


Council



Title	Agenda
Date	Tuesday 14 June 2022
Time	7.00 pm
Venue	Conference Chamber West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds
Membership	<p>All Councillors</p> <p>You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to transact the business on the agenda set out below.</p>  <p>Ian Gallin Chief Executive 6 June 2022</p>
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	One third of the Council (22 members)
Committee administrator	<p>Claire Skoyles Democratic Services Officer Telephone 01284 757176 / 07776 254986 Email claire.skoyles@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p>

Venue	Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds
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 may put questions about the work of the Council or make statements on items on the agenda to members of the Cabinet or any committee. A total of 30 minutes will be set aside for this with each person limited to asking one question or making one statement within a maximum time allocation of five minutes. 30 minutes will also be set aside for questions at extraordinary meetings of the Council, but must be limited to the business to be transacted at that meeting.</p> <p>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. We 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>
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

	Pages
1. Minutes	1 - 24
To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 22 March 2022 and 17 May 2022 (annual and extraordinary meetings of Council) (copies attached).	
2. Chair's announcements	25 - 26
To receive announcements (if any) from the Chair.	
A list of civic events/engagements attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair since their election at the Annual Meeting of Council on 17 May 2022 are attached .	
3. Apologies for absence	
To receive announcements (if any) from the officer advising the Chair (including apologies for absence).	
4. Declarations of interests	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	

Part 1 – public

5. Leader's statement

Paper number: **COU/WS/22/011 TO FOLLOW**

Council Procedure Rules 8.1 to 8.3. The Leader will submit a report (the Leader's Statement) summarising important developments and activities since the preceding meeting of the council.

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

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

6. Public participation

Council Procedure Rules Section 6. Members of the public who live or work in the district may put questions about the work of the council or make statements on items on the agenda to members of the Cabinet or any committee.

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

Each person may ask **one** question or make **one** statement only. A total of **five minutes will be allowed for the question to be put and answered or the statement made.** If a question is raised, one supplementary question will be allowed provided that it **arises directly from the reply and the overall time limit of five minutes is not exceeded.**

If a statement is made, then the Chair may allow the Leader of the Council, or other member to whom they refer the matter, a right of reply.

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. **We 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.**

As an alternative to addressing the meeting in person, **written questions** may be submitted by members of the public to the Monitoring Officer **no later than 10am on Monday 13 June 2022.** The written notification should **detail the full question** to be asked at the meeting of the Council.

7. Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

The last meeting of Cabinet arranged for 24 May 2022 was cancelled, therefore on this occasion, there are no referrals emanating from Cabinet.

8. Review of political balance and appointment to committees 2022 to 2023 **27 - 34**

Report number: **COU/WS/22/012**

9. West Suffolk Annual Scrutiny Report 2021 to 2022 **35 - 44**

Paragraph 7.5.1 of Article 7 of the Council’s Constitution requires that:

‘The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the Council on

their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate’.

Report number: **COU/WS/22/013**

10. Any other urgent business

To consider any business, which by reason of special circumstances, should in the opinion of the Chair be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Part 2 – exempt

None

Council



Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held on **Tuesday 22 March 2022** at **6.30 pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present **Councillors**

Chair Margaret Marks
Vice Chair Mike Chester

Richard Alecock	Brian Harvey	Karen Richardson
Michael Anderson	Ian Houlder	David Roach
Sarah Broughton	Paul Hopfensperger	Ian Shipp
Tony Brown	Beccy Hopfensperger	Andrew Smith
Patrick Chung	Aaron Luccarini	Karen Soons
Max Clarke	Victor Lukaniuk	Clive Springett
Nick Clarke	Birgitte Mager	Lance Stanbury
Jason Crooks	Elaine McManus	Peter Stevens
Dawn Dicker	Sara Mildmay-White	Peter Thompson
Roger Dicker	Andy Neal	Jim Thorndyke
Andy Drummond	David Nettleton	Don Waldron
Stephen Frost	Robert Nobbs	Cliff Waterman
Susan Glossop	Colin Noble	Nick Wiseman
John Griffiths	David Palmer	Phil Wittam
Pat Hanlon	Sarah Pugh	

191. **Welcome and introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all persons present in the Conference Chamber. She explained the rationale behind the 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.

192. **Minutes**

Councillor Paul Hopfensperger made reference to Minute 187. 'Budget and Council Tax Setting 2022 to 2023 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022 to 2026' with specific reference to (c) 'Swimming pool provision in the proposed new leisure centre (as part of the Western Way Development)'. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the accuracy of the text used to minute this element of the debate.

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

193. **Chair's announcements**

The Chair reported on the civic engagements and charity activities which she and the Vice-Chair had attended since the last ordinary meeting of Council on 22 February 2022.

Attention was drawn to an engagement recently attended by the Chair with representatives of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA). She provided background to the organisation, with particular reference given to their work in helping to reinstate veterans that had been in prison back into the community.

