge on the sale of the Well Street property exceeds the value of the total loan by 1.4:1	Low
The loan is not repaid on time	Medium	The organisation will continue to pay interest (or if they don't the interest will be deducted from the proceeds of the property sale, upon which the council will have first charge)	Low
Ward(s) affected:		This is the only branch of Samaritans in St Edmundsbury, and it serves the whole of the borough.	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Full Council Report F121 - Bridging Loan to Samaritans	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Reason for request

- 1.1.1 In September 2014, full Council approved a bridging loan of £150,000 at an interest rate of 3% above bank base rate, in order that the charity could relocate to more suitable premises without a break in operations. These terms were acceptable to the charity, as well as meeting the Council's own loans policy.
- 1.1.2 The property identified fell through, but the charity has now identified another suitable property, which is more expensive, but still within their available capital funds, once they sell 46 Well Street, Bury St Edmunds.
- 1.1.3 Purchase of the new property means that the charity will be £47,710 short of cash, pending the sale of 46 Well Street. They have worked hard to try to fill this gap, and have indeed found two benefactors who are prepared to loan some of the money. However, there is still a shortfall of £25,000 and the Council has been approached to consider increasing the value of the already agreed loan by £25,000. The loan would still be repaid within six months. The benefactors would have a second charge (meaning that the Council's loan repayment would take precedent).

2. Additional supporting information (if required)

- 2.1 All of the loan policy criteria (set out in detail in Cabinet [Report E102](#)) are still met if this further sum were to be agreed. The Council is currently in the process of undertaking due diligence on the original loan, and would simply extend this process to include the further sum of £25,000, and deliver the outcome sought by the Borough Council when it originally agreed to support the charity.

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	West Suffolk Houses in Multiple Occupation(HMO) Guidance and Standards	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/012 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	Anne Gower Portfolio Holder for Housing Tel: 01440 706402 Email: anne.gower@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Simon Phelan Head of Housing Tel: 01638 719440 Email: simon.phelan@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To request formal adoption of standards and fees	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that the West Suffolk Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Guidance and Standards, and HMO licence fee, as contained in Appendix A to Report No. CAB/SE/14/012, be approved.	
Key Decision: (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <u>do not</u> apply.)	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>It is likely:-</p> <p>(i) To result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; and</p> <p>(ii) To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the Borough.</p>	

<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>			
Consultation:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMO landlords, letting agents, eastern Landlords Association and tenants of HMOs were consulted. No responses were received which would require any changes. 	
Alternative option(s):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	
Implications:			
<p>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are associated with staffing costs with the licence fee covering the administration of the licence The previous flat rate for St Edmundsbury was £150. The proposed fee is £500 	
<p>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<p>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<p>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMO legislation is met through adoption and implementation 	
<p>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Legal, health and reputational	Medium	Approval and implementation of the guidance and standards	Low
		Adequate resource in service	
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Cabinet Report F43 – 24 June 2014	
Documents attached:		Appendix A: HMO Guidance and Standards (including appendices)	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Housing Act 2004 duties

- 1.1.1 The Council has a statutory duty, under the Housing Act, to inspect, licence and ensure satisfactory standards in HMOs. This document details the approach, standards and licensing fee to be consistently implemented and enforced as appropriate across West Suffolk.
- 1.1.2 HMOs pose a higher risk to the health of tenants, than single occupied dwellings, but also provide necessary accommodation for mainly single people often on lower incomes. The aim is to ensure safe and well managed HMOs in the private rented sector.
- 1.1.3 Larger HMOs (those with three or more storeys and five or more persons) are required to be licensed and there is a fee to cover the cost of this process; the proposal is that it should be £500.

1.2 Consistent Approach

- 1.2.1 A West Suffolk HMO Guidance and Standards document has been developed as attached as Appendix A to this report. It aligns the existing standards and fees for both St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath District Councils, and ensures a consistent approach towards dealing with HMOs and gaining compliance with the legislation and standards.
- 1.2.2 For ease of reference, a copy of Report F43, considered by the Cabinet on 24 June 2014 is attached as Appendix B. This report sought approval for progressing consultation on the document and associated fees. Consultation has since taken place throughout West Suffolk focussing on HMO landlords, HMO tenants, Eastern Landlords Association and letting agents. Response has been supportive and not requiring any changes to the document.
- 1.2.3 It is necessary for the standards and fee to be approved by the formal democratic process as we will use this to ensure compliance and as the basis for any future enforcement.

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Houses in Multiple Occupation Guidance and Standards 2014

1. Introduction

The term 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' (HMO) describes a type of dwelling that includes bedsits and similar shared accommodation. A detailed definition can be found in the Housing Act 2004 (see Appendix 1) which also describes the types of HMOs that are subject to mandatory licensing (see Appendix 2).

HMOs provide a valuable source of affordable accommodation. Young and professional single people, students and migrant workers predominantly access this type of accommodation, where there is a higher level of transience than may be found in other sectors of the private housing market. As a whole there are more residents on low incomes in the HMO sector.

This procedure seeks to achieve a good standard of accommodation and to address problems often associated with HMOs; for example disrepair, lack of amenities, inadequate fire safety provisions and poor management. The West Suffolk Housing Strategy identifies Houses in Multiple Occupation as a priority area for the monitoring of standards within the private rented sector. Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils will work in partnership with external agencies such as Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and private landlords and tenants of HMOs, to achieve the aims and objectives of this policy.

2. Aim

- (a) To safeguard the health, safety and well-being of residents within West Suffolk who live in houses in multiple occupation by ensuring the application and maintenance of standards in these properties.
- (b) To contribute towards the delivery of West Suffolk's Housing Strategy
- (c) To contribute to the West Suffolk Strategic Priority 3: Homes for Our Communities

3. Objectives

To achieve the overall aim we have identified five objectives, to:

- Develop our knowledge on the number of HMOs in West Suffolk
- Promote good standards in HMOs and provide information and advice to landlords and tenants
- Encourage co-operation between landlords and tenants
- Eliminate poor property and poor management standards in HMOs
- Meet the legislative obligations for HMO licensing

4. Implementation

The Public Health & Housing team within Housing Services is principally responsible for private sector housing and will therefore play the lead role in implementing HMO standards. Our objectives will be achieved by engaging in a positive dialogue with landlords, tenants, letting agents and other internal and external partners.

4.1 To develop our knowledge we will:

- Carry out surveys to identify HMOs
- Maintain and update a database of known HMOs
- Liaise with other organisations to determine trends which may lead to the creation of HMOs
- Exchange information with other council services, such as Anglia Revenue Partnership, Planning & Regulatory Services and Waste Management
- Share knowledge with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and University Campus Suffolk
- Work with local estate and letting agents
- Act upon information from the public and their local Members
- Work with housing colleagues through the West Suffolk Letting Partnership (WSLP)

4.2 To ensure satisfactory standards we will:

- Carry out proactive routine inspections of HMOs in accordance with our hazard weighted risk assessment programme (see Appendix 3)
- Inspect newly identified HMOs within a maximum of 6 months and incorporate them into the inspection programme
- Advise landlords of any category 1 and category 2 hazards identified under the Housing Act 2004 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Advise landlords and agents of the requirements of the HMO Management regulations
- Consult with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service in accordance with the HMO protocol adopted by all Suffolk local authorities
- Take enforcement action where appropriate and necessary in accordance with good practice
- Liaise with colleagues in Planning and Regulatory Services, and Housing Services
- Work with other organisations such as Trading Standards (flammable furnishings) and the Health & Safety Executive (gas safety) to ensure the interests of the tenants are fully protected

4.3. Meeting our obligations for licensing:

The Housing Act 2004 introduced mandatory national licensing for all houses in multiple occupation of three storeys or more, occupied by five or more persons. We operate a mandatory licensing scheme and have raised awareness of the legislative requirements through the local press and landlords forums; we will:

- Advise owners of their obligations to licence HMOs

- Process licence applications (for which there is a fee – see Appendix 2) within three months
- Maintain a register of licensed HMOs
- Ensure that all HMOs subject to licensing attain the standards required by the licence
- Inspect each licensed HMO at least once every five years
- Advise landlords and letting agents on the requirements of the HMO management regulations
- Take enforcement action where HMO owners evade licensing

4.4. To promote good standards we will:

- Provide information and advice to letting agents and individual landlords through discussions, our landlord information pack and site visits
- Provide guidance through our amenity standards (see Appendix 4)
- Have regular meetings of our landlords forums
- Encourage landlords and letting agents to join an accredited landlords association

4.5. To encourage co-operation between landlords and tenants we will:

- Raise awareness of the statutory requirements particularly regarding termination of tenancy
- Encourage landlords to manage properties in accordance with best practice
- Advise and support responsible landlords in dealing with tenants causing problems with anti-social behaviour
- Advise tenants on their tenancy rights and provide information on general housing rights and responsibilities

4.6 Partnership with University Campus Suffolk

University Campus Suffolk has developed a code of practice for landlords wishing to make accommodation available to their students. Landlords are required to comply with the code which specifies a high standard of repair, safety, amenity and housing management. Applications for accreditation are made through the University. We will:

- Encourage all landlords to adopt the University Campus Suffolk Standards
- Inspect properties for landlords wishing to have accreditation under the University Campus Suffolk scheme

5. Review

This document will be reviewed annually or when there are changes to council policy, Government, guidance, legislation or other circumstances that would deem this appropriate and necessary.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1- Definition of a House in Multiple Occupation(HMO)
- Appendix 2 -Licensing Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Appendix 3- HMO Inspection programme
- Appendix 4- Houses in Multiple Occupation Amenity Standards

Useful/relevant guidance:

- LACORS HOUSING-FIRE SAFETY (2008)
- Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order Sleeping Accommodation Guidance (2006)
- RICS Private rented sector code of practice (2014)
- Asset Skills HHSRS Guide
- HMO Joint Protocol between Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service and the District & Borough Councils (2007 and supplementary guidance 2008)
- University Campus Suffolk Accommodation Code of practice (2010)

Appendix 1

Definition of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Under the Housing Act 2004, if you let a property which is one of the following types it is a House in Multiple Occupation:

- An entire house or flat which is let to 3 or more tenants who form 2 or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet.
- A house which has been converted entirely into bedsits or other non-self-contained accommodation and which is let to 3 or more tenants who form two or more households and who share kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities.
- A converted house which contains one or more flats which are not wholly self contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by 3 or more tenants who form two or more households.
- A building which is converted entirely into self-contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one-third of the flats are let on short-term tenancies.

