

Cabinet

Title	Agenda																										
Date	Tuesday 26 April 2022																										
Time	6.00 pm																										
Venue	Conference Chamber West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds																										
Membership	<table> <tr> <td>Leader</td> <td>John Griffiths</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Leader</td> <td>Sara Mildmay-White</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor</td> <td>Portfolio</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sarah Broughton</td> <td>Resources and Property</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carol Bull</td> <td>Governance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andy Drummond</td> <td>Regulatory and Environment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robert Everitt</td> <td>Families and Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Susan Glossop</td> <td>Growth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Griffiths</td> <td>Leader</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sara Mildmay-White</td> <td>Housing and Strategic Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Joanna Rayner</td> <td>Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Roach</td> <td>Planning</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Stevens</td> <td>Operations</td> </tr> </table>	Leader	John Griffiths	Deputy Leader	Sara Mildmay-White	Councillor	Portfolio	Sarah Broughton	Resources and Property	Carol Bull	Governance	Andy Drummond	Regulatory and Environment	Robert Everitt	Families and Communities	Susan Glossop	Growth	John Griffiths	Leader	Sara Mildmay-White	Housing and Strategic Health	Joanna Rayner	Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs	David Roach	Planning	Peter Stevens	Operations
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Interests – declaration and restriction on participation	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.																										
Quorum	Four Members																										
Committee administrator	Claire Skoyles Democratic Services Officer Telephone 01284 757176 / 07776 254986 Email claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk																										

Public information



Venue	Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU
Contact information	Telephone: 01284 757176 / 07776 254986 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk Website: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk
Access to agenda and reports before the meeting	The agenda and reports will be available to view at least five clear days before the meeting on our website.
Attendance at meetings	<p>This meeting is being held in person in order to comply with the Local Government Act 1972. We may be required to restrict the number of members of the public able to attend in accordance with the room capacity. If you consider it is necessary for you to attend, please inform Democratic Services in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>As a local authority, we have a corporate and social responsibility for the safety of our staff, our councillors and visiting members of the public. We therefore request that you exercise personal responsibility and do not attend the meeting if you feel at all unwell.</p> <p>West Suffolk Council continues to promote good hygiene practices with hand sanitiser and wipes being available in the meeting room. Attendees are also able to wear face coverings, should they wish to.</p>
Public participation	<p>Members of the public who live or work in the district are invited to put one question or statement of not more than three minutes duration relating to items to be discussed in Part 1 of the agenda only. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply.</p> <p>The Constitution allows that a person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. However, we have a corporate and social responsibility for the safety of our staff, our councillors and visiting members of the public. We therefore strongly urge anyone who wishes to register to speak to notify Democratic Services by 9am on the day of the meeting so that advice can be given on the arrangements in place.</p> <p>There is an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chair's discretion.</p>

Accessibility	If you have any difficulties in accessing the meeting, the agenda and accompanying reports, including for reasons of a disability or a protected characteristic, please contact Democratic Services at the earliest opportunity using the contact details provided above in order that we may assist you.
Recording of meetings	<p>The Council may record this meeting and permits members of the public and media to record or broadcast it as well (when the media and public are not lawfully excluded).</p> <p>Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Committee Administrator who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.</p>
Personal information	<p>Any personal information processed by West Suffolk Council arising from a request to speak at a public meeting under the Localism Act 2011, will be protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information on how we do this and your rights in regards to your personal information and how to access it, visit our website: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm or call Customer Services: 01284 763233 and ask to speak to the Information Governance Officer.</p>

Agenda

Procedural matters

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Minutes**

1 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 (copy attached).

3. **Declarations of interest**

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

Part 1 - public

4. **Open forum**

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

5. **Public participation**

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

A person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. This can be done online by sending the request to democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk or telephoning 01638 719237 or in person by telling the Committee Administrator present at the meeting. However, we have a corporate and social responsibility for the safety of our staff, our councillors and visiting members of the public. **We therefore strongly urge anyone who wishes to register to speak to notify Democratic Services by 9am on the day of the meeting so that advice can be given on the arrangements in place.**

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

- 6. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 17 March 2022** **13 - 18**
- Report number: **CAB/WS/22/017**
 Chair of the Committee: Councillor Ian Shipp
 Lead officer: Christine Brain

- 7. Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 1 March 2022** **19 - 28**
- Report number: **CAB/WS/22/018**
 Portfolio holder: Councillor Sarah Broughton
 Lead officer: Rachael Mann

Non key decisions

- 8. West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation** **29 - 36**
- Report number: **CAB/WS/22/019**
 Portfolio holder: Councillor David Roach
 Lead officers: Julie Baird and Marie Smith

- 9. West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part One - Strategic Policies**
- Supplementary Agenda Pack 'A'** **Supplementary Agenda Pack 'A'**
- Appendix A to Report number: **CAB/WS/22/019**
 Portfolio holder: Councillor David Roach
 Lead officers: Julie Baird and Marie Smith

This provides the draft consultation document for Part One: Strategic Policies section of the Preferred Options consultation. It sets out the draft local plan vision and objectives and the strategic policies that are the heart of the West Suffolk Local Plan. These contain the Council's development strategy establishing our commitment to achieving net zero, adapting to and mitigating for climate change, setting the pattern, scale and quality of development to meet our need in West Suffolk to 2040, and making provision for all types of development, infrastructure, community facilities and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment (where these issues relate to strategic priorities).

- 10. West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part Two - Non Strategic Policies**
- Supplementary Agenda Pack 'B'** **Supplementary Agenda Pack 'B'**
- Appendix A to Report number: **CAB/WS/22/019**
 Portfolio holder: Councillor David Roach
 Lead officers: Julie Baird and Marie Smith

This provides the draft consultation document for Part Two: Non Strategic Policies section of the Preferred Options consultation. The non strategic policies are locally specific policies that will be used in day-to-day planning decisions (providing more detail on the strategic policies, and providing criteria that proposals are required to comply with).

11. West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part Three - Site Allocations

Supplementary Agenda Pack 'C'

Appendix A to Report number: **CAB/WS/22/019**

Portfolio holder: Councillor David Roach

Lead officers: Julie Baird and Marie Smith

**Supplementary
Agenda
Pack 'C'**

This provides the draft consultation document for Part Three: Site Allocations section of the Preferred Options consultation. These include residential, mixed-use and employment site allocations. It also identifies existing employment areas, town centres and local centres.

12. Decisions Plan: 1 April 2022 to 31 May 2023

37 - 58

To consider the most recently published version of the Cabinet's Decisions Plan

Report number: **CAB/WS/22/020**

Portfolio holder: Councillor John Griffiths

Lead officer: Ian Gallin

Part 2 – exempt

None

Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on **Tuesday 15 March 2022** at **6.00pm** in the **Academic Hall, Mildenhall Hub**, Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall, IP28 7JX

Present

Councillors

Chair John Griffiths (Leader of the Council)

Vice Chair Sara Mildmay-White (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Sarah Broughton
Carol Bull
Robert Everitt

Susan Glossop
David Roach
Peter Stevens

In attendance

Brian Harvey

Ward Member for Manor (speaking under Item 4. in relation to Item 6.)

Rachel Hood

Ward Member for Newmarket East (speaking under Item 4. in relation to Items 6. and 7.)

Andy Neal

Ward Member for Mildenhall Queensway (speaking under Item 4.)

Ian Shipp

Ward Member for Mildenhall Kingsway and Market (speaking under Item 4. in relation to Item 6.)

Lance Stanbury

Ward Member for The Rows (speaking under Item 4. in relation to Item 6.)

333. Welcome and introduction

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all persons present to the first West Suffolk Council Cabinet meeting at the Mildenhall Hub.

The Chair also explained that this meeting was being webcast live and would be available to view subsequently on the Council’s website. The Chair also explained the rationale behind the continuing precautionary health and safety measures that remained in operation for this meeting, which aimed to reduce and restrict the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

334. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andy Drummond and Jo Rayner

335. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

336. Declarations of interest

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

337. Open forum

The following non-Cabinet members spoke under this item:

1. Councillor Andy Neal (Customer access at the Mildenhall Hub)

Councillor Andy Neal (Ward Member for Mildenhall Queensway) addressed the Cabinet with regards to the public being able to access West Suffolk Council services at the Mildenhall Hub.