Veterans, serving members of the armed forces and their family members could access help and support by contacting the SSAFA Forces Helpline number (0800 731 4880). The Chair urged councillors to record the helpline number should they come across the aforementioned and may be in need of help.

(Councillor Karen Soons joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

194. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Augustine, Trevor Beckwith, Mick Bradshaw, Simon Brown, Carol Bull, John Burns, Simon Cole, Robert Everitt, Diane Hind, Rachel Hood, James Lay, Joe Mason, Jo Rayner, Marion Rushbrook, David Smith, Sarah Stamp and Julia Wakelam.

Councillor Richard Rout was also unable to attend the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Richard Alecock to the meeting, who had returned after a recent spell of ill health. She then paid tribute to Councillor Bradshaw who remained significantly unwell. Members joined the Chair in wishing him well in his recovery.

(Councillor Andrew Smith joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

195. **Declarations of interests**

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

196. **Leader's statement (Paper number: COU/WS/22/006)**

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, presented his Leader's Statement as outlined in paper number: COU/WS/22/006.

In his introductory remarks, Councillor Griffiths:

- a. **War in Ukraine:** acknowledged the atrocities of recent events in Ukraine and paid tribute to the refugees, their families and those affected by the catastrophe. Later in his introductory remarks,

Councillor Griffiths provided further details on the Government's recently announced 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. Initial guidance had been received with more expected in the coming weeks; however, it was anticipated that together with Suffolk County Council and other partners, West Suffolk Council would have a vital role in supporting the operation of this scheme.

- b. **COVID-19:** that whilst restrictions were being eased, the virus remained prevalent: however, in most cases, those that had tested positive were experiencing less severe harm to their health. Members and staff that were currently suffering from COVID-19 were wished a speedy recovery.
- c. **Monthly newsletter:** the second monthly 'Your West Suffolk update' newsletter had been circulated to members during the previous week. The newsletter had primarily been introduced to support councillors in their own wider communications to local communities and businesses about the Council's activities.
- d. **Sunnica Energy Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) proposals:** the Council's draft Relevant Representation on these proposals was considered and approved by Cabinet at its meeting held at the Mildenhall Hub on 15 March 2022. The Council had a strong commitment to the provision of green energy, not only as owners of a solar farm but also recently approving in February 2022, a £9 million net zero carbon budget investment facility. However, the Cabinet acknowledged the serious concerns with the proposed Sunnica Energy Farm application, as it was currently presented. Such concerns were provided in the Cabinet report (Report number: CAB/WS/22/012) and also by the several ward members that had attended the meeting to convey the views of residents they represented, many of whom felt strongly adversely affected by the proposals.
- e. **LGC Awards 2022:** Suffolk County Council with the Suffolk Office for Data Analytics (SODA) had been shortlisted for a nationally recognised LGC award for its 'Data Saves Lives' project which aimed to help, support and protect those most vulnerable during the pandemic. Sources of data from a range of partners, including West Suffolk Council, had been brought together in order to identify those residents that were most vulnerable, and potentially in need of help during lockdown. This had led to the creation of the 'Home But Not Alone' initiative, which was an excellent example of how the collaborative working of the Suffolk System operated extremely effectively.

The Leader responded to a range of questions relating to:

- a. **'Homes for Ukraine' scheme:** if accepted to host a Ukraine household within their home, those in receipt of the single occupier discount on council tax would continue to receive it.
- b. **Investing in growth:** in the context of thanking Councillor Sarah Broughton, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property, for her recent

visit to Brandon, and with reference to paragraph 19. of his statement, the Leader was asked whether the Council could consider allocating an investment towards the restoration of the railway station building in Brandon. In response, Councillor Griffiths, supported by Councillor Broughton, informed Council of the recent investments in Brandon, including the refurbishment to the leisure centre and the support provided to the MENTA business hub. Brandon was faced with significant challenges which had impacted growth (see e. below); however, the Council would continue striving to progress appropriate growth, where possible.

- c. **Sick pay:** In the context of rising infection rates of COVID-19 and hospitalisations, Councillor Max Clarke asked whether all staff at West Suffolk Council received proper employment sick pay or statutory sick pay only, and if the former, whether this applied to contracted maintenance and housekeeping staff. In response, Councillor Griffiths stated that a written reply would be provided, which would be circulated to all members.
- d. **Christmas Fayre:** That a partnership comprising a range of organisations were working together to provide a variation on the Christmas Fayre that had traditionally been held in Bury St Edmunds prior to the pandemic. The Council was one of many partners involved, which meant it was no longer the lead organising body. Similar events would be welcomed for other West Suffolk towns and rural villages alongside the commitment and financial support of partners. Partnership working was also an integral part of supporting 'the high street' in its recovery from the effects of COVID-19.
- e. **West Suffolk Local Plan - Brandon:** That discussions were being held with Natural England regarding the environmental restrictions in place that affected development growth in Brandon. Extensive lobbying was being undertaken with a view to seeking, amongst other matters, a compromise on the depth of the buffer zone currently in place.
- f. **General Practice health service provision in Mildenhall:** Councillor Don Waldron asked a question in connection with whether there was any further news on a GP practice moving into the Mildenhall Hub, as was mooted when it was agreed to be built.