In order to be an HMO the property must be used as the tenants' only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants. Properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same will apply to properties which are used as domestic refuges.

What counts as a self contained unit of accommodation?

A self contained unit is one which has inside it a kitchen (or cooking area), bathroom and toilet for the exclusive use of the household living in the unit.

If the occupiers need to leave the unit to gain access to any one of these amenities that unit isn't self contained.

Is a block of flats an HMO?

A purpose built block of flats is not an HMO. However, an individual flat within it might be if it is let to 3 or more tenants (at least one of whom is unrelated). The flat will not be subject to mandatory licensing.

If the block is a house which has been converted entirely into self-contained flats the conversion will be regarded by local housing authorities as an HMO if it does not comply at least with the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and if more than one third of the flats are let out on short leases. These blocks of flats will not be subject to mandatory HMO licensing.

What is a household?

The following are 'households' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004:

Members of the same family living together including:

- Couples married to each other or living together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex).
- Relatives living together, including parents, grandparents, children (and step-children), grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces or cousins.
- Half-relatives will be treated as full relatives. A foster child living with his foster parent is treated as living in the same household as his foster parent.
- Any domestic staff in the household are also included if they are living rent-free in accommodation provided by the person for whom they are working.

Therefore three friends sharing together are considered three households. If a couple are sharing with a third person that would consist of two households. If a family rents a property they are a single household. If that family had an au-pair to look after their children that person would be included in their household.

Are there any exceptions to the definition of HMOs?

Certain types of properties are not classed as HMOs for the purpose of the Housing Act 2004 HMO management and licensing requirements, these include:

- A two person flat share; a property, or part of a property, lived in by no more than two 'households' each of which consists of just one person.
- A property where the landlord and his household is resident with up to 2 tenants.
- Buildings occupied entirely by freeholders or long leaseholders.
- Buildings managed or controlled by a public body (such as the police or the NHS), a local housing authority or a registered social landlord.
- A building where the residential accommodation is ancillary to the main use of the building, for example, religious buildings, conference centres etc.
- Buildings which are already regulated (and where the description of the building is specified in regulations), such as care homes, bail hostels etc. (however, domestic refuges are not exempt).

Appendix 2

Licensing Houses in Multiple Occupation

Which Types of HMO need a licence?

Under the national mandatory licensing scheme an HMO must be licensed if it is a building consisting of three or more storeys and is occupied by five or more tenants in two or more households.

How do I work out how many storeys there are?

When counting the number of storeys in the building you need to include:

- basements and attics if they are occupied or have been converted for occupation by residents or if they are in use in connection with the occupation of the HMO by residents
- any storeys which are occupied by you and your family if you are a resident landlord
- all the storeys in residential occupation, even if they are self-contained
- any business premises or storage space on the ground floor or any upper floor

You do not need to count basements and ground floors used for business or storage unless the basement/ground floor is the only, or principal, entrance to the HMO from the street.

Licence Fee

The licence fee is **£500**

Appendix 3

HMO Inspection programme

HMOs on our data base are inspected on a regular basis. The frequency is determined on a risk assessment basis and programmed inspections are carried out, every one, two, three or five years. Higher risk properties are inspected annually and the lower risk properties five yearly.

Risk factors include number of storeys, fire precautions, the housing health & safety rating system, amenities and management.

All newly identified HMOs will be inspected within six months and incorporated into the inspection programme.

Risk Factor	Category	Score
Number of storeys	1	5
	2	10
	3	15
	4+	30
Fire Precautions HHSRS hazard (24)	Full fire protection	0
	Partial fire protection	20
	No fire protection	40
Amenities HHSRS hazards (16), (17) & (18)	Satisfactory	0
	Unsatisfactory minor	5
	Unsatisfactory major	10
HHSRS Other hazards	No hazards	0
	Lower score category 2 (F-J)	5
	Category 2 hazards (D & E)	10
	Category 1 hazards (A-C)	20
Management	Confident	0
	Reasonably confident	15
	Little confidence	30
	No confidence	60
	HMO check	160

Inspection frequency

Score	Inspection frequency
5-10	Five Yearly
15-55	Three Yearly
60-80	Two Yearly
85-160	Yearly
165+	Six Monthly

Appendix 4

Houses in Multiple Occupation Amenity Standards

All houses are assessed using the housing health & safety rating system as defined by the Housing Act 2004. Houses should not contain any category 1 hazards.

The following standards relate specifically to houses in multiple occupation and are a guide for the minimum standard which should be achieved. There may be variations to take into account particular circumstances for individual properties.

Schedule of amenity provisions in relation to number of persons	
1 – 5 persons	At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined). At least 1 kitchen, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance an additional kitchen should be provided, or, a dining room provided on the same floor as the kitchen.
6 –10 persons	At least 2 kitchens, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen. Or 1 large kitchen with dining room, with 2 sets of facilities - dependant upon the actual number of tenants. 2 bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with wash hand basins (WHBs); one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms
10 + persons	At least 2 kitchens, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen. Or 1 large kitchen with dining room, with sets of facilities dependant upon the actual number of tenants. 3 bathrooms AND 3 separate WCs with WHBs (but two of the WCs can be contained within the bathrooms)

NB A bathroom must contain a full sized bath/shower and a wash hand basin. Where a separate toilet is provided the room should contain a wash hand basin.

Space Standards

All rooms should be of suitable size the following is a guide to a minimum room size:

Bedroom:

Bedroom only with separate shared living room

1 person	6.5m ²
2 persons	11.0m ²

Bed-sitting room where there is no separate living room

1 person	10.0m ²
2 persons	15.0m ²

Bed-sitting room containing cooking facilities

1 person	13.0m ²
2 persons	18.0m ²

Unless related, persons should not be required to share bedrooms. It is accepted, however, that some groups may wish to share rooms.

Living room

To be provided where bedrooms are not large enough for use as bed-sitting rooms

1-5 persons	11.0m ²
6 -10 person	16.5m ²
11-15 persons	21.5m ²
16+ persons	25.0m ²

Dining room

To be provided as an alternative to a living room or where a bed-sitting room is provided which is more than one floor distance away from a kitchen:

1 - 5 persons	11.0m ²
6 - 10 persons	16.5m ²
11-15 persons	21.5m ²
16 + persons	25.0m ²

Kitchen/diners are acceptable, where the dining area is separate from cooking and sink areas and is of the above dimensions.

Kitchen

Kitchens shall be provided no more than one floor away from any occupied rooms, unless a dining area is available as detailed. Kitchens must not be located within the fire escape route.

Each kitchen for up to 5 persons should have a minimum floor area of 7m² and be provided with the following:

- 1 cooker with 4 rings, oven and grill (alternatively a microwave oven may be substituted for one or two of the rings)
- 1 sink with hot water, cold drinking water, base unit and drainer and tiled splash back
- 1 single wall or floor cupboard per person for food storage (minimum size 1x 500mm standard unit) or
- 1 double wall or floor cupboard for food storage per 2 persons (minimum size 1 x 1000mm standard unit)
- 1000mm x 600mm worktop for food preparation per 3 persons **or**
- 2000mm x 600mm worktop for food preparation per 5 persons
- 1 standard fridge per 3 persons (with separate shelf for each person) **or**
- 1 large fridge per 5 persons (with separate shelf for each person)
- A sufficient number of suitably located electrical sockets (a minimum of 4 double sockets is recommended)
- Separate cooker panel for electric cookers.

NB cooking facilities in a single bed-sitting room may be a portable appliance such as a two ring oven and grill may be substituted for a full cooker.

The kitchen shall be of sufficient area for the safe provision of all necessary facilities. Cookers shall not be placed adjacent to doorways and there shall be sufficient floor space for the safe retrieval of items from the oven and for the safe circulation of occupants generally.

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Draft West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/013 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	Anne Gower Portfolio Holder for Housing 01440 706402 anne.gower@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Simon Phelan Head of Housing 01638 719440 simon.phelan@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>The Strategy sets out what the two West Suffolk Councils, along with their partners, will do over the next three years to address and prevent homelessness, ensuring that there is sufficient suitable temporary accommodation and support for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.</p> <p>The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all councils to produce a Homelessness Strategy at least every five years.</p>	

Recommendations:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that:</p> <p>(1) the draft West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/SE/14/013, be approved for consultation to the public, local authorities, voluntary and statutory agencies; and</p> <p>(2) following consultation, the amended Strategy be brought back to Cabinet for consideration in February 2015 with a recommendation to full Council for adoption.</p>
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders have been consulted as part of the Homelessness Review and their views have been incorporated in developing the draft strategy. • The strategy will go out for a six week stakeholder and public consultation from 10 December 2014.
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to produce a strategy. However the Council would be in breach of its statutory requirements.
Implications:	
<p><i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See paragraph 2.1
<p><i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p><i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p><i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to produce a Strategy would mean that the Council would be in breach of its statutory requirements.
<p><i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Impact Assessment attached as Appendix B.
Risk/opportunity assessment:	<p><i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i></p>

Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Non-engagement of Partners	Medium	Development of multi-agency partnerships	Low
Insufficient Temporary Accommodation	Medium	Provide identified re-provision of temporary accommodation	Low
Ward(s) affected:		All	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None.	
Documents attached:		Appendix A: Draft West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018 Appendix B: West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy - Equality Impact Assessment	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

- 1.1 This Strategy will support priorities set out in West Suffolk's Strategic Plan. In particular:
- Priority 2: Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active
 - Priority 3: Homes for our communities
- 1.2 Councils are required to carry out a homelessness review of their area and produce a Strategy to:
- (1) address the causes of homelessness in the area;
 - (b) introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible;
 - (c) provide sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless; and
 - (d) ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it from happening again.
- 1.3 This is the first joint West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy. Previously Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council have had their own separate documents.