Councillor Neal stated that the Mildenhall Hub was a flagship facility and commended its success. However, he wished to raise his residents' concerns regarding the absence of face-to-face representation from West Suffolk Council Officers at the facility. Prior to the construction of the Hub, 'face-to-face' services were available at both the Council Offices located at College Heath Road and at the Mildenhall Bus Station. If possible, he asked if it would be possible for a 'Help-desk' facility to be provided at the Hub (possibly for two days a week), where West Suffolk Council Officers could help residents with their queries.

Therefore, Councillor Neal asked the Cabinet to give future consideration of a 'Help-desk' facility being made available at the Mildenhall Hub.

The Chair thanked Councillor Neal for attending Cabinet and then asked Councillor Robert Everitt (Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities) to respond directly.

In response, Councillor Robert Everitt firstly wished to commend the Mildenhall Hub as an excellent public facility. He thanked Councillor Neal for attending this Cabinet meeting and raising these concerns. Councillor Everitt reassured Councillor Neal and the local residents that support and advice was provided from Mildenhall Hub. Public access to West Suffolk Council services was provided by telephone and computers on site or through a pre-booked appointment. A Hub Host service was provided on-site covering all co-located partner services. If

members of the public wanted to discuss matters with Council staff and would prefer to do so face-to-face, then that absolutely could be arranged and at a time convenient to the customer. There were staff working across West Suffolk from various locations, so it was always best to arrange appointments rather than arriving at the Hub and finding that staff were on-site elsewhere. The vast majority of people preferred to contact the Council on-line or via the telephone, but appointments could be arranged for those that needed one.

In addition, Councillor Everitt also referred to the consultation which had been undertaken with regards to the future provision of the Council's Customer Service Access Points (and which had been previously approved by Cabinet). Councillor Everitt considered that because of the arrangements in place, there was not a specific need for Officers to be available on a general 'meet and greet' basis and that the process for making appointments to speak with Officers was more efficient and effective.

Councillor Andy Neal thanked Councillor Everitt for his response and would reassure his residents that the operation of the appointment process allowed the public to continue to be able to meet with West Suffolk Council staff 'face-to-face'.

2. **Councillor Brian Harvey (Agenda Item 6 (Report number CAB/WS/22/012): Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project: Draft Relevant Representation)**

Councillor Brian Harvey declared a local non pecuniary interest being the Ward Member for Manor (which included the parishes of Worlington and Freckenham who would be directly affected by this proposal) and also being a resident of Worlington.

Councillor Harvey addressed the Cabinet and explained that, if constructed, this scheme would become the largest solar panel, battery storage and regeneration farm within the UK, of some 500MW capacity and encompassing some 3,700 acres of farmland, straddling both East Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk. Therefore, the sheer size of this proposal would effectively change the local rural community / landscape forever.

Recent public opinion surveys which had been taken across all parishes within the affected areas, showed that 90% of residents opposed the current Sunnica scheme. However, the survey also revealed that local residents were not opposed to the solar energy agenda and fully supported the need for climate changes. If approved, this project would have a consequential impact, not only upon local residents, but also upon local businesses, such as the local anaerobic digestion plant, with its gas production connecting directly to the National Grid.

Despite various requests from the local MPs, Sunnica had failed to engage with local residents, since the launch in 2019. By invitation, last week, Sunnica had attended a public meeting at Red Lodge, with over 100 local residents present, together with the local TV news

channels. After the presentation by Sunnica, residents had the opportunity to raise their concerns over their proposals. In particular, issues relating to the capacity and siting of the battery storage containers, shown to be located and installed on a 45 acre site, adjacent to Elms Road, directly opposite the new Red Lodge housing development and primary school. Unfortunately, when challenged on these issues, Sunnica were unable to provide any clear answers or details as to the size and type of batteries to be installed.

Councillor Harvey also explained that during the COVID-19 lock-down period there had been several local resident 'virtual' meetings, in addition to meetings with the Parish Council Alliance and the 'No to Sunnica' Action Group. In addition, regular briefings had also been held with West Suffolk Council's Portfolio Holder and Planning Officers, with the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Highways.

With such a major project, being approved by the Secretary of State without detailed proposals and designs contained within the final submission, then the subsequent reviews and the final approval could fall back to the four local authorities as the project proceeded, which could be an inherent cost to all of these Councils.

Councillor Harvey concluded by stating that Suffolk County Council had submitted its Relevant Representation, which he fully supported. Therefore, he also strongly recommended that the West Suffolk Council Relevant Representation, as presented within the agenda papers, also be fully supported by the Cabinet.

The Chair thanked Councillor Harvey for attending Cabinet and noted his concerns. The item would be considered in detail later in the meeting under Agenda Item 6.

3. **Councillor Lance Stanbury (Agenda Item 6 (Report number CAB/WS/22/012): Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project: Draft Relevant Representation)**

Councillor Lance Stanbury declared a local non pecuniary interest being the District Council Ward Member for The Rows and the Suffolk County Councillor for the Mildenhall Division (which included the parishes of Worlington and Freckenham who would be directly affected by this proposal).

Councillor Stanbury addressed the Cabinet with regards to this item and firstly acknowledged that it was a difficult time to speak out against a proposal for solar energy, given not least, the fact that the country wanted to achieve net zero, but also with the current situation in Europe and the effect on energy prices. However, this should not mean that schemes should be accepted 'at any cost'.

Councillor Stanbury wished to make it abundantly clear that this scheme was a speculative investment opportunity for Sunnica, who were an investment company. Sunnica were looking for sites all over the country and had found a potential opportunity within this local area

to submit an application of this kind. As this was an investment company, then assumptions could be made that at least half of the income generated would go abroad and there would be no local benefit whatsoever. All of the money spent and all of the work over the years and yet Sunnica had indicated that there would only be 17 full time jobs actually created from this project. Not only would it hugely disrupt local people, it would also affect the countryside habitats within the area as well.

Councillor Stanbury explained that Sunnica were intending to generate energy during the daytime and take in the cheaper energy at night and then sell for a higher price during the daytime. In order to be able to achieve this, Sunnica were proposing the untested battery storage system, which had also been acknowledged by Sunnica themselves. As a consequence, these could be a potential fire risk for the local community.

In conclusion, Councillor Stanbury stated that the Suffolk County Council Cabinet, at their recent meeting, had objected to this particular scheme, within their Relevant Representation and urged the West Suffolk Council Cabinet to do exactly the same.

The Chair thanked Councillor Stanbury for attending Cabinet and noted his concerns. The item would be considered in detail later in the meeting under Agenda Item 6.

4. **Councillor Rachel Hood (Agenda Item 6 (Report number CAB/WS/22/012): Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project: Draft Relevant Representation)**

Councillor Rachel Hood declared a local non pecuniary interest being a Newmarket Town Councillor, the District Council Ward Member for Newmarket East, Suffolk County Councillor for the Exning and Newmarket Division, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member and a resident of Newmarket.

Councillor Hood endorsed the previous comments made by Councillors Harvey and Stanbury and also commended the proposed West Suffolk Council Relevant Representation, as set out within the agenda papers. She stated that the provision of green energy was supported, but this scheme could not be.

Both Exning Parish Council and Newmarket Town Council were unanimous in their opposition to this scheme. The size of the scheme was monstrous with 2,800 acres of good farmland being potentially lost. This scheme was actually a battery storage system masquerading as a solar farm.

The proposed scheme would damage heritage assets, in particular, the famous Limekilns Gallops in Newmarket. The appearance of how the solar panels had been misrepresented by Sunnica and they would be a hideous blight on the landscape, ruining heritage assets that had been admired for hundreds of years. It would damage the horse racing and

tourism industry and would cause a detrimental increase in traffic, particularly within Newmarket, with large lorries having to come through the town.

The proposed battery storage scheme was a danger to local residents who were genuinely frightened, particularly those living within Red Lodge. There were no reports on the fires that these batteries could cause and which were exceedingly difficult to extinguish. The loss of farmland would reduce the ability for local food production, which had also not been taken into account by Sunnica, with regards to the calculations on the carbon footprint of the scheme.