Upon invitation by the Chair, Councillor Lance Stanbury informed Council that the Reynard Surgery GP practice based in Red Lodge, had a second surgery in Mildenhall town centre (White House surgery). Pre-COVID and following a period of consultation with patients, the practice was intending to move that operation into the Mildenhall Hub. However, whilst this was encouraged by the Council, the practice, as a private sector organisation with its own challenges to overcome, particularly around the impact of COVID-19, reviewed its plans. This included reviewing how the practice considered they could deliver health and care services more effectively and efficiently. It consequently decided to consolidate all its services under one roof at Red Lodge. This meant provision of a satellite service was not pursued at the Hub and the decision was taken to close its White House surgery.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Waldron asked whether the opportunity should have been taken to ensure the practice was tied in by contract to relocate the White House surgery to the Hub. In response, Councillor Griffiths stated that a written reply would be provided, which would be circulated to all members.

197. **Public participation**

The following members of the public spoke under this agenda item:

1. **James Sheen** asked a question in connection with the costs required to run the Haverhill Business Improvement District (BID) process and ballot, and whether the Council would attempt to force a BID into Haverhill or any other West Suffolk towns in the future and therefore, be required to spend similar amounts to operate future BID ballots.

In response, Councillor Susan Glossop, Portfolio Holder for Growth, stated that the BID process in Haverhill was not initiated by West Suffolk Council. The BID proposal was a business led initiative which accorded with the Council's aim to put local decisions in the hands of local businesses. It was not in the Council's gift to impose a BID. Once the process had been initiated by local businesses, it was the Council's legal duty to then facilitate a fair ballot and allow the businesses eligible to vote to decide.

The funding spent on the BID campaign and ballot was not sought to be recouped and this would apply to whether the vote to establish a BID was successful or not.

Councillor Glossop then provided further detail on the Council's position regarding its role with the establishment and operation of BIDs and provided information to mitigate potential misconceptions around this.

As the maximum five-minute time allocation for the question to be put and answered had been reached, no supplementary question arising directly from the reply was asked.

2. **Rob Dorling** had registered to speak on behalf of West Suffolk taxi drivers. He asked a question in connection with the seeking of fare increases for Hackney Carriage drivers in West Suffolk. He stated that the Licensing and Regulatory (L&R) Committee had not met in over two years and sought the convening of an extraordinary (L&R) Committee meeting to consider proposals for an emergency fare increase, providing background and the rationale for his question.

In response, Councillor Andy Drummond, Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Environment, firstly acknowledged the valuable key role taxis played in supporting the night time economy and vulnerable people in West Suffolk's communities. The challenges associated with the rising cost of living that faced many in the community was also recognised.

A review of fares was in hand and a report was due to be presented to the L&R Committee in July 2022 for a decision to be made. Some benchmarking had however, already been undertaken in respect of how West Suffolk fares

compared with other districts across the county in the last six months and, notwithstanding the recent fare review in Ipswich, West Suffolk's Hackney Carriage fares were not any lower than those in other local authorities. The Council did not oversee or have any influence regarding the setting of private hire vehicle fees.

While an extraordinary meeting of the Committee could be convened to consider substantive business in-between diarised meetings, it was considered that the request for a fare review was already being responded to in a timely manner and an extraordinary meeting was therefore, not required.

Councillor Drummond then explained that since the creation of West Suffolk Council in 2019, the L&R Committee had met regularly on an informal basis as no decisions had needed to be made. He then reiterated the purpose and remit of the L&R Committee; and the decision making process associated with licensing and regulatory matters and how the public was able to participate in this. These matters were set out in the Constitution, which could be found on the Council's website.

As the maximum five-minute time allocation for the question to be put and answered had been reached, no supplementary question arising directly from the reply was asked.

The Chair thanked Mr Sheen and Mr Dorling for attending and welcomed their presence for the remainder of the meeting should they wish to do so.

198. Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

Council noted that there were no referrals emanating from the Cabinet meeting held on 15 March 2022.

199. Community Governance Review (Report number: COU/WS/22/007)

(The following local non-pecuniary interests were declared in this item:

1. Councillors Michael Anderson and Andy Drummond as members of Newmarket Town Council.
2. Councillors Tony Brown, Pat Hanlon, Aaron Luccarini, Margaret Marks, Elaine McManus and David Roach members of Haverhill Town Council.
3. Councillors Patrick Chung, Peter Thompson and Cliff Waterman as members of Bury St Edmunds Town Council.
4. Councillor Brian Harvey as ward member for Manor Ward. Councillor Harvey had been in discussions with both Red Lodge and Worlington Parish Councils on this matter.

All members remained in the meeting for consideration of the item and voted.)

Council considered this report, which sought approval for draft recommendations for consultation as part of the interim Community Governance Review (CGR).