2. Financial implications

- 2.1 The outcomes of the strategy should result in overall savings to West Suffolk by:
- (a) Eliminating the use of costly Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The Councils spent £220,000 in 2013/2014 on Bed and Breakfast. This figure is expected to reduce to £130,000 in 2014/2015.
 - (b) Increasing the numbers of successful homeless prevention cases, so reducing the need for costly homelessness assessments. Research from the homelessness charity, Shelter, indicates the cost to a Local Authority per homeless prevention case is £826 and the minimum cost of a homeless case is £2,112.

West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018

Foreword:

In recent years, housing in our area has become less and less affordable. For some people, it has meant staying put in an unsuitable home, or passing up a job opportunity because a house move is simply out of the question. For others, the consequences have been more extreme, with more and more people facing homelessness.

As the Councillors responsible for leading West Suffolk's housing agenda, we are fully committed to seeing the actions in this strategy taken forward. Together, we will work across our councils and with our partners to make sure those who are affected by homelessness receive timely advice and assistance.

Cllr Rona Burt, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Transport,
Forest Heath District Council.

Cllr Anne Gower, Portfolio Holder for Housing, St Edmundsbury Borough
Council

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all councils to produce a Homelessness Strategy at least every five years. Councils are required to carry out a homelessness review of their area and produce a strategy to:

1. Address the causes of homelessness in the area.
2. Introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
3. Provide sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless.
4. Ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again.

This is the first joint West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy. Previously Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council have had their own. References to "West Suffolk" in this document refer to both councils, working together.

This Strategy will support priorities set out in West Suffolk's Strategic Plan (2013-15). In particular:

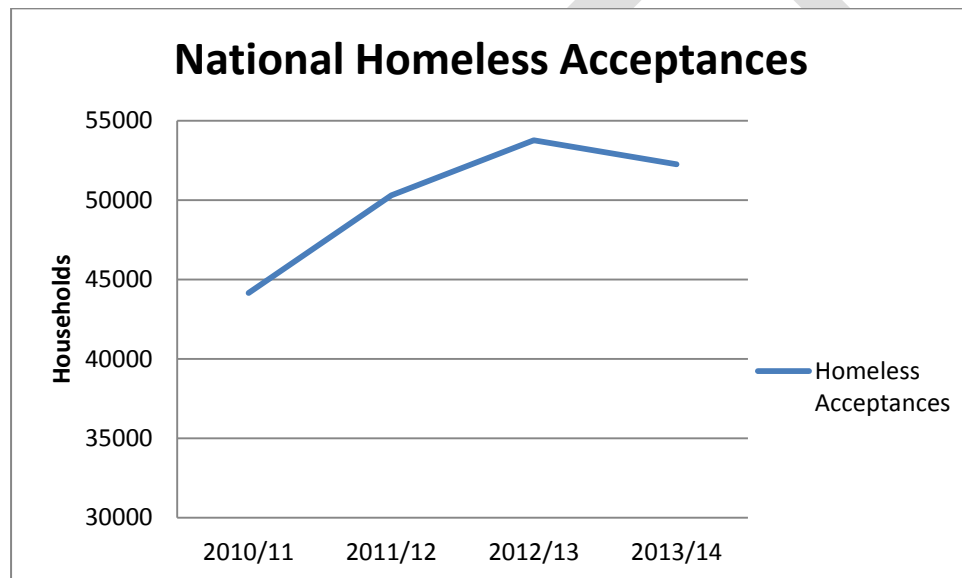
- Priority 2: Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active
- Priority 3: Homes for our communities

Both councils have recently adopted a West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015–2018, the priorities set out in the strategy which specifically relate to homelessness are expanded upon within this document.

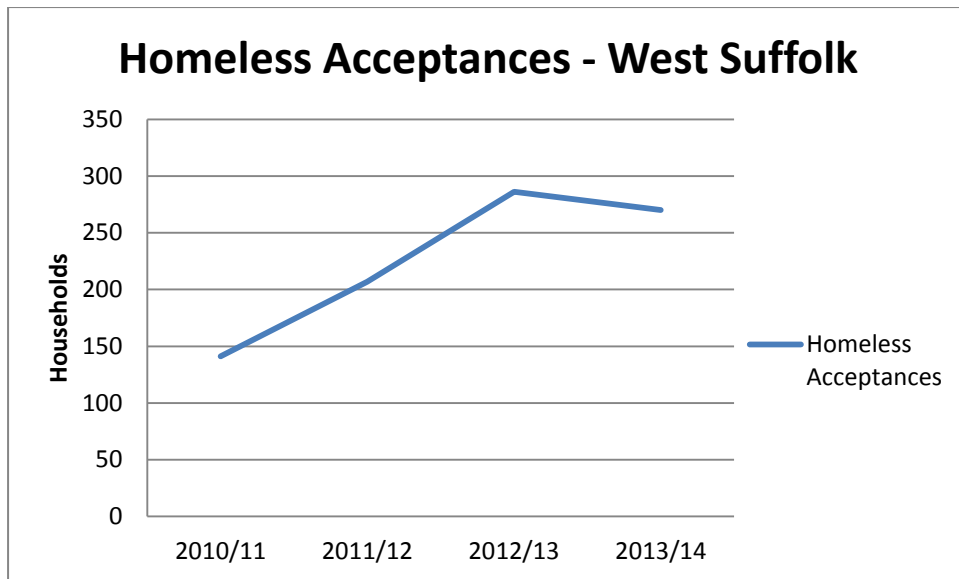
2. Homelessness Context

2.1 Level of Homelessness

Nationally the rate of homeless acceptances, where a local authority has a duty to find accommodation for a household, has increased overall in the last four years, a trend which is reflected in West Suffolk.



Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics



Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

Unless action is taken, the number of cases where West Suffolk has a duty to provide accommodation for homeless households is anticipated to remain at between 250 and 300 households per year.

2.2 Age profile of homeless households

Analysis of homelessness acceptances show that younger and middle aged people are affected more by homelessness than older people. The table below shows the breakdown by age group of homeless households housed by West Suffolk from April 2010 – March 2014.

Age	Number	Percentage
16-24	321	36%
25-44	457	51%
45-59	84	9%
60+	33	4%

Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

2.3 Stakeholder and Partner Survey

As part of the review of homelessness across West Suffolk, questionnaires were sent to over 40 individuals at 22 stakeholder and partner organisations in July 2014 (attached at Appendix 1). A response rate of 32% was achieved.

The questionnaire asked what issues partners had identified regarding homelessness and what they and others, including West Suffolk, could do to prevent homelessness and support homeless households.

Several themes emerged, including barriers to accessing suitable housing, which included:

1. Lack of affordable properties,
2. The need for earlier interventions, partnership working, information sharing which would identify and enable problems to be resolved before the situation becomes a crisis,
3. The process of moving applicants on through the Housing Register (Home-Link) has become much slower, largely as a result of increased demand for 1 bed properties,
4. Partners generally reported that the causes of homelessness were those relevant to themselves, eg: a Registered Provider (RP) would report that rent arrears was the biggest cause of homelessness. This could demonstrate a lack of awareness of issues affecting other partners (for example change in personal circumstances or change in benefits eligibility),
5. Difficulties in sourcing housing and support for customers with complex/multiple issues and/or a history of not being able to manage their accommodation needs.

Some of these barriers will be directly addressed through this Strategy and the West Suffolk Housing Strategy.

3. Addressing the causes of homelessness in the area.

The main causes of individuals/families being homeless within West Suffolk are in line with national trends. The loss of private rented accommodation is now the biggest cause of homelessness rather than the traditional cause of eviction by parents, other relatives or friends. The other major cause of homelessness is relationship breakdown (violent and non-violent).

Causes of Homelessness in West Suffolk	2010 - 2014
Eviction by family or friends	28%
Non-violent relationship breakdown	9%
Violent relationship breakdown	13%
Mortgage arrears	3%
Loss of private rented accommodation	35%
Other eg: discharge from hospital or prison	12%

Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

West Suffolk has already within two of its key strategies, the Housing Strategy (2015-18) and the Families and Communities Strategy 2013, taken steps to address some of the root causes of homelessness.

The Housing Strategy's main priority areas are:

1. increasing the supply of new homes so as to accommodate our growing population, promote economic growth, improve affordability and reduce homelessness,
2. making the best use of existing housing so as to allocate housing efficiently and improve the quality, sustainability and suitability for an ageing population,
3. support the provision of specialist housing and support for those who need it.

This homelessness strategy will give particular emphasis to increasing the provision of specialist housing i.e.: temporary accommodation for homeless households and providing timely support for those threatened with homelessness.