Councillor Hood concluded that this scheme was, overall, very disappointing and could not be considered as a green environmental project and would be a blight on the special countryside within West Suffolk.

The Chair thanked Councillor Hood for attending Cabinet and noted her concerns. The item would be considered in detail later in the meeting under Agenda Item 6.

5. **Councillor Ian Shipp (Agenda Item 6 (Report number CAB/WS/22/012): Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project: Draft Relevant Representation)**

Councillor Ian Shipp declared a local non pecuniary interest being the District Council Ward Member for Mildenhall Kingsway and Market, a Mildenhall Town Councillor and a resident of Mildenhall.

Councillor Shipp explained that he was not opposed to projects of solar power and would support these schemes where they were in the right place, the right size and were locally supported. Councillor Shipp expressed his grave concerns regarding this scheme, for all of the reasons which had been already stated. The massive scale of the scheme would blight the lives of local communities for years to come. The battery storage would threaten the safety of many thousands of local people and Sunnica had taken, little or no regard, to the concerns of the local community.

Councillor Shipp explained that he was not attending this meeting in his capacity as Deputy Mayor of Mildenhall Town Council, but stated that the Town Council had also expressed its concerns towards the scheme and had also offered financial support to help fight the scheme, as its Members could see the real issues that it would bring locally.

Councillor Shipp suggested that new legislation should be introduced which may protect local farmland against schemes, such as these. New legislation could insist that all new developments, both residential and commercial, should incorporate solar panels. This proposal should be stopped and a new, more sustainable project should be brought forward, which not only delivered the energy needs, but also engaged with and brought on board local communities.

In conclusion, Councillor Shipp also expressed his support for the West Suffolk Council's Relevant Representation, as set out within the Cabinet agenda papers.

The Chair thanked Councillor Shipp for attending Cabinet and noted his concerns. The item would be considered in detail later in the meeting under Agenda Item 6.

6. **Councillor Rachel Hood (Agenda Item 7 (Report number CAB/WS/22/013): Former St Felix School Site, Newmarket – Development Brief)**

Councillor Rachel Hood declared a local non pecuniary interest being a Newmarket Town Councillor, the District Council Ward Member for Newmarket East, Suffolk County Councillor for the Exning and Newmarket Division, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member and a resident of Newmarket.

Councillor Hood explained that Newmarket Town Council was opposed to this application (although not unanimously so). There was an existing allocation within the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) for 50 dwellings on this site. Suffolk County Council had confirmed that the part of the site which was not developed, would be allocated to Newmarket to join up with the George Lambton Playing Fields, as some of the site had been allocated as playing fields.

Councillor Hood stated that both herself and Councillor Drummond had been in consultation with Suffolk County Council about what would happen and are both in the position, as Newmarket Town Councillors, who would have liked this site to be allocated as open space/sports facilities for Newmarket. However, they were both aware that this could not be achieved due to the existing allocations on the site, but still wished to make the Cabinet aware of the views of Newmarket Town Council.

In conclusion, Councillor Hood stated that she supported the Development Brief proceeding to a six week period of public consultation to gain the views of local residents.

The Chair thanked Councillor Hood for attending Cabinet and noted her concerns. The item would be considered in detail later in the meeting under Agenda Item 7.

338. **Public participation**

There were no members of the public in attendance on this occasion.

339. **Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project: Draft Relevant Representation (Report number CAB/WS/22/012)**

The Cabinet considered this report which set out the Relevant Representation of West Suffolk Council, under Section 56 of the Planning Act 2008, in respect of the Sunnica Energy Farm application.

Councillor David Roach, Portfolio Holder for Planning, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet and explained that the Sunnica Energy Farm was a scheme for the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) generating panels and on-site battery energy storage systems (BESS) across two sites within Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The proposal would include the infrastructure associated with the required connection to the national grid, including an extension to the Burwell National Grid Substation. The scheme was defined as a National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008, as it was an onshore generating station in England exceeding 50 megawatts (MW). Consent for a NSIP takes the form of a development Consent Order (DCO) and the application would be determined by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The Council was a statutory consultee in the consenting process.

The application was now in the pre-examination phase. As required by s56 of the Planning Act 2008, Sunnica had notified the Council, as a person identified as falling within the categories of persons that must be notified that the application had been accepted for examination. The s56 Notice set out the period in which relevant representations were invited to be made to the Planning Inspectorate. This period ran from 3 February 2022 to 17 March 2022. The four affected Councils (West Suffolk Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Suffolk County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council) would submit a relevant representation on an individual basis to ensure that the Examining Authority was fully informed of the matters of concern to the Council and its communities and interests that the Council represented.

Appendix A to Report Number CAB/WS/22/012 set out the concerns of this Council which were stating that the Council could not support the proposal as it stood and considered that development consent should not be granted for the proposal, as submitted.

Key concerns remained in a number of areas in relation to the likely environmental impacts, the quality of assessment of these impacts and the lack of mitigation in a number of topic areas. Suffolk County Council had also stated within its Relevant Representation, that the submitted material in relation to transport and access was not acceptable and that there were deficiencies in the highway-related provisions in the draft DCO.

A project of the scale and nature proposed would radically change the sense of place, the place attachment of the residents and the recreational amenities of the affected villages and communities, over a long period of time. It was considered that the applicant's submission did not recognise this and the need to mitigate/compensate for these impacts.

The draft Relevant Representation also raised concerns in relation to cultural heritage and the assessment of non-designated heritage impacts, the acceptability of the applicant's noise assessments and assessment of impacts on soil and land use. In addition, attention was drawn to the need to thoroughly examine the suitability and safety of the Battery Energy Storage Systems and the need to fully assess the impact of the proposal on the horse racing industry.

Following the submission of the Relevant Representation, the Council would have further opportunities to present its views on the proposals to the Examining Authority, as part of the examination process. This would involve the submission of the Local Impact Report (LIR) and the Council's Written Representation (WR), along with attendance and participation at hearings and accompanied site visits; responding to the Examining Authority's questions and requests for further information; commenting on other interested parties' representations; submission of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) and submission, as appropriate, of signed planning obligations.

Therefore, to facilitate this process, it was also being recommended that the Cabinet granted the Director (Planning and Growth), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the delegated authority to fully engage with the pre-examination and examination stages of the DCO process in relation to the Sunnica proposals, in order to pursue the concerns identified in the Relevant Representation.

Councillor Peter Stevens thanked the local Ward Members for attending the meeting to address the Cabinet on this proposed scheme. Councillor Stevens acknowledged that a balance needed to be struck between the provision of renewable energy, along with its impact on the use of agricultural land and provision of food security. Therefore, Councillor Stevens also wished to propose the following further recommendation as an amendment:

"We, as a Council, make a submission to the Secretary of State expressing our disappointment of the quality of the application and to re-affirm our opposition to this application."

The Cabinet then discussed the amendment, as proposed by Councillor Peter Stevens and were satisfied, that the points raised had been sufficiently addressed within the recommendations and the Relevant Representation. With there being no seconder for this amendment and with Councillor Peter Stevens now being reassured of the fact, he then withdrew his amendment.

Having considered the report presented, along with the representations made by the local Members present, the Cabinet considered that they could not support the scheme as it stood and considered that development consent should not be granted, as submitted.

Councillor David Roach also wished to recognise all the work which had been undertaken with the local Ward Members, residents and Officers in the formulation of this Relevant Representation.

Resolved:

That:

1. The draft Relevant Representation, attached as Appendix A to Report number: CAB/WS/22/012, be endorsed and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate under s56 of the Planning Act 2008.
2. The Director (Planning and Growth), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, be authorised to make

amendments to the draft Relevant Representation, prior to its submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

3. Delegated authority be granted to the Director (Planning and Growth), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to fully engage with the Pre-examination and Examination stages of the Development Consent Order process in relation to the Sunnica proposals, in order to pursue the concerns identified in the Relevant Representation.

(Due to ensuring the representation was submitted by the required deadline of 17 March 2022, with the agreement of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee, the call-in procedure for this item had been suspended. The Chair of the O&S Committee was satisfied that the decision proposed was reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency).

340. Former St Felix School Site, Newmarket - Development Brief (Report number CAB/WS/22/013)

The Cabinet considered this report which set out the draft Development Brief for the former St Felix School site in Newmarket.