On behalf of Councillor Carol Bull, Portfolio Holder for Governance, who was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting, Councillor Sara Mildmay-White, Deputy Leader, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council. She thanked the Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group for their work on the review so far and extended her thanks to members, town and parish councils and other groups that had engaged with the process to date.

Following submissions received as a result of invitations requested as part of stage one of the CGR process, ten issues were presented for consideration, as summarised in section 2.3 of the report. The submissions received were used to prepare draft recommendations for consultation, as contained in Appendix A.

Following consideration by the Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group on 18 January 2022, the draft recommendations were now presented to Council. Subject to approval, consultation would commence between April and June 2022.

Members noted that there was not currently a consensus among stakeholders in relation to some of the issues. However, testing the recommendation during consultation would assist the Council with its decision on final recommendations in September 2022.

In addition, it was noted that there were some draft recommendations that, if adopted, would require a consequential amendment to the district ward to ensure ongoing coterminosity of governance arrangements at parish, district and county level. This would ensure effective and convenient local governance.

A discussion was held on Issue 4, which sought to extend the boundary of Bury St Edmunds parish to include the Lark Grange housing development, which was currently located within Rushbrooke with Rougham parish, as detailed in Appendix A. Lark Grange was located in the district ward of Moreton Hall.

Councillor Peter Thompson, one of the ward members for Moreton Hall, firstly wished to place his thanks on record to officers for their excellent knowledge and support with the CGR process. Councillor Thompson provided background to the submission and urged Council to support the draft recommendation for consultation. Whilst not part of this CGR, he also commented on the appropriateness of Suffolk Business Park falling within Rushbrooke with Rougham parish as he felt this was better placed within Bury St Edmunds parish given its affiliation to the Moreton Hall ward. Councillor Thompson also expressed his support for the draft recommendation emanating from Issue 1, which related to the proposed combining of Bury St Edmunds (Out Westgate) town ward and Bury St Edmunds (Westgate) town ward so that a single town ward of Westgate remained.

Councillor Birgitte Mager, one of the other ward members for Moreton Hall, supported the comments of Councillor Thompson, stating that it was a view of the Moreton Hall Residents' Association that the Bury St Edmunds parish boundary should be extended to fully align with the Moreton Hall ward district boundary, so that any household or business located within the boundary

annotated in orange on the map at Appendix A was in Moreton Hall ward and Bury St Edmunds parish.

Councillor Brian Harvey, ward member for Manor, sought support for the draft recommendation set out in Issue 9.

On the motion of Councillor Mildmay-White, seconded by Councillor David Roach, it was put to the vote, and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That:

1. the draft recommendations, as set out in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/007, be approved for consultation.
2. The Director for HR, Governance and Regulatory be authorised to prepare the draft recommendations for consultation, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
3. The Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group be authorised to amend draft recommendations and re-consult where necessary.
4. The Chief Executive be asked to write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBEC) to request their support with any consequential changes to district warding arrangements ahead of the elections in May 2023.

200. Pay Policy Statement 2022 to 2023 (Report number: COU/WS/22/008)

Council considered this report, which sought approval for the Pay Policy Statement 2022 to 2023.

The Localism Act 2011 and supporting guidance provided details of matters that must be included in this statutory pay policy, but, also, emphasised that each local authority had the autonomy to take its own decisions on pay and pay policies. The Pay Policy Statement must be approved formally by Council each year. The statement could be amended in year, must be published on the Council's website and must be complied with when setting the terms and conditions of Chief Officers.

Set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, were details of what was included in the Pay Policy Statement 2022 to 2023, which was attached at Appendix A.

In the absence of Councillor Carol Bull, Portfolio Holder for Governance, Councillor Sarah Broughton, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council.

On the motion of Councillor Broughton, seconded by Councillor Nick Clarke, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2022 to 2023, as contained in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/008, be approved.

201. New Model Code of Conduct (Report number: COU/WS/22/009)

Council considered this report, which sought adoption of the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct as its new local Code of Conduct for councillors.

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on every council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members of the authority and, in discharging that duty, adopt a code dealing with the conduct that was expected of those members when they were acting in that capacity. A Suffolk-wide local code of conduct was adopted by the councils in 2012.

In January 2019, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) published a report following their review of local authority standards. This review had concluded that a model code of conduct would create consistency across England and reflected the common expectations of the public, regardless of geography or tier. It would also reduce the potential for confusion amongst dual-hatted or triple-hatted councillors. The CSPL also considered that matters such as gifts and hospitality, social media use and bullying and harassment had also increased in salience and where, perhaps, not regularly reflected in local authority codes of conduct and a model code would help to ensure that they did so.

The report directed a series of recommendations to the Government and to the local government sector. A key recommendation was directed to the LGA to create an updated model code of conduct, in consultation with representative bodies of councillors and officers of all tiers of local government. Consequently, the LGA approved a Model Councillor Code of Conduct in December 2020, which provided a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

The Code (attached to the report at Appendix A) contained much of the existing Suffolk Local Code of Conduct and provided welcome guidance to explain the rationale for the obligations and how councillors should follow them. The LGA had also published more extensive guidance that would assist councillors and the public in understanding the Code and what was included. Moving forward, the LGA had committed to undertake an annual review of the Code to ensure it continued to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation.