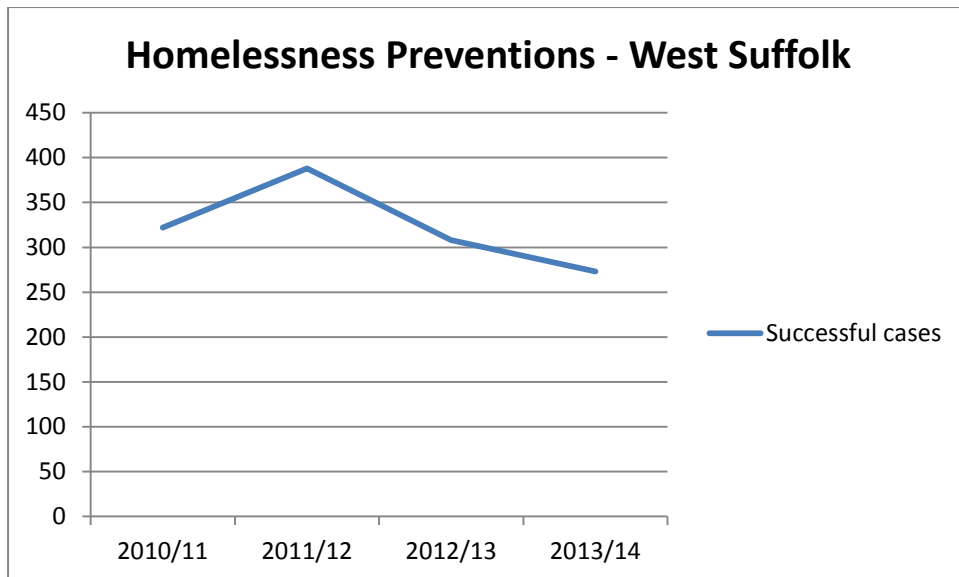
The Families and Communities Strategy emphasises the advantages of early intervention and the empowerment of communities to identify problems early and address situations before they escalate into a crisis. However this, in some circumstances requires intervention by the councils.

Through the actions set out in these strategies we will aim to actively assist and alleviate the pressure on households, who could otherwise become homeless.

Increasing the availability of affordable housing will also help to provide accommodation for those living in overcrowded conditions in the family home, as well as for those struggling to find and afford private rented properties.

4. Introducing initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible.

The graph below shows that the number of successful homelessness prevention cases has fallen over the last few years. A prevention case is where the Council has actively worked with a household to prevent their homelessness. In addition to the Housing Options Team there are a wide range of activities across the Council such as benefits advice and addressing anti-social behaviour which contribute to preventing homelessness. This reduction in numbers has occurred despite the fact that the level of resources committed to preventing homelessness has remained constant.



Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

This trend can be seen as a reflection of the difficulties of finding and maintaining affordable accommodation in the private rented sector and the high demand for social housing. A snapshot survey in July 2014 found that only 5% of available private rented properties in St Edmundsbury and 9% in Forest Heath had rental levels that could be fully met by Housing Benefit.

In order to address this trend West Suffolk will need to explore new and innovative ways of improving homelessness prevention, working in partnership with other organisations. We have signed up to the "Housing and Health Charter for Suffolk" demonstrating our commitment for joint working with other agencies, such as the West Suffolk Lettings Partnership to deliver shared agendas and services.

Our Housing Strategy has already identified a number of specific actions that we will be working on to prevent homelessness.

We will:

- Develop good quality, easily accessible housing advice materials, including web-based material which reflect the diversity of applicants' needs and abilities
- Continue to work in partnership with other key agencies to prevent individuals and families from getting into a housing crisis.

In addition we will complete the Government's GOLD Standard Challenge for homelessness. The challenge is a local authority sector led peer review scheme designed to help local authorities deliver more efficient and cost effective homelessness prevention services. The challenge comprise of 10 points that Local Authorities are required to achieve. These are set out below and the Action Plan at appendix 2 details how we are going to achieve the GOLD Standard.

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.

The stakeholder and partner survey also identified several specific proposals which could be used to help prevent homelessness and support homeless households. We have incorporated a number of these proposals in the Action Plan (at Appendix 2), which include developing:

1. Improved hospital and prison discharge protocols.
2. Home security scheme for victims of domestic violence.
3. More flexible use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)
4. Expansion of a Private Rented Scheme into West Suffolk for applicants with complex issues

5. Providing sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless.

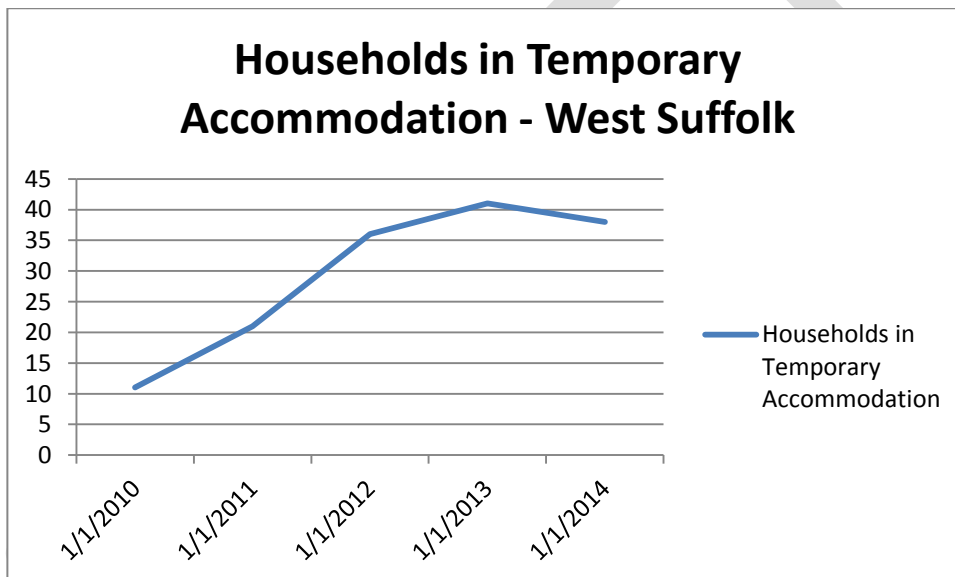
The majority of homeless households that West Suffolk has a duty to source accommodation for are small families, with one or two children, with the next biggest group being single people. This trend points to the growing need for smaller units of accommodation both as temporary accommodation and for permanent housing.

Household Composition of homeless households – West Suffolk	2010-2014
Single person	18%

Couple	7%
Pregnant woman, no other children	13%
Family with 1 child	37%
Family with 2 children	18%
Family with 3 or more children	7%

Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

With the numbers of homeless households in temporary accommodation mirroring the trend of homelessness acceptances it is anticipated that West Suffolk will need permanent access to around 45 units of temporary accommodation, at anyone time, in the future.



Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics

Currently West Suffolk has access to self-contained temporary accommodation, provided by Registered Providers, but has to supplement this accommodation with the use of bed & breakfast.

The Housing Strategy sets out that West Suffolk should increase:

“the amount of temporary accommodation available for individuals and families in crisis housing need, to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation.”

Within the lifetime of this Homelessness Strategy we aim to:

- minimise the use of bed & breakfast to the extent it is only used in an emergency and

- ensure that enough suitable temporary accommodation is available and that it is in the right location for homeless households to access support, maintain employment and education.

A breakdown of the last four years homelessness duty accepted cases shows where homeless households have originated from

Area	Homeless Acceptances 2010/2014
Newmarket	22%
Brandon	13%
Mildenhall	10%
Haverhill	19%
Bury	36%
Total	100%

Source: West Suffolk Homeless Database

In order that the location and numbers of available temporary accommodation reflects where homeless households are originating from, we will look to change the profile of our temporary accommodation to that proposed in the table below.

Area	Current units		Proposed units	
Newmarket	10	29%	10	22%
Brandon	8	23%	8	17%
Mildenhall	0	0%	3	7%
Haverhill	10	29%	10	22%
Bury	7	20%	15	33%
Total	35	100%	46	100%

Source: West Suffolk Homeless Database

This would retain the units in Newmarket and Brandon, whilst new temporary accommodation would need to be provided in Mildenhall.

In Haverhill, whilst the numbers of units remain the same, there would have to be new provision of 10 units, due to the expiry of the lease on the current temporary accommodation in 2015.

In Bury an additional eight units would be needed, but the council has recently bought a five bedroom property which will go some way to meeting this need.

Breakdown by size

In order to provide suitable sized temporary accommodation for homeless households it is proposed that the type of temporary accommodation should be as follows.

Area	A room with shared facilities	Studio/1 bed Flat	2 bed Flat	3 bed Flat
Brandon		6	2	
Newmarket			10	
Haverhill		3	7	
Mildenhall	3			
Bury St Edmunds	10		5	
Total	13	9	24	0

To achieve this West Suffolk will work with partners to deliver innovative, cost effective solutions in-line with the Housing Strategy's aim that:

"By April 2015 we will identify and deliver new funding models for delivering open market, private rented and affordable housing."

Details of the specific actions around temporary accommodation are included in the Action Plan at Appendix 2.

6. Ensuring that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again.

There is a low rate of recurring homelessness where West Suffolk has accepted a duty to house households more than once. Less than 1% of cases approach the councils again for assistance in the 2 years after being housed. However, analysis of the data regarding households who have approached the councils as being potentially homeless, shows that a significant proportion of them (15%), have accessed assistance from the Housing Options Team more than once. Although information is not available to show if the reason they have returned is as a result of lack of support in finding and maintaining accommodation, it would be a natural assumption that this is one of the reasons.

The Housing Strategy has already identified the need for the provision of specialist housing and support, and included these specific actions:

- Continue to engage with partners on specific multi-agency homeless prevention projects to improve the support given to young people across West Suffolk,
- Set up a Task and Finish Group to develop a West Suffolk model for housing chronically excluded adults,
- Continue to lead the county-wide partnership to develop a strategy for "move-on" of marginalised adults.

A key element of supporting those threatened with homelessness is early intervention. As part of this work we will, in conjunction with partners, develop a "Making Every Intervention Count" programme which will feature:

- Multi agency teams and service integration
- Joint commissioning, data sharing and data analysis
- Community resilience being supported by the voluntary sector

Details of the specific actions around the prevention of recurring homelessness are included in the Action Plan at Appendix 2.

7. Conclusion

This strategy identifies the steps needed to achieve the four keys aims of addressing the causes of homeless, preventing homelessness, having suitable temporary accommodation and support for those threatened with homelessness.