Councillor David Roach, Portfolio Holder for Planning, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet and explained that the site was allocated within the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) under Policy SA6(d) which was adopted in September 2019. This site was known in the SALP as the 'Former St Felix Middle School Site'. The site extended to 4.5 hectares and comprised the footprint of the former school, outbuildings, sports pitches, courts and playing fields. The site was allocated in its entirety, although the suggested capacity (50 dwellings) reflected the retention of the open space and existing tennis courts.

Suffolk County Council, as landowners of the site, had prepared a draft Development Brief (as set out in Appendices A to C of Report number CAB/WS/22/013) that sought to provide planning and design guidance for the development of the former middle school.

The Development Brief provided a design framework aligned with the adopted Local Plan and would guide the preparation and determination of future planning applications for this site. However, this document was not designed to be prescriptive. It was intended to guide the effective delivery of SALP Policy SA6d. The Cabinet also noted that an element of the draft Development Brief relocated within the existing tennis courts within the site and this was considered to be contrary to the requirements of the policy allocation. Provided that the relocated tennis courts resulted in an improved facility, then Officers agreed that there was merit in this approach.

Once approved and adopted as informal Planning Guidance, the Development Brief would constitute a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications and should also be read in conjunction with the policies of the adopted West Suffolk Local Plan. Therefore, the Cabinet was being

asked to recommend that the draft Development Brief now proceeded to a six-week period of public consultation.

Councillor Sarah Broughton endorsed the Development Brief proceeding to a period of public consultation by Suffolk County Council. In addition, Councillor Broughton hoped that this Development Brief would provide Suffolk County Council with the opportunity to reinstate a sports hall for Newmarket, to replace the one which had been previously demolished on the Scaltback School site.

Resolved:

That:

1. The landowner to begin a six-week formal public consultation process on the draft St Felix Development Brief.
2. The possible future options for a sports facility (as set out in Part 2 of the Development Brief) be noted.

341. Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs (Report number CAB/WS/22/014)

The Cabinet considered this report, which provided the collection data in respect of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and sought approval for the write-off of the amounts contained in the exempt Appendices attached to the report.

Councillor Sarah Broughton, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including the current performance of both Council Tax and Business Rates collection, as set out in Section 2 of the report.

Members noted that reliefs introduced by central Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (many of which provided 100 percent relief for 2020/2021) had been extended to the end of June 2020, at which point the remainder of the year would be discounted by 66 percent. Eligible accounts were rebilled in July 2021 for the increased amount which adjusted the net collectable debt to £61.4m on 1 July 2021.

Resolved:

That the write-off of the amounts detailed in the Exempt Appendices to Report number CAB/WS/22/014, be approved, as follows:

1. Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax totalling £21,160.82.
2. Exempt Appendix 2: Housing Benefit Overpayment totalling £15,028.93.

342. Decisions Plan: 1 March 2022 to 31 May 2022 (Report number CAB/WS/22/015)

The Cabinet considered this report which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period 1 March 2022 to 31 May 2022.

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

343. **Exclusion of press and public**

See minute 344. below.

344. **Exempt Appendices: Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs (paragraphs 1 and 2) (Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 to Report number CAB/WS/22/014)**

The Cabinet considered the exempt appendices to this report. However, no reference was made to specific detail and, therefore, this item was not held in private session.

The meeting concluded at 7.01 pm

Signed by:

Chair



Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 17 March 2022

Report number:	CAB/WS/22/017	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	26 April 2022
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Councillor Ian Shipp Overview and Scrutiny Committee Telephone: 07368 134769 Email: ian.shipp@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Telephone: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: This item is not required to be included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: It is recommended that Report number: CAB/WS/22/017, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

1. Context to this report

1.1 On 17 March 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:

1. Response on Homes for Life and Ageing Population Housing Questions
2. Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – 26 January 2022
3. Work programme update 2022

2. Proposals within this report

2.1 Response on Homes for Life and Aging Population Housing Questions (Report number: OAS/WS/22/004)

2.1.1 The Committee received and **noted** the above report presented by the Cabinet Member for Planning, which had been prepared following a request on 12 March 2020, which came from discussions relating to the West Suffolk Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2018 to 2023: Year 1 Review. The report provided responses to two questions raised:

- How many Homes for Life are being built; and
- What is specifically being built for the aging population.

The report explained the terminology, history of the change and current policy standards being used to meet housing need across West Suffolk.

2.1.2 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions. In particular discussions were held on whether the number of homes being built to the new standards M4(2) – accessible and adaptable dwellings and M4(3) – wheelchair user dwellings would be included in the new Local Plan; why solar panels and other sustainable materials were not being put on new builds; and the lack of bungalows being built to which comprehensive responses were provided.

2.2 Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – 26 January 2022 (Report number: OAS/WS/22/005)

2.2.1 The Committee received Report number OAS/WS/22/005, prepared by Councillor Margaret Marks setting out a summary of the discussions held at its meeting on 26 January 2022. The focus of the meeting was to consider Dentistry Services in Suffolk.

2.2.2 Councillor Marks explained a significant problem was that around 50 percent of children had not seen a dentist in recent times and this seems to be as a result of parents/guardians struggling to register with a dentist. A specific difficulty was that NHS England appeared to be the only body which has the power to change this situation. Although some progression is being made, work is being undertaken to drive NHS England towards improving this

service, including ensuring budgets are appropriately allocated and encouraging some of the Health Scrutiny recommendations to be adopted within the next year. Recommendations include seeking a change to dentist contracts; ensuring the paperwork that is required to be completed by dentists from overseas is not too onerous; getting dentists back into schools; and providing better support for dentists to help them operate more effectively.

2.2.3 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked questions to which Councillor Marks provided comprehensive responses. In particular, discussions were held on the number of bodies involved in dentistry; needs assessments; whether there was a shortage of private dentists; current dental contracts; the number of dentists leaving the NHS and the reasons behind this; and residents experiencing difficulties registering with an NHS dentist.

2.2.4 The Committee **noted** the report, and in particular, supported the work being carried out by the Health Scrutiny Committee around the provision of dentistry services in Suffolk.

2.3 **Work programme update 2022 (Report number: OAS/WS/22/006)**

2.3.1 The Committee received Report number OAS/WS/22/006, which updated members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items, and items currently agreed but had yet to be programmed for 2022, as attached at Appendix 1.

2.3.2 The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on 9 June 2022, which coincided with the "Platinum Jubilee Parade and RAF Honington 50th Anniversary Parade". Therefore, the Chair advised that the meeting would be moved to the following week, **Thursday, 16 June 2022**.

2.3.3 The Chair referred to the "20mph zones" which was yet to be scheduled. In moving this forward, the Chair proposed two options in progressing this piece of work, either:

- Inviting Suffolk County Council to a "virtual informal Overview and Scrutiny" meeting between April and May 2022 to brief the Committee on the "20mph zone" process; or
- Inviting Suffolk County Council to the Committee's June meeting to provide a briefing.

The Vice-Chair supported holding a virtual meeting between April and May 2022 to progress the "20mph zone" topic, which was also **agreed** by the Committee.

2.3.4 Councillor Cliff Waterman, on behalf of Councillor Diane Hind raised the issue of anti-idling. A meeting had been held on 11 January 2022 with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, Councillors Diane Hind, Julia Wakelam, the Director (Operations) and the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) to discuss anti-idling. At this meeting, the possibility of continuing collecting figures on the number of drivers approached about the topic was not possible because there was not the mechanism to record interactions for idling and issue them as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). However, two options were suggested being:

1. agree for Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) officers to continue to have informal conversations with idling motorists in the course of their duties (but not record/report interventions); or
2. seek to establish the full impact and cost of obtaining formal powers to enforce idling with the requisite resources, training and back-office system modifications. If the Committee agrees, then a recommendation would need to be made to Cabinet.

Given the importance to our residents' health of reducing air pollution Councillor Waterman asked the Committee to agree that the Director (Operations) be tasked with establishing the costs and impacts of establishing a full anti-idling policy.

The Committee considered the request and **Resolved:** That "Vehicle idling interactions" be included into the Committee's forward work programme and the Director (Operations) be requested to establish the full impact and costs of obtaining formal powers to enforce idling, including the requisite resources, training and back-office system modifications, and provide a report to the Committee by September 2022.