The Suffolk Monitoring Officers Group strongly recommended that there continued to be a Suffolk-wide code of conduct to enable clarity and consistency across the county and particularly across the tiers of local government where councillors represented more than one authority. The district council Monitoring Officer was responsible for investigating breaches of the code of conduct by town and parish councillors across the whole district and the ability to apply a single code to all complaints was desirable. The

Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) was also supportive of a Suffolk-wide code.

The key differences between the existing code and the LGA's Model Code of Conduct were summarised in Report number: COU/WS/22/009, and these had been previously considered by the West Suffolk Standards Committee and the Constitution Review Group. Both forums had been content to recommend approval of the proposed new Code with effect from the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2022.

In the absence of Councillor Carol Bull, Portfolio Holder for Governance, Councillor Sara Mildmay-White, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council.

A discussion was held on the manner in which councillors should conduct themselves when posting on social media; and the use of the term 'promote' as described in paragraph 2.3 of the model Code in respect of the following sentence.... '*I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person*', and whether this was an appropriate use of terminology.

In response, Council was informed that the LGA would be offering support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code, and therefore issues of concern or where clarification was sought on specific matters could be discussed as part of the training programme. Advice and support to town and parish councils would also be provided by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) together with local associations of local councils, which in Suffolk's case was SALC. A training package in Suffolk was expected to commence from March 2022, starting with offering support and guidance to county, then district through to town and parish councillors.

On the motion of Councillor Mildmay-White, duly seconded by Councillor Jim Thorndyke, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That the Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct, as contained in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/009, be adopted as its new Local Code of Conduct for Councillors, with effect from the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2022.

(Councillors David Nettleton and Robert Nobbs left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

202. Any other urgent business

There were no matters of urgent business considered on this occasion.

The meeting concluded at 7.48 pm

Signed by:

Chair

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Annual Council

Minutes of the **Annual Meeting** of **Council** held on **Tuesday 17 May 2022** at **7.00 pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present **Councillors**

Chair Margaret Marks

Vice Chair Mike Chester

Richard Alecock	Brian Harvey	Richard Rout
Michael Anderson	Rachel Hood	Marion Rushbrook
John Augustine	Ian Houlder	Ian Shipp
Sarah Broughton	Paul Hopfensperger	Andrew Smith
Simon Brown	Beccy Hopfensperger	David Smith
Tony Brown	James Lay	Karen Soons
Carol Bull	Victor Lukaniuk	Clive Springett
Patrick Chung	Birgitte Mager	Sarah Stamp
Nick Clarke	Joe Mason	Lance Stanbury
Simon Cole	Sara Mildmay-White	Peter Stevens
Dawn Dicker	Andy Neal	Peter Thompson
Roger Dicker	David Nettleton	Jim Thorndyke
Andy Drummond	Robert Nobbs	Julia Wakelam
Robert Everitt	Colin Noble	Don Waldron
Stephen Frost	David Palmer	Cliff Waterman
Susan Glossop	Joanna Rayner	Phil Wittam
John Griffiths	Karen Richardson	
Pat Hanlon	David Roach	

203. **Welcome and introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all persons present in the Conference Chamber. She explained the rationale behind the 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.

(Councillor Paul Hopfensperger left the meeting during the consideration of this item and returned during the consideration of agenda item 4.)

204. **Election of Chair of the Council for 2022 to 2023**

The outgoing Chair called for nominations for the election of Chair for the 2022 to 2023 civic year.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, nominated Councillor Mike Chester, which was duly seconded by Councillor Robert Everitt.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor Mike Chester be elected Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2022 to 2023 civic year.

The retiring Chair acknowledged her year in office. Councillor Marks paid tribute to fellow councillors, officers, volunteers in the community particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and the work of the charities she had chosen to support during her term of office. Special recognition was given to Ruth Pusterla, Personal Assistant to the Civic Office and to Councillor Mike Chester, Vice Chair for 2021 to 2022.

Councillor Marks then invited Councillor Chester to apply the Chain of Office and take the chair. The incoming Chair signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

205. Chair's announcements

The Chair acknowledged his forthcoming year in office, which included graciously thanking fellow councillors for his appointment and announcing the charity he wished to support during 2022 to 2023, namely, the GeeWizz Charitable Foundation, a small low cost charity founded in 2015 and based in Fornham St Martin, Bury St Edmunds. Their mission was to support children and young adults, across Suffolk and Norfolk, who were learning disabled or neurodivergent, had a life-limiting illness or cancer, as well as supporting Sarcoma Cancer research and many capital projects.