The action plan at Appendix 2 details how West Suffolk will build on existing strategies and partnerships and develop new partnerships to achieve these aims.

Appendix 1

West Suffolk Homelessness Review

Completed by:

Position in Organisation:

What is your organisation currently doing, or planning to do to:

- Prevent homelessness
- House homeless households

(please include any policies, action plans, initiatives)

What do you see as the barriers to homelessness prevention (including any council or government policies)?

What would you like to see West Suffolk Councils doing to address homelessness?

How could you work with the Councils and other partners to address homelessness?

From your experience of dealing with homelessness and housing issues, what do you regard as the main causes of homelessness?

What trends and patterns in homelessness have you noticed over the past two years?

Please return to:

Tony Hobby – Housing Options Manager
District Offices
College Heath Road
Mildenhall
IP28 7EY

tony.hobby@westsuffolk.gov.uk

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Appendix 2 – ACTION PLAN

No	Action	Priority Area	Funding	By when?	Outcomes & Monitoring	Lead Officer	Key Partners
1	Develop Housing Advice Materials	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Existing budget - Homelessness Prevention Fund	Dec 2015	Report Web site hits, Customer Service enquiries.	Team Leaders – Housing Options	Customer Services.
2	Implement Young Persons Housing Protocol	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Existing budget - Homelessness Prevention Fund	Jan 2016	Reduced numbers of Homeless young persons, reports to SHOG.	Housing Options Manager	Children & Young People Services
3	Hospital and Prison discharge protocols.	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Existing budget - Homelessness Prevention Fund	April 2016	Successful homeless preventions. Report numbers.	Housing Options Manager	Health, Probation, Prison Service
4	Achieve GOLD Standard	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Existing budget - Homelessness Prevention Fund	April 2016	Award of Gold Standard	Housing Options Manager	Local Authority Peers
5	Develop flexible use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Discretionary Housing Payments Budget	April 2016	Successful homeless preventions. Report numbers.	Housing Business and Partnership Manager	Anglia Revenue Partnership

	Action	Priority Area	Funding	By when?	Monitoring	Lead Officer	Key Partners
6	Home security scheme for victims of domestic violence.	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	Existing budget - Homelessness Prevention Fund	Sept 2016	Successful homeless preventions. Report numbers.	Housing Options Manager	Police, Registered Providers
7	Replacement for Heron House, Haverhill	Sufficient Temporary Accommodation	Capital Funding/ Housing Company - to be identified.	August 2015	New provision operational	Housing Options Manager	Registered Providers
8	Eliminate use of Bed and Breakfast - provide alternative accommodation.	Sufficient Temporary Accommodation	Capital Funding/ Housing Company - to be identified	August 2016	B&B useage	Housing Options Manager	Registered Providers
9	Develop - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Support to prevent recurring homelessness.	To be determined	Sept 2015	MASH outcomes reporting	Housing Options Manager	Children & Young People Services, Adult Care, Police, Health, Probation

	Action	Priority Area	Funding	By when?	Monitoring	Lead Officer	Key Partners
10	Make Every Intervention Count (MEIC)	Support to prevent recurring homelessness.	To be determined	April 2017	To be determined	Housing Options Manager	Children & Young People Services
11	Develop model for housing chronically excluded adults	Support to prevent recurring homelessness.	To be determined	April 2018	To be determined	Housing Business & Transformation Manager	Supported Housing Providers, Health, Adult Care Services, Suffolk Co-ordination Service

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West Suffolk – Equality Impact Assessment

Name of strategy, project or policy to be assessed	
West Suffolk Homelessness Strategy 2015-18	
Lead officer completing assessment	Job title
Tony Hobby	Housing Options Manager

Summary:

Equality Impact Assessment

1. What is the main purpose of the strategy?

To set out what West Suffolk, along with its partners, will do over the next three years to address and prevent homelessness, ensuring that there is sufficient suitable temporary accommodation and support for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

2. List the main activities of the project/policy (for strategies list the main policy areas):

1. Address the causes of homelessness in the area.
2. Introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
3. Provide sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless.
4. Ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again.

3. Who are the main stakeholders?

Residents
 Voluntary and community sector
 Suffolk County Council – Children and Young People services, Adult Care Services
 Registered Providers
 Police
 Probation
 Housing Providers
 Users of the service

4. What outcomes are wanted from this strategy?

This strategy identifies the steps needed to achieve the four keys aims of addressing the causes of homeless, preventing homelessness, having suitable temporary accommodation and support for those threatened with homelessness.

The action plan details how West Suffolk will build on existing partnerships and develop new partnership to achieve these aims.

5. Are there any concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?

The table below highlights where we believe the project will have a positive or negative impact on a particular group.

	Explanation
Gender	The Homelessness Strategy plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of gender. We monitor the gender profile of homeless cases and will take action if required.
Race	The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon people in terms of race. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of race.
Disability	We expect the strategy to have a positive impact on this group. The re-provision of temporary accommodation will facilitate the provision of more suitable and accessible accommodation.
Sexual Orientation	The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon people in terms of sexual orientation. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of sexual orientation.
Age	<p>Older people (60 +):</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon older people in terms of age. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of age.</p> <p>Younger people:</p> <p>We expect the strategy to have a positive impact on this group. The strategy includes plans to engage with partners on specific multi-agency homeless prevention projects to improve the support given to young homeless people across West Suffolk. We monitor the age profile of homeless cases and will take action if required.</p>

Belief or Religion	The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon people in terms of belief or religion. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of belief or religion.
Language	The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon people in terms of language. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people regardless of language. Translation services are available to ensure language is not a barrier.
Social inclusion and rural isolation	<p>Low Income:</p> <p>We expect the strategy to have a positive impact on this group. Households on a low income are likely to have fewer options available to them than those on a higher income when threatened with homelessness. This strategy seeks to assist such affected people.</p> <p>Rural Isolation:</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy will have no negative impact upon people in terms of rural isolation. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people.</p> <p>Social Inclusion:</p> <p>We expect the strategy to have a positive impact on the provision of specialist housing and support as we plan to set up a task and finish group to develop a model for housing chronically excluded adults and will continue to lead on the county-wide partnership to develop a 'move-on' strategy for marginalised adults.</p>
Other Groups	No other group has been identified that the Homelessness Strategy will impact upon. It plans positively for the residents in West Suffolk and will benefit all homeless people.

6. Are key elements of people's lives affected by this strategy for example finance, accommodation, welfare?

The Strategy could have a positive impact for all people threatened with homelessness living in West Suffolk as it is aimed at improving Housing/Accommodation and Health and Wellbeing.

7. Could the strategy discriminate against any group(s) either directly or indirectly? If yes, please state how.

No

8 a) If there are any negative impacts, how could you minimise or remove any negative impact?

N/A

8 b) How could you improve the strategy, project or policy's positive impact?

The Homelessness Strategy and action plan in place to deliver it will continue to be reviewed and monitored. This will help to ensure that we plan positively for the future of those threatened with homelessness in the area.

9. If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – how could it be adapted so that it does?

N/A

10. What consultation has been carried out on the strategy? Please include details of any equality monitoring carried out.

Consultation with stakeholders and members of the public occurred in December 2014 – January 2015.

11. Do you have data available which monitors the impact of the policy on minority groups? If not, please explain how you intend to continue monitoring the impact of this strategy, policy or project

Equality monitoring for housing is conducted by:-

- Collecting data for our Homelessness Database, giving us information on age, disabilities and ethnic origin of people who are homeless or threatened with Homelessness.

We will continue to use this data to monitor the impact of the Homelessness Strategy

12. Next steps: Based on your assessment, what changes, if any do you need to make? Tick one of the following and provide an explanation of why this is the action you are taking.

Action*	Tick ✓ relevant	Explanation of action
No major change	✓	
Adjust the policy		

Continue the policy		
Stop and remove the policy		

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to the relevant Director and one to the Policy Team.

Name: Tony Hobby

Signed:

Date:

If you have identified any negative impact which is possibly discriminatory and not intended and / or of high impact, you must amend your policy/strategy and/or contact the Policy Unit to discuss remedial action

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Report No: CAB/SE/14/014

WEST SUFFOLK COUNCILS
Data Protection Policy

Version 3 – 18/11/14

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This joint policy outlines the principles of the **Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA)** and identifies how both St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council (jointly referred to as West Suffolk councils throughout this policy) comply with the DPA. It aims to give guidance on how the requirements of the DPA apply to the work of the West Suffolk councils.
- 1.2 This policy covers all personal data that West Suffolk councils hold in either electronic or paper format, and applies throughout the life cycle of the data from the time it is created or arrives within the West Suffolk councils, to the time it is either destroyed or permanently preserved.
- 1.3 This policy applies equally to all West Suffolk councils' employees, agency staff, contractors and councillors.
- 1.4 This policy also:
 - Identifies responsibilities for data protection; and
 - Gives more specific guidance on the following areas:
 - Notification to the Information Commissioner
 - Sensitive personal data
 - Staff records and monitoring
 - Use of CCTV
 - Retention and disposal of personal data
 - Subject access requests
 - Disclosure of data to third parties.
 - Fair processing notices
 - Data breach
 - Training and awareness
 - Security
- 1.5 Further guidance is available on the Information Commissioner's website at the following link:
http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/the_guide.aspx

2. Context

- 2.1 The DPA balances the legitimate needs of organisations to store and use personal data with the rights of individuals who are the subject of this data. Basically, if an organisation collects or holds information about an identifiable living individual, or if it uses, discloses, retains or destroys that information, it is likely to be processing personal data.

The DPA is underpinned by a set of eight straightforward, common-sense principles which, if followed will ensure compliance with the DPA. These principles are set out at 3.2 below.