3 Alternative options that have been considered

3.1 Please see background papers.

4 Consultation and engagement undertaken

4.1 Please see background papers.

5 Risks associated with the proposals

5.1 Please see background papers.

6 Implications arising from the proposals

6.1 Financial:

Please see background papers.

6.2 Equalities:

Please see background papers.

7 Appendices referenced in this report

7.1 Please see background papers.

8 Background documents associated with this report

8.1 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/004](#) and [Appendix 1](#), [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Response on Homes for Life and Ageing Population Housing Questions

8.2 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/005](#) and [Appendix 1](#), [Appendix 2a](#), [Appendix 2b](#) and [Appendix 3](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – 26 January 2022

8.3 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/006](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update 2022

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Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 1 March 2022

Report number:	CAB/WS/22/018	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	26 April 2022
Cabinet member:	Councillor Sarah Broughton Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property Telephone: 07929 305787 Email: sarah.broughton@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) Telephone: 01638 719245 Email: rachael.mann@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: This item is not required to be included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: The Cabinet is requested to note the content of Report number: CAB/WS/22/018, being the report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee.

1. Context to this report

1.1 On 1 March 2022, the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee met where the following items of substantive business were discussed:

1. Performance Report
2. Welfare Reform Update
3. ARP Financial Performance 2021 to 2022
4. Verification Policy
5. Forthcoming Issues
6. Exempt Item: Partnership Working through Section 113 Agreement

This report is for information only. No decisions are required by the Cabinet.

2. Updates within this report

2.1 **Performance Report: December 2021 (agenda item 5)**

2.1.1 **a. Joint Committee performance report: December 2021**

The Joint Committee received and **noted** an update on performance. This report provides relevant information relating to the performance of ARP as a whole and that of the individual partners. This detailed report can be viewed on Breckland Council's website at the following link:

[Performance Report 2021-22 Qtr 3 December 2021.pdf \(breckland.gov.uk\)](https://www.breckland.gov.uk/Performance-Report-2021-22-Qtr-3-December-2021.pdf)

The reports indicated that when considering performance as a whole for all partner councils, all targets for the 2021 to 2022 financial year were presently being met in respect of the following categories:

- Business rates collection
- Council tax collection
- Number of electronic forms received
- Fraud and compliance

2.1.2 In respect of West Suffolk Council's individual performance, all targets were presently being met for the 2021 to 2022 financial year in respect of the following categories:

- Business rates collection
- Local council tax reduction
- Housing benefit
- Fraud and compliance

2.1.3 Attention was drawn to the service updates:

- a. **Enforcement:** ARP's enforcement agency visits are continuing with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and risk

assessments in place. Collection has continued to rise back to near normal levels. ARP continue to try and engage with customers offering long term payment arrangements and assisting customers where possible. In November 2021, £382,048 had been collected compared to £221,137 at the same point last year. As at 31 December 2021, the total collected for the 2021 to 2022 financial year to date was £3,511,917 debt with £863,468 in fees. The collection of parking fines for East Suffolk and West Suffolk continue to remain positive.

- b. **Further recovery:** As at 31 December 2021, collection was £1,087,848, which was now exceeding the pre-pandemic further recovery performance figure. As at 31 December 2019, £988,268 had been collected.
- c. **Non-domestic rates:** Work is progressing to commence the reviews on Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) reductions which have now commenced on a rolling basis. Reviews of discretionary reliefs have been issued. Volumes of work are in a better position than earlier in the year; however, the return of relief reviews may impact over the next few months. A new discretionary relief, COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) had been announced and guidance was awaited on how this would be administered.
- d. **Council tax:** Demand for council tax billing continues at very high levels due to the effects of COVID-19 with a significant proportion being due to people moving home. However, outstanding work continues to be below the peaks previously experienced which can be attributed to the project to introduce generic Council Tax Billing Officers. This provides a resilient team who have been able to switch between billing and benefits to help cope with ever changing workloads and priorities during the pandemic and has provided increased flexibility in the use of ARP's resources.

In the 2020 to 2021 financial year, formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers had sought extensions into the 2021 to 2022 financial year. This may impact on this year's collection and the situation will be closely monitored.

News was awaited on the return of information from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in relation to a Cabinet Office pilot to share data to provide information. This provided numerous benefits, as set out in the report. If the pilot is successful, ARP may in the future be able to make this an integral part of the recovery process.

- e. **Benefits:** Both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance has achieved targets, despite the increased demand attributed to economic recovery from COVID-19.

ARP continues to see significant increases in demand, particularly increases in change of addresses and continue to utilise generically trained staff to focus resource where it is most needed.

The COVID-19 Test and Trace Self-Isolation payment scheme had been extended until 31 March 2022. This scheme pays £500 to each eligible person notified of a requirement to self-isolate. Payments had risen steeply over December 2021 and January 2022 and resources were reviewed to help deal with the increased demand and ensure financial support was provided in a timely manner.

- f. **Fraud and compliance:** The fraud team are now visiting domestic (unoccupied) and business premises with appropriate COVID safety measures in place. Desk based fraud and compliance work continues, which is undertaken by fraud team officers working from home. Face-to-face interviews with customers under caution were hoping to resume by the end of 2021/early 2022.

Work has been continuing to extend the Fraud and Compliance work of East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils to the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub with both councils approving a business case to allow this element of the project to move forward. This in turn would generate fraud-related savings for the partnership.

Both Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils have committed to continue providing funding for fraud and compliance work for two years from April 2022.

- g. **ARP systems and digital:** Work is progressing with Capita to review their digital product where it is currently being utilised by other local authorities to gain feedback from a wider group of Capita users. Knowledge and experiences are being shared, which will potentially benefit ARP in the future.

Work volumes with both System Administration and Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) have been quite high but a strong plan of priorities has been devised to ensure resources can meet expectations and demands.

Work was underway on the Annual Billing process, with Customer Service teams reviewing bill content and system testing commencing.

- h. **Better Customer Journeys Programme:** Through the Better Customer Journeys Programme, ARP is continuing to improve the customer experience through the automation project or streamlining processes, which in turn is helping to make self-service the customer-preferred option.

The new online council tax change of address service is now live for all partners, following testing with customer service teams. Customer take-up is above expectations with 43 percent of customers currently

using the facility against an anticipated 30 percent, which is testament to excellent work with customers and the effectiveness of the new online form. The project team is now investing resources to implement automation, working closely with Capita to ensure it fulfils its potential.

The report outlined additional specific digital measures in place, which aim to improve the customer experience.

- 2.1.4 Discussion was specifically held at the meeting on a number of topics including the collection targets relating to each individual partner authority and how these could be reviewed if considered appropriate.

2.2 **Welfare reform update (agenda item 6)**

- 2.2.1 The Joint Committee **noted** an update on welfare reform, which included:

- a. **Universal Credit (UC):** It was announced at the end of January 2022 that the Help to Claim scheme has been renewed for a further year. Ministers confirmed that Citizens Advice will continue to deliver independent support and from April 2022 and that the support will be provided through telephony and digital channels. Individuals who are unable to access support via these channels will be supported by the local jobcentres.

The Customer Services Team, comprising partners' Heads of Customer Service support ARP's view that the best fit for residents would be for DWP to take full responsibility for helping customers to claim UC, a benefit they administer. To provide a seamless service DWP could utilise their existing digital and telephony capability to provide assistance to supplement their face-to-face Job Centre capability.

The summary of the latest position on the expansion of UC and concerns raised by officers regarding specific issues in respect of the expansion on a national level were contained in sections 2.1.13 and 2.1.14, and 2.2 of the report, and which were duly noted by the Joint Committee.

- b. **Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP):** For the 2020 to 2021 financial year, the DWP increased funding to offset the impact of private sector rents increasing above the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates used to calculate housing benefit. Funding for 2021 to 2022 has returned to 2019/2020 levels, despite concerns the pandemic will increase demand throughout this year. ARP are in close conversations with individual Housing teams to plan, profile and monitor demand and expenditure to meet requirements to ensure full spend, but not to exceed funding levels, given a budget does not exist to top up.