The Chair then welcomed members to formally join him in paying tribute to the retiring Chair, Councillor Margaret Marks, for her outstanding contribution and dedicated service to the Council during her term of office in 2021 to 2022, and prior to that as Vice Chair for two years following the creation of West Suffolk Council on 1 April 2019.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council; together with Councillor Ian Shipp, Leader of the Independent Group; and on behalf of Councillor Diane Hind, Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor David Smith, each paid their own tribute to Councillor Marks.

The Chair then presented Councillor Marks with her Past Chair's Badge.

206. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Trevor Beckwith, Mick Bradshaw, John Burns, Max Clarke, Jason Crooks, Diane Hind, Elaine McManus, Sarah Pugh and Nick Wiseman.

Councillor Aaron Luccarini was also unable to attend the meeting.

The Chair reported with great sadness that Cliff Hind, husband of Councillor Diane Hind, and former Bury St Edmunds Town Councillor, had very recently

died. Members joined Councillor Chester in expressing their deepest sympathies to Councillor Hind, and their family and friends during this extremely difficult time.

207. Election of Vice Chair of the Council for 2022 to 2023

The Chair nominated Councillor John Augustine for the election of Vice Chair for the 2022 to 2023 civic year, which was duly seconded by Councillor Richard Rout.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor John Augustine be elected Vice Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2022 to 2023 civic year.

The Chair invited Councillor Augustine to apply the Chain of Office and acknowledge his year in office. Councillor Augustine then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing it to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

(Councillor Paul Hopfensperger returned to the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

208. Appointment of Cabinet members

The Chair called upon Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council to make his announcements.

Councillor Griffiths began by thanking his fellow portfolio holders for their sterling work and continued support before paying tribute to Councillor Sara Mildmay-White who had decided to step down from her role as Deputy Leader of the Council for reasons fully supported by Councillor Griffiths.

Councillor Griffiths thanked Councillor Mildmay-White profusely for her friendship, wise counsel and insightfulness, which together with the care and commitment she had for West Suffolk's communities, had made her an outstanding deputy leader, role model and a champion for all of the district.

Not only had she served as Deputy Leader but also Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Health. A challenging role to do on its own, but one she excelled in. This included reducing rough sleeping, helping prevent people becoming homeless and overseeing the Council's successful Barley Homes company which was building and selling homes, creating affordable homes and income for the Council.

Whilst stepping down as Deputy Leader, Councillor Griffiths was delighted to announce that Councillor Mildmay-White would continue in her role as Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Health.

Councillor Griffiths then announced the role of Deputy Leader would be a joint appointment of Councillors Sarah Broughton and Joanna Rayner. Both Councillors Broughton and Rayner would also continue in their roles as Portfolio Holders for Resources and Property, and Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs respectively.

No further changes would be made to the Cabinet at this stage, which was duly noted by Council.

Upon invitation by the Leader and duly called upon by the Chair, Councillor Sara Mildmay-White placed her thanks on record to the Leader for his and her fellow councillors' faith in her for the significant number of years she had been appointed as Deputy Leader for both West Suffolk Council and the former St Edmundsbury Borough Council. She felt it was a huge privilege to not only serve as Deputy Leader, but also to support West Suffolk's communities in her role as portfolio holder and as a councillor. She was delighted to support both Councillors Broughton and Rayner in their appointment as joint Deputy Leaders, and very much looked forward to continuing her role as Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Health.

209. **Review of the political balance and appointment to committees 2022 to 2023 (Report number: AGM/WS/22/001)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval for the political balance and the allocation of seats to committees for 2022 to 2023.

Members confirmed that they had received copies of the report which had been circulated following the distribution of the agenda for the meeting.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that the Constitution required that at each Annual Meeting, Council would decide which committees to establish for the municipal year, the size and terms of reference for those committees, the allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules and to receive or arrange the delegation of nominations and appointment of councillors to serve on each committee.

Committees and the terms of reference for those committees were included in Part 3b, section 2 of the Council's Constitution. A link to this could be found within paragraph 2.2 of the report.

Following careful consideration of the rules on calculating political balance, Council was requested to approve the number of seats and terms of reference for the committees. This included an amendment to increase the membership of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to a total of 13 members. This amendment was proposed following a review and careful calculation of the political balance and overall distribution of seats.

On the motion of Councillor Griffiths, duly seconded by Councillor Carol Bull, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved: That

1. The Committees for the 2022 to 2023 municipal year and the terms of reference for those committees as per the West Suffolk Council Constitution, Part 3b, section 2: "Responsibility for Council (non-executive) Functions", be approved.
2. An increase to the membership of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to a total of 13 members, be approved.
3. The political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes on Committees as per Appendix A to Report number: AGM/WS/22/001, be approved.
4. Delegation be given for Group Leaders to nominate members from their Groups to seats and as substitutes on Committees.

210. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of scrutiny committees**

The next item of business was the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny and Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees for the 2022 to 2023 municipal year.

a. Appointment of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor John Griffiths nominated Councillor Ian Shipp as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which was duly seconded by Councillor Margaret Marks.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor Ian Shipp be elected Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2022 to 2023.

b. Appointment of Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor John Griffiths nominated Councillor Stephen Frost as Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which was duly seconded by Councillor Ian Shipp.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor Stephen Frost be elected Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2022 to 2023.

c. Appointment of Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Councillor John Griffiths nominated Councillor Ian Houlder as Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, which was duly seconded by Councillor Victor Lukaniuk.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor Ian Houlder be elected Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2022 to 2023.

d. Appointment of Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Councillor John Griffiths nominated Councillor Karen Richardson as Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, which was duly seconded by Councillor Andrew Smith.

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

Resolved:

That Councillor Karen Richardson be elected Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2022 to 2023.

211. Representation on outside bodies 2022 to 2023 (Report number: AGM/WS/22/002)

Council considered this report, which sought approval for various member appointments to represent the Council on outside bodies in 2022 to 2023.

Members confirmed that they had received copies of the report which had been circulated following the distribution of the agenda for the meeting.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that the Constitution required that at each Annual Meeting, the Council reviewed its representations on outside bodies.

Following the election in 2019 a comprehensive process was undertaken to review the Council's representation and all members had an opportunity to submit to the Group Leader if they would like to serve on an outside body. The Monitoring Officer confirmed the appointments based on those nominations.

It was expected and anticipated that in most cases, if not all, the current appointments at Appendix A to the report would continue. However, should councillors or Group Leaders wish to review appointments, delegated

authority was sought for the Monitoring Officer to confirm those appointments following consultation with the Group Leaders.

Councillor Griffiths also drew attention to the rationale behind each of the other recommendations contained in the report before highlighting an administrative error to the listing in Appendix A with regards to the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel. Notification had recently been received from Suffolk County Council that West Suffolk Council was entitled to two 'full' members on this Panel and up to two substitutes, as appropriate, which inadvertently had inaccurately been reflected in Appendix A. The representatives would be confirmed with the County Council following the meeting.

With this amendment, on the motion of Councillor Griffiths, duly seconded by Councillor Sarah Broughton, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved: That

1. The Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to appoint the Council's representatives on outside bodies, in accordance with the nominations put forward by relevant Group Leaders, or the nominated body, or the individual listed, as detailed in Appendix A to Report number: AGM/WS/22/002.
2. Where no representative is nominated, the Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to seek nominations from other bodies and individuals, to be approved by Council in due course.
3. It be noted that where the outside organisation is discharging executive functions, or the Council is an observer on an organisation, these appointments will be made by Cabinet.
4. It be noted that it is intended to continue to review representation on outside bodies to ensure that it remains beneficial for the organisation and for the Council.
5. It be noted that the nominations to the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee, be proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for subsequent confirmation by Council.

The meeting concluded at 7.38 pm

Signed by:

Chair

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Extraordinary Council

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the **Council** held on **Tuesday 17 May 2022** at **7.50pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present

Councillors

Chair Mike Chester

Vice Chair John Augustine

Richard Alecock
Michael Anderson
Simon Brown
Tony Brown
Carol Bull
Patrick Chung
Nick Clarke
Simon Cole
Dawn Dicker
Roger Dicker
Andy Drummond
Robert Everitt
Stephen Frost
Susan Glossop
John Griffiths
Pat Hanlon
Brian Harvey

Rachel Hood
Ian Houlder
Paul Hopfensperger
Beccy Hopfensperger
James Lay
Victor Lukaniuk
Birgitte Mager
Margaret Marks
Joe Mason
Sara Mildmay-White
Andy Neal
Robert Nobbs
Colin Noble
David Palmer
Joanna Rayner
Karen Richardson
David Roach

Richard Rout
Marion Rushbrook
Ian Shipp
Andrew Smith
David Smith
Clive Springett
Sarah Stamp
Lance Stanbury
Peter Stevens
Peter Thompson
Jim Thorndyke
Julia Wakelam
Don Waldron
Cliff Waterman
Phil Wittam

212. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Trevor Beckwith, Mick Bradshaw, Sarah Broughton, John Burns, Max Clarke, Jason Crooks, Diane Hind, Elaine McManus, David Nettleton, Sarah Pugh, Karen Soons and Nick Wiseman.

Councillor Aaron Luccarini was also unable to attend the meeting.

213. Declarations of interests

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

214. Public participation

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

215. **Referral from Cabinet: West Suffolk Local Plan: Preferred Options consultation (Report number: COU/WS/22/010)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval of the West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options document, for the purposes of public consultation.

Following its meeting on 26 April 2022, the recommendations contained in the report had been referred by Cabinet to Council for a final decision.

The West Suffolk Local Plan would cover the period up to 2040. Upon adoption it would set out the Council's policies to address housing and employment needs and other associated economic, social and environmental priorities.

It was an important tool in supporting delivery of West Suffolk Council's strategic priorities and essential for the continuation of an effective planning service. In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), required local planning authorities to prepare and keep an up-to-date local plan.

The Preferred Options document (Appendix A) represented the next stage of the plan making process. It was proposed to consult on the Preferred Options Local Plan and supporting documents for eight-plus weeks from Thursday 26 May to Tuesday 26 July 2022.