- 2.2 Compliance with the DPA is monitored and enforced by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO has the power to impose fines of up to £500,000 for a serious breach of one or more of the data protection principles and where the breach is likely to cause substantial damage or distress. This is in addition to any penalties imposed by the courts against individuals who unlawfully breach the DPA.
- 2.3 The DPA uses many terms which have a specific meaning in the context of this Act, and therefore a glossary of these terms is included at the end of this policy.
- 2.4 West Suffolk councils collect and use certain types of data about people, in order to continue to provide the level of service expected by the public and to comply with the requirements of government departments. This data includes personal details about current, past, and prospective staff, suppliers, West Suffolk taxpayers, benefits claimants, council housing and other tenants, residents in West Suffolk and others with whom they communicate.
- 2.5 As organisations which deal with personal data the West Suffolk councils will ensure they:
 - comply with both the law and best practice;
 - respect the rights of individuals;
 - are open and honest with individuals whose data is held; and
 - provide support and training for those who handle personal data, so that they can act confidentially and consistently.

3. Achieving Compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998

- 3.1 The main purpose of the eight principles of the DPA is to protect the interests of individuals whose personal data is being processed (i.e. information or data obtained, recorded or held or the carrying out of any operation or set of operations on the information or data). They apply to everything West Suffolk councils do with personal data, except where an exemption applies. The key to complying with the DPA is to follow the eight data protection principles.
- 3.2 Below is a summary of the eight principles and the ways in which West Suffolk councils comply with them.

The First Principle – processing personal data fairly and lawfully

3.3 This first principle states that personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and in particular, shall not be processed unless:

- at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the DPA is met; and
- in the case of sensitive data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 of the DPA is also met.

3.4 In practice, this means that West Suffolk councils must:

- have legitimate grounds for collecting and using the personal data;
- not use the data in ways that have unjustified adverse effects on the individuals concerned;
- be transparent about how they intend to use the data, and give individuals appropriate privacy notices when collecting their personal data;
- handle people's personal data only in ways they would reasonably expect; and
- make sure they do not do anything unlawful with the data.

Compliance is achieved by:

3.5 Abiding by the law in all activities;

3.6 Ensuring data subjects are aware of how their data will be used at the time they provide it and not using it for any purpose incompatible with the original stated purpose;

3.7 Ensuring the data has been provided by a person who is legally authorised, or required, to provide it;

3.8 Ensuring that any processing of personal or sensitive personal data meets one of the legitimising conditions listed in Schedules 2 and 3 of the DPA; and

3.9 Ensuring that all processing of personal data meets one of the following conditions:

- the data subject has consented to the processing;

- the processing is necessary for completion of a contract between the data subject and the data controller, or to investigate or set up a new contract between the data subject and the data controller;
- the processing is necessary because of a legal obligation which applies to the data controller;
- the processing is necessary to protect the individuals' vital interests;
- the processing is necessary for administering justice or for exercising statutory, governmental or other public functions; or
- the processing is necessary for the legitimate interests of the data controller.

3.10 Further conditions are in place for sensitive personal data, see section 6 for further guidance.

The Second Principle – processing personal data for specified purposes

3.11 This second principle states that personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.

3.12 In practice this means that West Suffolk councils must:

- be clear from the outset about why they are collecting personal data and what they intend to do with it;
- comply with the DPA's fair processing requirements – including the duty to give privacy notices to individuals when collecting their personal data;
- comply with what the DPA says about notifying the Information Commissioner; and
- ensure that if West Suffolk councils wish to use or disclose the personal data for any purpose that is additional to or different from the originally specified purpose, the new use or disclosure is fair.

Compliance is achieved by:

3.13 Ensuring that West Suffolk councils' annual notifications to the ICO are up to date and include all the purposes for processing.

- 3.14 At the time data is obtained the data subject will be informed of the purpose for which the data is being collected.
- 3.15 If West Suffolk councils wish to use or disclose the data to a third party for any purpose other than that for which the data was obtained, West Suffolk councils will ensure a data sharing agreement between the two parties is in place beforehand ensuring the data is processed fairly in accordance with the first principle.

The 3rd, 4th and 5th Principles

- 3.16 As well as creating a framework for collecting and using personal data, the DPA sets standards that personal data must meet before it can be used. The standards are set out in the third, fourth and fifth principles which are that personal data should be:

3rd principle: adequate, relevant and not excessive;

4th principle: accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; and

5th principle: kept for no longer than necessary.

The Third Principle – personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive

- 3.17 This third principle states that personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
- 3.18 In practice, this means West Suffolk councils shall ensure that they:
- hold personal data about an individual that is sufficient for the purpose for which it is being held in relation to that individual; and
 - do not hold more information than they need for that purpose.

Compliance is achieved by:

- 3.19 Collecting only the minimum amount of personal data required to fulfil legitimate operational needs or to comply with legal requirements. Additional unnecessary data will not be collected and data will not be held on the off-chance that it might be useful in the future.

The Fourth Principle – personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary kept up to date

- 3.20 This fourth principle states that personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.

Compliance is achieved by:

- 3.21 Taking reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of any personal data ensuring that the source of any personal data is clear; carefully considering any challenges to the accuracy of information; and considering whether it is necessary to update the information.

The Fifth Principle – personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary

- 3.22 This fifth principle states that personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.

- 3.23 In practice this means West Suffolk councils will need to:

- review the length of time they keep personal data;
- consider the purpose or purposes they hold the information for in deciding whether (and for how long) to retain it;
- securely delete information that is no longer needed for this purpose or these purposes; and
- update, archive or securely delete information if it goes out of date.

Compliance is achieved by:

- 3.24 West Suffolk councils will hold personal data only as long as it is necessary for the legitimate West Suffolk purpose for which it has been provided/obtained.
- 3.25 If personal data is collected for a specific project it shall be disposed of as soon as the project comes to an end.
- 3.26 Compliance with West Suffolk councils' document retention policy which is available on the intranet at the following link:
<http://intranet.stedsbc.gov.uk/DocumentRetentionPolicy.xls>

The Sixth Principle – the rights of data subjects

- 3.27 The sixth principle states that personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the DPA.

- 3.28 The rights of the data subjects that this refers to are:

- A right of access to a copy of the information comprised in their personal data;
- A right to object to processing that is likely to cause or is causing damage or distress;
- A right to prevent processing for direct marketing;

- A right to object to decisions being taken by automated means;
- A right in certain circumstances to have inaccurate personal data rectified, blocked, erased or destroyed; and
- A right to claim compensation for damages caused by a breach of the DPA

Compliance is achieved by:

- 3.29 West Suffolk councils will ensure that individual rights are protected in relation to the processing of personal data by them. In order to achieve this staff should have sufficient knowledge of data protection to recognise and act on subject access requests (SAR).
- 3.30 If West Suffolk councils intend to process personal data for direct marketing, the prior consent of the individuals being targeted by the marketing must be obtained.

The Seventh Principle- information security

- 3.31 This seventh principle states that appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
- 3.32 In practice this means West Suffolk councils must have appropriate security to prevent the personal data they hold being accidentally or deliberately compromised. In particular, West Suffolk councils will need to:
- design and organise their security to fit the nature of the personal data they hold and the harm that may result from a security breach;
 - be clear about who in West Suffolk councils is responsible for ensuring information security;
 - make sure West Suffolk councils have the right physical and technical security, backed up by robust policies and procedures and reliable, well-trained staff; and
 - be ready to respond to any breach of security swiftly and effectively.

Compliance is achieved by:

- 3.33 Technical security measures including:

- password protection of computer systems;
- controlled access to West Suffolk council buildings;
- access rights of users appropriate to the needs of their job; and
- management to ensure that performance with regard to personal data is regularly assessed and evaluated.

3.34 Organisational measures including:

- all staff to have a level of understanding of the DPA commensurate with their duties;
- adequate checks to ensure the suitability of all staff who have access to personal data; and
- management to ensure that everyone managing and handling data is subject to appropriate line management.

3.35 West Suffolk councils shall have in place appropriate security arrangements both covering physical and electronic security. See section 15 for further details.

The Eighth Principle – sending personal data outside the European Economic Area

3.36 This eighth principle states that personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

Compliance is achieved by:

3.37 If West Suffolk councils transfer information to any country outside the European Economic Area this must be done in a way which is compliant with the DPA.

3.38 Any organisation processing data on behalf of West Suffolk councils should be contractually bound to follow the principles as described in the DPA.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Data Controllers

4.1 For the purpose of the DPA the data controllers are St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council.

Senior Information Risk Officer

- 4.2 West Suffolk's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) with specific responsibility for managing information risks on behalf of the Chief Executive and members of West Suffolk will be one of the Councils' Directors as designated by the Chief Executive.

Information Governance Working Group

- 4.3 The Information Governance Working Group (IGWG), chaired by the SIRO, provides an oversight of the proper and secure handling of information by the West Suffolk and supports the SIRO in his role

Data Protection Officer

- 4.4 West Suffolk councils' Data Protection Officer with specific responsibility to ensure the West Suffolk councils are compliant with the DPA is the Councils' Monitoring Officer.

Data Protection Coordinators

- 4.5 Each service area has nominated a member of staff to be that service area's data protection coordinator. The data protection coordinator's role is to:
- act as a link officer between colleagues within their service area and the Data Protection Officer when there is an issue relating to the DPA;
 - advise the Data Protection Officer if a subject access request has been received in their service area;
 - review the various application forms used within their service to ensure they include the reasons why West Suffolk councils need to collect and store the personal information requested, and how they will use this information (privacy/fair processing notices);
 - determine the extent to which personal information is shared with others and whom it is shared with (internally and externally); and
 - conduct a regular review of the types of personal data being processed by the team, reporting any changes to the Data Protection Officer.

Heads of Service

- 4.6 Heads of Service have responsibility for ensuring that their service area complies with the principles of the DPA when processing personal data. This includes ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the DPA and trained to discharge those responsibilities.