Funding for 2021 to 2022 was allocated in two parts with £100 million provided at the start of the year with a further £40 million allocated in September 2021.

- c. **Benefit cap:** In November 2016, the maximum family income before the benefit cap applies reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£13,400 for single adults with no children). The Benefit Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and the cost of temporary housing.

The Benefits Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and the Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and assist with the cost of temporary housing.

- d. **Social rented sector rent restrictions:** The Government has responded to consultation on funding for supported housing, removing proposals to move away from a subsidised demand led model to a grant model. For the foreseeable future, supported accommodation, including hostel tenancies will remain in within the Housing Benefit service and will not therefore move to Universal Credit.

- e. **Welfare benefit uprating – April 2022:** The Government ended the four year benefit uprating freeze in 2020. However, the link between pensions and the 'Triple Lock' was severed in September 2021 because of wage inflation. Instead in 2022 to 2023, the state pension will rise in line with the highest inflation rate or 2.5 percent. The Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) rate for September is historically the figure used, reported at 3.1 percent.

- 2.2.2 Discussion was specifically held at the meeting on a number of topics including the recently announced Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme. At the time of the meeting, an extensive amount of detail needed to be interpreted and worked through with ARP on how the council tax rebate element of the overall energy support package could be facilitated and administered.

2.3 **ARP Financial Performance 2021 to 2022 (agenda item 7)**

- 2.3.1 The Joint Committee **noted** the financial performance report which presented the forecast full year financial position against budget for the ARP.

The forecast at this stage shows a small underspend against budget of £51,082 (0.53 percent) for the whole of the partnership. The reasons for the specific variances, together with other details, are contained in the report at:

[ARP Financial Performance 2021-2022](#)

[Appendix 1](#)

- 2.3.2 An update was also provided on the remaining transformation funding which had been set aside in previous years. £109,000 has been earmarked for projects in progress in 2021 to 2022 and it is expected that £20,000 will be spent in 2022 to 2023. The remaining £101,000 available will be used for future transformation projects between all five partners.
- 2.3.3 Details of the funding held in the ARP ICT reserve, which had been approved as part of the budget setting process, was also contained in Appendix 1.
- 2.3.4 The Government has continued the grants to local authorities to offset the losses from sales fees and charges income for the first quarter only of 2021 to 2022. Authorities are expected to absorb the initial five percent of lost income against budget and after that the grant will provide 75 pence in every pound of lost income. Due to the profiling of income received, ARP has been able to claim for some enforcement-related income under this scheme for each partner.
- 2.3.5 As reported at the last meeting in December 2021, the Joint Committee considered a proposal to distribute the end of year variance between the partner authorities in the approved shares.
- 2.3.6 The table below, which has been updated since last reported, shows the share of the forecast outturn for each partner based on the Joint Committee constitutional agreement and income compensation expected to be retained by each authority; however, this would be amended to reflect the final values at the end of March 2022.

	Forecast outturn	Enforcement income
Breckland	(£19,457)	(£14,374)
East Cambridgeshire	7,590	(£6,599)
East Suffolk	(£22,330)	(£23,591)
Fenland	(£12,150)	(£13,220)
West Suffolk	(£4,735)	(£17,202)
Total	(£51,082)	(£74,986)

2.4 **Verification policy (agenda item 8)**

- 2.4.1 The Joint Committee considered this report, which sought approval for its Verification Policy for 2022 to 2023 and onwards.
- 2.4.2 Housing benefit regulations require local authorities to obtain information which allows an accurate assessment of a claimant’s entitlement to benefit to be made. However, except for a national insurance number and proof of

identity, they do not specify what evidence is required in support of the claim.

- 2.4.3 In 2011, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provided an option for local authorities to replace their verification policy with a risk-based approach, applying different levels of checks to benefit claims. Since 2004, DWP has not prescribed a verification policy, instead leaving individual local authorities to determine their own policy.
- 2.4.4 Anglia Revenues Partnership introduced risk-based verification (RBV) in 2012 and had continued with the same policy until April 2021, where it was found to work well.
- 2.4.5 Last year Anglia Revenues Partnership replaced RBV with a new verification policy. The onus of the new policy was to reduce the burden for customers to supply documentation and utilise digital data sharing with DWP, HMRC and housing providers.
- 2.4.6 The introduction of the new Verification Policy has proven to be very successful. As anticipated, the greater use of real time secure data has reduced the requirement for customers to obtain and submit evidence. Customers are only asked to provide information where information cannot be obtained from other sources. This has led to an improvement to the customer experience.
- 2.4.7 Further benefits of introducing a new verification policy were detailed in section 3 of the Joint Committee report.
- 2.4.8 A revised Appendix A was attached to the [Verification Policy](#) at Appendix 1, detailing the verification standards applied to different types of evidence requirements.
- 2.4.9 Following the successful implementation of the 2021/2022 Verification Policy and this 2022/2023 review, officers considered there was no longer a requirement to review it on an annual basis. Therefore, it was recommended to the Joint Committee that future reviews should take place only where there is a foreseen change to verification requirements for either housing benefit or council tax support.
- 2.4.10 Risk continues to be mitigated by compliance with DWP housing benefit regulations, which in turn will continue to satisfy DWP subsidy requirements and is compliant with the Local Council Tax Support Schemes. It was noted that the change of policy was not reducing the quality of the evidence that has always been required and will continue to be required; it was simply making maximum use of DWP and HMRC secure data share. The policy has approval from both internal and external auditors.

2.4.11 During consideration at the meeting, the Joint Committee was satisfied with the revisions and considered the proposal to review the policy as and when required rather than on an annual basis, was a sensible approach.

2.4.12 **The Joint Committee resolved that:**

- 1. the revised Verification Policy for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims from April 2022 for Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, East Suffolk Council, Fenland District Council and West Suffolk Council, be approved.**
- 2. The Verification Policy be approved as a permanent policy without the requirement to review annually.**

2.5 **Forthcoming issues (agenda item 9)**

2.5.1 A discussion was held on arranging some informal meetings of the Joint Committee and potentially convening meetings at other locations of the respective partner authorities.

2.6 **Exempt item: Partnership working through Section 113 Agreement**

2.6.1 Approval was sought in private session for a Section 113 Agreement with Norwich City Council which would enable ARP to continue providing the City Council with fraud services.

2.6.2 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables local authorities to enter into an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

2.6.3 ARP has an existing Section 113 agreement to provide a management service to Norwich City Council (NCC), including fraud services. However, this agreement will shortly expire and NCC has asked ARP to continue to provide fraud services.

2.6.4 This would be a separate arrangement to that of the five partner authorities that form Anglia Revenues Partnership; however, it would provide opportunities and benefits for the partnership. Such benefits will include creating greater resilience and generate further efficiencies which will support ARP's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Furthermore, providing a fraud service to Norwich City Council will add social value to the work of ARP and throughout Norfolk; that, in turn, might lead to other, similar approaches and opportunities.

2.6.5 The Joint Committee considered it was an excellent opportunity and was supportive of the proposal.

2.6.6 The Joint Committee **resolved that:**

1. the first recommendation as listed in the report be approved.

2. It be recommended to each partner authority that the second recommendation as listed in the report, be approved.

2.6.7 In respect of 2. above, under part 3 of West Suffolk Council's Constitution, which contains the approved Scheme of Delegation to Officers, this enables officers to make this decision, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, which in this case is Councillor Sarah Broughton, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property. Following necessary discussions and negotiations required to complete the agreement, the actions required to exercise the relevant delegation will be undertaken accordingly.

2.6.8 The Cabinet is therefore requested to formally **note** the position set out in paragraph 2.6.7 above.

3. Minutes

3.1 For further information on the discussions held at the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee meeting on 1 March 2022, the draft minutes of the meeting may be viewed on Breckland District Council's website at the following link:

[Minutes](#)

4. Background papers

4.1 Breckland DC Website:

[1 March 2022](#)



West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation

Report number:	CAB/WS/22/019	
Report to and dates:	Cabinet	26 April 2022
	Council	17 May 2022
Cabinet member:	Councillor David Roach Portfolio Holder for Planning Telephone: 07889 510003 Email: david.roach@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officers:	Julie Baird Director (Planning and Growth) Telephone: 01284 757613 / 07960 868420 Email: julie.baird@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Marie Smith Service Manager (Strategic Planning) Telephone: 01638 719260 / 07932 834603 Email: marie.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours. The recommendations contained in this report will be referred to Council for a final decision and are, therefore, not subject to call-in. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendations: **It is recommended that, subject to the approval of Council:**

- 1. The West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18) document, as contained in Appendix A to Report number: CAB/WS/22/019, together with supporting documents, be approved for the purposes of public consultation.**

- 2. Delegated authority is given to the Director (Planning and Growth), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning to make minor non-material consequential changes to the documents, as necessary.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The West Suffolk Local Plan will cover the period up to 2040. Upon adoption it will set out the Council's policies to address housing and employment needs and other associated economic, social and environmental priorities.
- 1.2 It is an important tool in supporting delivery of our strategic priorities and essential for the continuation of an effective planning service. In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), requires local planning authorities to prepare and keep an up-to-date local plan.
- 1.3 West Suffolk Council is preparing a new Local Plan that once complete will replace the various documents which together form the existing Development Plan for West Suffolk:
- Former Forest Heath area Core Strategy (2010)
 - Former St Edmundsbury area Core Strategy (2010)
 - Former Forest Heath area Single Issue review (SIR) (2019)
 - Joint Development Management Policies Document (2015)
 - Former Edmundsbury area 'Vision' Site Allocation documents (2014)
 - Former Forest Heath area Sites Allocation Local Plan (2019)
- 1.4 The Council undertook consultation on the initial stages of the local plan in October 2020 with an Issues and Options consultation. The Council received over 3,500 comments. All comments are available to view online at the council's public consultation website [West Suffolk Local Plan \(Regulation 18\) Issues and Options October 2020 - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](#) The consultation responses, national policy guidance, evidence and research have been used to develop the Council's Preferred Options document for consultation (Appendix A).
- 1.5 The Preferred Options document (Appendix A) represents the next stage of the plan making process. The consultation asks questions to actively engage and invite comments from communities, businesses, the development industry, and other stakeholders.
- 1.6 It is important to note that the plan is still evolving, and no firm decisions have been made at this stage. The Council will continue to gather evidence throughout the local plan preparation and this consultation is an important aspect of this. Therefore, this is not what the final plan will look like.
- 1.7 Following consultation, the Council will continue to engage with infrastructure providers and stakeholders, and complete a number of key pieces of evidence, which may influence the final version.

- 1.8 At this stage, policy parameters have been drafted which set out the purpose of each policy area. These are not full policies but outline the scope or framework of the emerging policy which the Council is seeking comment on before work commences on the detailed policies. The consultation also includes a new 'call for sites' for housing, employment and gypsy and traveller sites in order to ensure that all potential options have been explored prior to the Council preparing a final suite of sites and policies.
- 1.9 The response received from this consultation will help shape the next version of the local plan. That version will be the document which the Council proposes to submit for examination to the Planning Inspectorate and will be subject to a further round of consultation prior to its submission. Consultation of the pre-submission document is anticipated in May 2023.

2. **Proposals within this report**

- 2.1 This report asks the Cabinet to endorse the West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options (Appendix A) and refer the document to Council for approval for public consultation.
- 2.2 The West Suffolk Preferred Options consultation document has been prepared in three main parts for ease of reading.

Part One – strategic policies sets out the draft local plan vision and objectives and the strategic policies that are the heart of the West Suffolk Local Plan. These set out the council's development strategy establishing our commitment to achieving net zero, adapting to and mitigating for climate change, setting the pattern, scale and quality of development to meet our need in West Suffolk to 2040, and making provision for all types of development, infrastructure, community facilities and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment (where these issues relate to strategic priorities).

Part Two – non-strategic policies contains non-strategic policies. These are locally specific policies that will be used in day-to-day planning decisions (providing more detail on the strategic policies, and providing criteria that proposals are required to comply with).

Part Three – site allocations sets out the preferred site allocations. These include residential, mixed-use and employment site allocations. It also identifies existing employment areas, town centres and local centres.

- 2.3 A series of questions in each section invite comments on whether the right preferred option sites and policy parameters have been identified together with reason why the alternative options were not taken forward.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 The alternative option would be to not progress a new local plan or delay preparation and consultation. This would leave the Council at risk of unplanned, speculative development. As the Government requires West Suffolk to have an up-to-date plan in place, to not progress a local plan in a timely manner would be reputationally damaging and lead to Government intervention to produce a local plan for the district council and remove local decision making. See section 5 below.
- 3.2 In assembling the Preferred Options document, sixteen West Suffolk Local Plan Working Group meetings were held. The working group reviewed the comments received to the previous consultation, national guidance requirements, emerging evidence outcomes and provided a range of thoughts to identify a refined list of policy parameters and sites for consultation. These meetings were to ensure that the preparation of the Council's document was informed by councillors across political groups and where possible, a balance of geographical representation. These meetings fed into the production of the final consultation document (Appendix A) and a programme for consultation and engagement.
- 3.3 The Preferred Options Local Plan document itself considers reasonable alternatives and have provided reasons why policy and site options that were consulted on in the previous Issues and Options consultation have not been taken forward. The consultation also includes a new 'call for sites' which provide alternative options that the Council should consider.
- 3.4 Following this second consultation, the next stage will be to review the comments received and together with evidence and prepare a final local plan (pre-submission consultation), which will be subject to consultation, programmed for May 2023.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 The aim of the consultation and engagement will be to make as many people as possible across West Suffolk aware of the local plan consultation and encourage them to take the opportunity to have their say.
- 4.2 In order to achieve this aim, the Council will use a range of communication tools and channels both traditional and online making most of both virtual and real-life consultation events.
- 4.3 It is proposed to consult on the Preferred Options Local Plan and supporting documents for 8+ weeks from Thursday 26 May to Tuesday 26 July 2022.

- 4.4 The methods include but are not limited to:
- **Branding** - Branding, tone and style will be consistent with that of Issue and Options stage which resonated with people
 - **Virtual** - Exhibition, with display boards, an information table, video and feedback console with a live webchat function to speak to a member of the planning team to understand the consultation documents, ask questions and submit comments
 - **In person** - Alongside the virtual exhibition we will be holding events in each town and key service centre. Dates and timings will be into the evenings and at weekends. This will include displays with officers on hand to answer questions to tell residents the ways in which they can respond using business cards with QR code and weblink to virtual exhibition
 - **Targeted communication/meetings/briefings** – with town and parish councils, statutory consultees, neighbouring authorities, businesses and local groups
 - **Materials** - Posters available in libraries and sports centres and a range of other suitable organisations
 - **Social Media and Media** – Media adverts running weekly. Videos, images, podcasts etc.

- 4.5 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the document which sets out what planning policy documents the Council intends to produce and the timescale for their preparation. A link to the programme for the production of the West Suffolk Local Plan can be found under background documents below.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 Failure to proceed in a timely manner with the preparation of the new local plan through to adoption will leave the authority with a dated local plan, leading to less control over development across the district. West Suffolk would be at high risk of speculative, unsuitable, uncontrolled development. Development and infrastructure needs would be determined on a case-by-case basis rather than a strategically planned approach.
- 5.2 The option not to progress a new local plan would also leave the Council open to reputational damage and likely Government intervention to produce a local plan for the district council. The Council may be left with no control over local decision making until the local plan is completed.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.1 **Financial** – The Local Plan will be progressed through to adoption using existing budgets.

- 6.2 **Legal compliance** – The West Suffolk Local Plan is a statutory development plan. Local plans are prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Preferred Options is a draft document is prepared in accordance with Regulation 18.
- 6.3 **Personal data processing** – Planning Policies’ consultation system is considered to be General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant.
- 6.4 **Equalities** – An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and the consultation and engagement programme recognise that community engagement with all sectors of society is important if we are to prepare an inclusive and forward-thinking local plan.
- 6.5 **Crime and disorder** – The Suffolk Police Force and the Suffolk Police Architectural Liaison Officer were formally consulted as the Issues and Options consultation. Following feedback further engagement was undertaken and policy wording has been amended as a result.
- 6.6 **Environment or sustainability** – The Local Plan plays a central part in terms of supporting the West Suffolk Climate and Environment Emergency themes of creating energy efficient new buildings and protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Supporting documents to the Preferred Options include a Sustainability Appraisal and Environmental Constraints Study.
- 6.7 **Changes to existing policies** - This is the second formal consultation in preparing a new local plan for West Suffolk. Two further rounds of consultation are programmed. Once adopted the new plan and its policies will replace those in the existing development plan.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 **Appendix A:** West Suffolk Local Plan – Preferred Options draft consultation document

Note: Due to the length and filesize of the documents, Appendix A (which is divided into three supplementary packs containing Parts 1, 2 and 3 and their respective appendices) is only available electronically with the agenda papers, at the following link:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday 26 April 2022, 6.00 pm \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Any members wishing to obtain a paper copy, may request a pack directly from Democratic Services.