Staff

- 4.7 All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply fully with the DPA. It is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly obtain or disclose personal data. They should not process any personal data unless they are sure that they are authorised to do so. Staff failing to comply with this policy could be subject to action under West Suffolk councils' disciplinary procedure.

Councillors (Members)

- 4.8 Councillors must comply with this policy when handling personal data on council business, and be aware of their responsibilities as individuals under the DPA. Although the Data Controller is liable for any mishandling of personal data, Councillors should be mindful that it can be a criminal offence for which they would be personally liable if they were to process personal data in a manner which they know that they are not authorised by the Data Controller to do. A breach of this policy by a Member is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.

5. Notification

- 5.1 The ICO maintains a public register of data controllers. The DPA requires every data controller who is processing personal data to notify and review their notification, on an annual basis.
- 5.2 It is an offence under the DPA if the notification is not kept up-to-date, and also an offence to use personal data in a manner which has not been notified.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of all Heads of Service to advise their data protection coordinator of any changes to the uses of personal data within their service areas as soon as they occur so that West Suffolk councils' notification can be updated.
- 5.4 West Suffolk councils' notification will be reviewed annually and kept up-to-date by the Data Protection Officer.
- 5.5 A copy of West Suffolk councils' current notification can be viewed at the Information Commissioner's Web site: www.ico.org.uk

6. Sensitive Personal Data

- 6.1 Sensitive personal data is defined in the DPA as data concerning an individual's:
- racial or ethnic origin
 - political opinions
 - religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature

- trade union membership
- physical or mental health or condition
- sexual life
- criminal convictions or alleged offences.

6.2 Extra care must be taken when processing sensitive personal data as additional requirements under the DPA must be met to ensure that the processing is legitimate and safe. At least one of the legitimising conditions described under the *First Principle*, and also one of the legitimising conditions shown below, must be met:

- the data subject has given their explicit consent;
- the processing is necessary for performing a legal obligation in relation to employment;
- to protect the vital interests of the data subject or another person;
- the processing is carried out as part of the legitimate activities of a not for profit body or organisation;
- the information has been made public by the data subject;
- the processing is necessary in relation to legal rights; or
- the processing is necessary for the administration of justice.

6.3 The advice of the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy should be sought before the processing or collection of sensitive personal data for any new purpose commences.

7. Staff Records and the Monitoring of Staff

7.1 West Suffolk councils should comply with the ICO's '*Employment Practices Code*' in relation to the processing of staff personal data. This Code is intended to help employers comply with the DPA and to encourage them to adopt good practice. The Code aims to strike a balance between the legitimate expectations of staff that personal data about them will be handled properly and the legitimate interests of employers in deciding how best, within the law, to run their own organisations carrying out their legitimate business.

7.2 In particular, staff monitoring should only be carried out in accordance with this Code. A copy of the Code is available on the ICO website at the following link:
http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/topic_guides/~media/documents/employment_practices_code_html/english/index.html

8. CCTV Monitoring

- 8.1 CCTV monitoring must only be carried out in accordance with the ICO's 'CCTV Code of Practice'. A copy of this Code is available on the ICO website at the following link:
http://ico.org.uk/for_the_public/topic_specific_guides/~media/documents/library/Data_Protection/Detailed_specialist_guides/cctv-code-of-practice.pdf

9. Retention and Disposal of Personal Data

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the service areas holding personal data to ensure that the data that they hold is kept accurate and up-to-date, and is not held for any longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was collected.
- 9.2 When the data is no longer required the service area must dispose of the data safely. Guidance on retention periods for classes of data is set out in the West Suffolk councils' document retention policy which is available on the intranet or by using the following link:
<http://intranet.stedsbc.gov.uk/DocumentRetentionPolicy.xls>

10. Subject Access Requests (SAR)

- 10.1 It is one of the fundamental rights of the individual under DPA that they are able to see copies of any information stored about them. It is in the interests of the West Suffolk councils to have an open and honest approach with all individuals on which they hold data.
- 10.2 The DPA sets out guidance and a time limit within which a SAR must be answered.
- 10.3 Any individual requesting access to their personal data must be asked to complete a request in writing which must be referred to the Data Protection Officer. This gives clarity around the date the request was made and therefore the deadline date and also encourages the individual to think clearly about the data they require. Guidance regarding SARs is available on West Suffolk councils' website at:
http://westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm?aud=council which includes access to an SAR application form which may be printed off and completed.
- 10.4 There is a statutory applicant fee of £10.00 and the individual making the request must produce a document such as a passport or driving licence to confirm his identity.
- 10.4 West Suffolk councils will approach all requests for data in an open and honest way and seek to ensure that the individual gets all the data they require as long as this is permissible within the law.

- 10.5 There are cases where it is not possible or appropriate to release personal data, for example, when doing so would involve releasing personal data about another individual, or if the data relates to ongoing criminal investigations. Any concerns about releasing data should be discussed with the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy prior to release of the information.

11. Fair Processing Notices (Privacy Notices) and Subject Consent

- 11.1 Fair processing notices / privacy notices are issued to individuals at the time they provide their personal data to organisations. They are designed to inform the individual of the nature of the processing for which their personal data is collected.
- 11.2 If consent has to be relied upon to process data then it must be fully informed and freely given. In the case of sensitive personal data it must be explicit consent.
- 11.3 Where it is possible to obtain explicit written consent to process personal data West Suffolk councils should aim to do so. This should be taken into account when designing forms or requesting details in any other format.
- 11.4 Further guidance when collecting information can be found in the data protection procedures developed from this policy.

12. Sharing Personal Data

- 12.1 Where requests are received from external organisations or third parties for personal data about individuals, advice should be sought from the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy unless there is an up-to-date information-sharing/data exchange agreement in place with that organisation or third party. **Under no circumstances** should any personal data about any individual be passed outside West Suffolk councils without the authority of the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy unless an approved data sharing agreement is in place. Where an officer considers information about a child or young person must be disclosed to a third party under the safeguarding provisions they must do so in accordance with West Suffolk councils' Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy:
http://westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/SafeguardingChildrenandYoungPeoplePolicyOct2012.pdf
- 12.2 Agencies which request data on a regular basis such as the police or banks will have easy access to appropriate paperwork and guidance for use in these circumstances.
- 12.3 It should be noted that whilst staff understandably will wish to assist external agencies wherever possible especially if the request relates to criminal activity (for example the police or banks), West

Suffolk councils are under no obligation to release personal data unless the request is made by a court order.

- 12.4 Personal data should generally only be made public if there is a legal or statutory requirement to do so. On occasions it may be appropriate to publish personal data with the individual's consent. However, in such cases staff must ensure that the consent is fully informed and freely given. Staff must also be aware that it is possible to withdraw consent at any time and, if that happens, publication of the data must cease immediately.
- 12.5 Staff should be aware that publishing personal data on West Suffolk councils' web pages or on the internet by any other means effectively means that the data is published world-wide and outside the European Economic Area. This means it cannot be protected by the DPA or the European Directive on Personal Privacy. Great care should be taken before publishing any personal data (or any data from which individuals could be identified) in this manner and the approval of West Suffolk councils' Data Protection Officer and Senior Information Risk Owner or their deputies should be obtained before publication.

13. What to do in the Event of a Data Breach

- 13.1 The ICO defines a data breach as a 'breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed in connection with the provisions of a public electronic communications service'.
- 13.2 A data breach can happen for a number of reasons, for example:
- loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored;
 - inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use;
 - equipment failure;
 - human error;
 - hacking attack; and
 - "blagging" offences where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation who holds it.
- 13.3 If a member of staff becomes aware of a data breach their first action should be to inform their line manager, who will then ensure that the breach is reported to the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy.

13.4 The Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy will then decide on the most appropriate steps to take depending on the nature and quantity of data released. An investigation will be carried out into all data breaches.

13.5 The ICO will be informed of all serious data breaches where significant harm to an individual(s) is likely or a large number of individuals are affected.

14. Training and Awareness

14.1 In order to fully comply with the DPA it is important that all staff who have access to any personal data have an awareness of the DPA.

14.2 Training is a crucial element of staff awareness. West Suffolk councils' staff must be aware of their obligations relating to personal data as part their duties.

14.3 Training may be achieved in a number of ways:

- all staff to be made aware of this Data Protection Policy;
- e- learning tools; and
- in-house training provided by the Data Protection Officer or their duly authorised deputy.

14.4 For some posts additional training and guidance is required. Those posts will identified through their work and any additional training and guidance will need to be discussed with the line manager in the first instance.

15. Keeping Information Secure

15.1 The *Seventh Principle* of the DPA requires organisations to take appropriate technical and organisational measures to keep data secure. The security of data held by West Suffolk councils is a relatively complex area and more information on the technical details of information security can be found in the West Suffolk Information Security Policy:
http://goldintranet.stedsbc.gov.uk/gold/News/General_information/upload/WestSuffolkInformationSecurityPolicyJune2014.pdf.

15.2 However, security of data goes beyond the use of computer equipment. Data will inevitably be stored or processed in hard copy forms at some time and access to this must be restricted to only those authorised to view it. As a general guide hard paper copies should not be left in the open in offices but should be kept locked away when not in use, in the same way as computer terminals should not be left unlocked and unattended.

- 15.3 It is important to remember that individuals should only be able to access data which they need to do their job. Personal data should not be left unattended and freely available to anyone in the office.

Working from home

- 15.4 When working from home, officers must ensure they only use their encrypted laptops to access personal data electronically. Paper files which include personal information must be kept in secure cases (lockable) at all times when not in use.
- 15.5 UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should hard copy files be left unattended.

16. Administration

- 16.1 The Data Protection Officer has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy, and will be pleased to answer any questions about it.
- 16.2 Responsibility for monitoring adherence to this policy belongs with the Information Governance Working Group.
- 16.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years to confirm it reflects best practice and to ensure it complies with any legislative changes or amendments. Any significant and necessary changes will be made by the Senior Information Risk Officer and the Data Protection Officer.