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 West Suffolk Local Plan consultation and Engagement Strategy
- 8.2 Sustainability Appraisal
- 8.3 Sustainable Settlements Study
- 8.4 Environmental constraints and opportunities study
- 8.5 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)
- 8.6 Local Development Scheme (LDS) Programme for the production of the West Suffolk Local Plan [Supporting information \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)
- 8.7 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (June 2020) [Supporting information \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

Decisions Plan

Report Number CAB/WS/22/020

Key decisions and other executive decisions to be considered

Date: 1 April 2022 to 31 May 2023

Publication date: 25 March 2022

The following plan shows both the key decisions and other decisions/matters taken in private, that the Cabinet, portfolio holders, joint committees or officers under delegated authority, are intending to take up to 31 May 2023. This table is updated on a monthly rolling basis and provides at least 28 clear days' notice of the consideration of any key decisions and of the taking of any items in private.

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

Members of the public may wish to:

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

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

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
2021 to 2022 Municipal Year							
26/04/22 (new) Page 38	<p>West Suffolk Local Plan: Preferred Issues and Options Document for Consultation</p> <p>As part of the West Suffolk Local Plan development process, the Cabinet will be asked to consider, and recommend to Council, approval of the draft Preferred Issues and Options document for consultation. Consultation will commence at the end of May 2022.</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/05/22	Cabinet/ Council	David Roach Planning 07889 510003	<p>Julie Baird Director (Planning and Growth) 01284 757613</p> <p>Marie Smith Service Manager (Strategic Planning) 01638 719260</p>	Report to Cabinet and Council with draft document attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Not before 26/04/22 (new) Page 39	<p>Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP): West Suffolk Council's Local Impact Report</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Planning will be asked to consider and approve West Suffolk Council's Local Impact Report in connection with the Sunnica Energy Farm NSIP project proposals. (Note that this will be a joint Local Impact Report prepared in conjunction with Suffolk County Council,</p>	Not applicable	PH (KD) (e) (i)	Portfolio Holder for Planning	David Roach Planning 07889 510003	<p>Julie Baird Director (Planning and Growth) 01284 757613</p> <p>Julie Barrow Principal Planning Officer 01284 757621</p>	Briefing note/report to Portfolio Holder for Planning and draft Local Impact Report.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	East Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.)						
2022 to 2023 Municipal Year							
24/05/22 (new)	Review and Appointment to Cabinet Panel/Working Groups/Joint Committee The Cabinet will be asked to review its membership and appoint to its Panel/Working Groups/Joint Committee. It will also consider the establishment of any	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	John Griffiths Leader of the Council 01284 757001	Jen Eves Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) 01284 757015 Teresa Halliday Service Manager (Legal and Governance) 01284 757144	Report to Cabinet.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	new Panels/Working Groups.						
21/06/22 (new) Page 41	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.
21/06/22 (new)	Workforce Strategy The Cabinet will be asked to approve the Workforce Strategy 2022 to 2024.	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Carol Bull Governance 01953 681513	Jen Eves Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) 01284 757015 Wendy Canham Service Manager	Report to Cabinet with draft strategy attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 12						(Human Resources and Organisational Development) 01284 757006	
19/07/22 (new)	West Suffolk Annual Report 2021 to 2022 The Cabinet will be asked to consider and approve the West Suffolk Annual Report 2021 to 2022, which will previously have been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	John Griffiths Leader of the Council 01284 757001	Ian Gallin Chief Executive 01284 757001	Report to Cabinet with Annual Report attached.
20/09/22 (new)	Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience	Not applicable	(R) – Council 27/09/22	Cabinet / Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and	Recommendations of the Performance and

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 43	<p>Report (2021 to 2022) The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report for 2021 to 2022.</p>				Property 07929 305787	Property) 01638 719245	Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
20/09/22 (new)	<p>Treasury Management Report – June 2022 The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 27/09/22	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 44	the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2022 and 30 June 2022.						Council.
20/09/22 (new)	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.
08/11/22	Council Tax Base for Tax Setting	Not applicable	(R) – Council 13/12/22	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton	Rachael Mann Director	Report to Cabinet with recommend-

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
(new) Page 45	Purposes 2023 to 2024 The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council the basis of the formal calculation for the Council Tax Base for West Suffolk Council for the financial year 2023 to 2024.				Resources and Property 07929 305787	(Resources and Property) 01638 719245	ations to Council.
08/11/22 (new)	Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023 to 2024 The Cabinet will be asked to consider proposals for potential revisions to the Local Council Tax	Not applicable	(R) – Council 13/12/22	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	Reduction Scheme prior to seeking its approval by Council.						
06/12/22 (new)	<p>Delivering a Sustainable Medium-Term Budget</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2023 to 2024 and in the medium term.</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 13/12/22	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
06/12/22 (new) Page 47	Treasury Management Report – September 2022 The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2022 and 30 September 2022.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 13/12/22	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
06/12/22 (new)	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.						
07/202/23 Page 18 (new)	<p>Community Chest and Theatre Royal Grants 2023 to 2024</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the West Suffolk Grant Working Party in respect of the levels of funding (if any) to be awarded to applicants to the Community Chest funding scheme for 2023 to 2024.</p> <p>The report containing the above</p>	Not applicable	(KD)	Cabinet	<p>Robert Everitt Families and Communities 01284 769000</p> <p>Joanna Rayner Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs (for Theatre Royal core funding grant only) 07872 456836</p>	<p>Davina Howes Director (Families and Communities) 01284 757070</p> <p>Alex Wilson Strategic Director (for Theatre Royal core funding grant only) 01284 757695</p>	Recommendations of the West Suffolk Grant Working Party, and a separate recommendation regarding the granting of core funding to the Theatre Royal, to Cabinet.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 49	recommendations will also include separate consideration of a core funding grant to the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds for 2023 to 2024.						
07/02/23 (new)	<p>Delivering a Sustainable Medium-Term Budget</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a</p>	Not applicable	<p>(R) – Council 21/02/23</p> <p>Unless separate proposals are recommended by Cabinet, consideration by Council will</p>	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 50 07/02/23 (new)	sustainable budget in 2023 to 2024 and in the medium term.		take place as part of the budget setting paper on 21/02/23				
	<p>Budget and Council Tax Setting 2023 to 2024 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 to 2027</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the proposals for the 2023 to 2024 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 to 2027 for West Suffolk Council, prior to its approval</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 21/02/23	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 5	by Council. This report includes the Minimum Revenues Provision (MRP) Policy and Prudential Indicators.						
07/2023 (new)	<p>Financial Resilience - Strategy Statement 2023 to 2024 and Treasury Management Code of Practice</p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, approval of the Strategy Statement 2023 to 2024 and Treasury Management Code of Practice for West</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 21/02/23	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	Suffolk Council, which must be undertaken before the start of each financial year.						
07/02/23 (new)	Treasury Management Report – December 2022 The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2022 and 31 December 2022.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 21/02/23	Cabinet/ Council	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
14/03/23 (new) Page 53	Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD)	Cabinet	Sarah Broughton Resources and Property 07929 305787	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.

Note 1: Definition of exempt information and relevant paragraphs of the Local Government Act 1972

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

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

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

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

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

Note 2: Key decision definition

A key decision is an executive decision that either:

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

Note 3: Membership of bodies making key decisions

a. Membership of West Suffolk Council's Cabinet and their portfolios

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

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

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

Jennifer Eves
Director (Human Resources, Governance and Regulatory)
Date: 25 March 2022

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