Glossary of Terms

Data means information which –

- (a) is being processed by means of equipment operating automatically in response to instructions given for that purpose,
- (b) is recorded with the intention that it should be processed by means of such equipment,
- (c) is recorded as part of a relevant filing system or with the intention that it should form part of a relevant filing system,
- (d) does not fall within paragraph (a), (b) or (c) but forms part of an accessible record as defined by section 68, or
- (e) is recorded information held by a public authority and does not fall within any of paragraphs (a) to (d).

Personal data means data which relate to a living individual who can be identified –

- (a) from those data, or
- (b) from those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of, the data controller, and includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of

Sensitive personal data means personal data consisting of information as to:

- (a) the racial or ethnic origin of the data subject,
- (b) his political opinions,
- (c) his religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,
- (d) whether he is a member of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992),
- (e) his physical or mental health or condition,
- (f) his sexual life,
- (g) the commission or alleged commission by him of any offence, or
- (h) any proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have

Data subject means an individual who is the subject of personal data

Processing, in relation to information or data, means obtaining, recording or holding the information or data or carrying out any operation or set of operations on the information or data, including –

- (a) organisation, adaptation or alteration of the information or data,
- (b) retrieval, consultation or use of the information or data,
- (c) disclosure of the information or data by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, or
- (d) alignment, combination, blocking, erasure or destruction of the information

Data processor, in relation to personal data, means any person (other than an employee of the data controller) who processes the data on behalf of the data controller

Data controller means a person who (either alone or jointly or in common with other persons) determines the purposes for which and the manner in which any personal data are, or are to be, processed.

Recipient, in relation to personal data, means any person to whom the data are disclosed, including any person (such as an employee or agent of the data controller, a data processor or an employee or agent of a data processor) to whom they are disclosed in the course of processing the data for the data controller, but does not include any person to whom disclosure is or may be made as a result of, or with a view to, a particular inquiry by or on behalf of that person made in the exercise of any power conferred by law.

Third party, in relation to personal data, means any person other than –

(a) the data subject,

(b) the data controller, or

(c) any data processor or other person authorised to process data for the data controller or processor

Disclosure is any release of information by the data controller to any recipient.

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Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Proposals for Commercial Development of West Stow Country Park	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/015 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	Sarah Stamp Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage Tel: 01284 769360 Email: sarah.stamp@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Richard Hartley Commercial Manager Tel: 01284 757055 Email: richard.hartley@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	West Stow Country Park will cost the Council £132,350 in 2014/2015. In the light of the budget gap for 2015/2016 and beyond, the Council is exploring possible opportunities to reduce this subsidy. Members are invited to consider a range of proposals which achieve a reduction whilst protecting the heritage asset that is the West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village.	

Recommendations:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) considers a range of proposals for appropriate commercial development of part of West Stow Country Park to complement the existing attractions; (2) considers minimising the risk of the preferred option by gaining planning permission in advance of selecting a partner to work with; and (3) approves taking the business plan, as contained in Exempt Appendix 1 to Report No. CAB/SE/14/015 to the market in order to secure a suitable operating partner for the preferred option. 		
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (a) Pending any further guidance from the Secretary of State, a decision which results in expenditure or savings of more than £50,000 will normally be considered as a key decision.		
<i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>			
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has been undertaken with the Portfolio Holder, other Cabinet Members and the Leadership Team. 		
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided in Exempt Appendix 1a 		
Implications:			
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Exempt Appendices 		
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Exempt Appendices 		
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
See Exempt Appendix 1a for details			

Ward(s) affected:	All Wards
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>	None.
Documents attached:	<p>Exempt Appendix 1: West Stow Country Park Business Plan</p> <p>Exempt Appendix 1a: Table of Options</p> <p>Exempt Appendices 2-10 and A-C: Additional information relative to proposal</p>

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

Current Offer

1.1.1 West Stow Country Park currently provides the following facilities and amenities:

- Children's play area
- Café run by a local social enterprise
- Visitor Centre
- Gift Shop
- Nature trails and walks through woodland and around the lake/river
- Bird hides and feeding area
- Anglo-Saxon Museum
- Anglo-Saxon Village supported by volunteers through the West Stow Trust
- West Stow Heritage Storage Facility and training rooms (The Collections Building)
- Car Park

1.1.2 The Anglo-Saxon Village is recognised as a site of significant historic interest and value. One of England's great archaeological sites, West Stow has extensive indoor galleries and a stunning re-creation of an Anglo-Saxon village surrounded by 125 acres of unspoilt countryside.

1.1.3 The Council has freehold ownership of the site and has used the location to build a purpose built structure to house the Council's Heritage Collection¹.

1.1.4 *Current Usage*

Currently up to 23,000 people visit the Anglo-Saxon Village each year. This figure includes approximately 160-180 school trips to the Anglo-Saxon Village which bring a total of 8,000 school children to the site a year.

1.1.5 There are three full time and four part-time operational staff (6.3 FTE) running the Gift Shop/Visitor Centre/Museum which is open 9am - 5pm (the park itself is open from 9am - 8pm in summer). The Café is currently being run by a social enterprise providing an opportunity for people who may otherwise find it difficult to get employment to participate in work.

1.1.6 Overall in 2014/2015, the running of the site costs the Council £132,350 (as detailed in the table overleaf). In 2012/2013, the subsidy was £254,000, demonstrating that considerable costs have already been saved in this service.

1.1.7 This report has been prepared on the basis that the Council cannot sustain this level of financial support in the light of the budget gap for 2015/2016 and beyond. West Stow was identified as an area for investigation as part of the

¹ For the purposes of this piece of work the Collections Building is considered to form part of the Council's museums offer linked with Moyses Hall and other museums partnerships and the cost associated with the running of the Collections Building does not therefore form part of the cost of West Stow.

drive to operate more commercially, specifically possible opportunities to generate more income from the Country Park.

	2014/2015 Budget
Expenditure*	
Employees	£168,350
Premises (incl building maintenance contribution)	£ 76,100
Supplies & Services	£ 42,750
Corporate Support Services	£ 59,300
Purchase of stock for shop	£ 49,100
Total Expenditure	£395,600
Income	
Visitor entry / special events / hall hire	£116,050
Shop sales	£ 73,650
Car Parking**	£ 35,000
Fishing Licences	£ 11,550
Cottage rents***	£ 11,200
Café (including recharge of utilities)	£ 6,850
Other income incl donations	£ 8,950
Total Income	£263,250
Overall running costs	£132,350

* These figures do not include costs associated with the collections building or collections staff (2014/2015 budgeted cost of £59,150).

** The Council introduced car park charges in 2011.

*** The council owns and rents 3 cottages opposite the site.

1.2 **Key issues**

1.2.1 The Council is looking to behave more commercially in the way it delivers its services. There are a number of options for the development of a more commercial offer at West Stow. These are summarised in the Table in Exempt Appendix 1a Options attached to this report, which mentions commercial partners by name.

1.2.2 Also attached in the Exempt section of this report is the Business Plan for Option 4a, which officers propose offers the greatest potential gain in the short term. This does not preclude us considering Options 4b and 4c in the longer term.

1.2.3 There are a number of steps that could be taken to reduce any of the risks of Option 4a. These are:

- (1) Environmental assessment (boreholes) – already completed;
- (2) Electricity supply to the site may take up to one year to install – could instruct early (need to investigate cost of non-refundable deposit);
- (3) Seek planning permission for preferred option – obtain with a view to

improving partner negotiations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider a range of proposals for the commercial development of West Stow Country Park.
- 2.2 To consider reducing the risk of the preferred option by gaining planning permission in advance of selecting a partner to work with.
- 2.3 To take the business plan to the market in order to secure a suitable operating partner for the preferred option.

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Revenues Collection Performance and Write-offs	
Report No:	CAB/SE/14/016 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Report to and date/s:	Cabinet	2 December 2014
Portfolio holder:	David Ray Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance Tel: 01359 250912 Email: david.ray@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Rachael Mann Head of Resources and Performance Tel: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To consider the current revenue collection performance and to consider writing off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	
Recommendation:	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that the write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report No: CAB/SE/14/016 be approved, as follows:</p> <p>(1) Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax totalling £13,945.63; and</p> <p>(2) Exempt Appendix 2: Business Rates totalling £17,736.82.</p>	
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Although published on the Decisions Plan as a Key Decision, given the amounts recommended to be written off, this is not now the case.</p>	
<p><i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>		

Consultation:	Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance have been consulted with on the proposed write-offs.		
Alternative option(s):	See paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2		
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • See paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3		
Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •		
Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •		
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • The recovery procedures followed have been previously agreed; writing off uncollectable debt allows staff to focus recovery action on debt which is recoverable.		
Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • The application of predetermined recovery procedures ensures that everybody is treated consistently. • Failure to collect any debt impacts on either the levels of service provision or the levels of charges. All available remedies are used to recover the debt before write off is considered. • The provision of services by the Council applies to everyone in the area.		
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
This has been identified as a low risk as there are resources allocated to meet items as detailed.			
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Debts are written off which could have been collected.	Medium	Extensive recovery procedures are in place to ensure that all possible mechanisms are exhausted before a debt is written off.	Low
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		None.	
Documents attached:		Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax Exempt Appendix 2: NNDR	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

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

2. Alternative options

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

3. Financial implications and collection performance

- 3.1 Provision is made in the accounts for non recovery but the total amounts to be written off are as follows with full details shown in Exempt Appendices 1 and 2.
- 3.2 As at 31 October 2014, the total National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council (as the billing Authority) is nearly £47.3 million per annum. The collection rate as at 31 October 2014 was 66.67% against a profile of 66.75%.
- 3.3 As at 31 October 2014, the total Council Tax billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council (includes the County, Police and Parish precept elements) is just under £53.8 million per annum. The collection rate as at 31 October was 67.87% against a profiled target of 68.31%.

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