Appendix A (as listed as agenda items 4a, 4b and 4c respectively) was divided into three parts, namely:

Part One: strategic policies
Part Two: non strategic policies
Part Three: site allocations

A summary of the content of each part was detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

Councillor David Roach, Portfolio Holder for Planning, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that it was important to note that the plan was still evolving, and no firm decisions had been made at this stage. The Council would continue to gather evidence throughout the local plan preparation and this consultation was an important aspect of this. Therefore, this was not what the final plan would look like.

The response received from this consultation would help shape the next version of the local plan. That version would be the document which the Council proposed to submit for examination to the Planning Inspectorate and would be subject to a further round of consultation prior to its submission.

Councillor Roach placed his thanks on record for the outstanding work of relevant officers and the West Suffolk Local Plan Working Group for their excellent contributions in reaching this significant stage of the local plan development process.

On the motion of Councillor David Roach, duly seconded by Councillor Joe Mason, it was put to the vote and with the vote being 50 for the motion, none against and one abstention, it was

Resolved: That

1. the West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18) document, as contained in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/010, together with supporting documents, be approved for the purposes of public consultation.
2. Delegated authority be 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.

216. **Referral from Cabinet: West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part One Strategic Policies**

See minute 215. above.

217. **Referral from Cabinet: West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part Two - Non Strategic Policies**

See minute 215. above.

218. **Referral from Cabinet: West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options consultation - Appendix A: Part Three - Site Allocations**

See minute 215. above.

The meeting concluded at 8.03 pm

Signed by:

Chair

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Civic communication for council

17 May to 14 June 2022

Chair attended 11 engagements

Vice Chair attended 6 engagements

Past Chair attended 1 engagement

Event	Venue	Date	Time	Attending
Annual Council	West Suffolk House	Tuesday 17 May 2022	7pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
Extraordinary Meeting of Council	West Suffolk House	Tuesday 17 May 2022	7.30pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
Dalham Parish Council Meeting	Dalham Village Hall	Thursday 19 May 2022	7pm	Chair of Council
Funeral for Cliff Hind	Risby Crematorium	Wednesday 1 June 2022	3pm	Chair of Council
Beacon Lighting for HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee	Abbey Gardens	Thursday 2 June 2022	9.45pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
Haverhill Mayor's Civic Service of Thanksgiving	St Mary's Church, Haverhill	Friday 3 June 2022	4pm	Chair of Council
BSE Royal British Legion D-Day Remembrance service	Abbey Gardens Rose Garden	Sunday 5 June 2022	10.30am	Chair of Council
Bury Women's Cycle Tour - finish of opening stage of Women's Tour	Abbey Gardens	Monday 6 June 2022	11.45am	Chair of Council
Platinum Jubilee Parade and RAF Honington 50th Anniversary Parade	Angel Hill Bury St Edmunds	Thursday 9 June 2022	From 5.30pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council

West Suffolk College certificate presentation to students	Edmunds Restaurant, West Suffolk College	Friday 10 June 2022	12.30pm	Former Chair Cllr Margaret Marks
A County Service of Celebration for H.M. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee	St Edmundsbury Cathedral	Sunday 12 June 2022	11am	Vice Chair of Council
West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk House	Tuesday 14 June 2022	7pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council

Review of political balance and appointment to committees 2022 to 2023

Report number:	COU/WS/22/012	
Report to and date:	Council	14 June 2022
Cabinet member:	Councillor John Griffiths Leader of the Council Telephone: 01284 757001 Email: john.griffiths@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Teresa Halliday Monitoring Officer Telephone: 01284 757144 Email: teresa.halliday@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **This report refers to non-executive matters and therefore is not required to be included on the Decisions Plan.**

Wards impacted: **None**

Recommendations: **It is recommended that Council approves:**

- 1. The revised political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes on committees as per Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/22/012.**
- 2. A return to the membership of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to a total of 12 members in accordance with the terms of reference.**
- 3. The appointment of the non-grouped independent members to 1 seat on the Officer Appeals Committee and 1 seat on the Officer Appointments Committee.**

Continued....

- 4. Delegation for Group Leaders to nominate members from their Groups to seats and as substitutes on committees.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 At the Annual Meeting in May 2022, the Council reviewed and approved its political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes on committees.

On 20 May 2022, the Monitoring Officer received notification of a change in membership of the political groups as detailed below:

Group	Members	Change
Conservative Group	41	+1
Independent Group	17	-2
Labour Group	4	N/A
Non-Grouped Independent	2	+1

- 1.2 Following the above changes, the Monitoring Officer received a request from the Leader of the Conservative Group to undertake a review the political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes on committees.
- 1.3 The Monitoring Officer has a duty to submit a report to the Council showing the revised political balance and proposed allocation of seats on committees.

2. Proposals within this report

Political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes in accordance with the political balance rules (section 15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989)

- 2.1 The allocation of seats and substitutes to committees must respect the requirement to ensure that relevant committees are politically balanced, in that they reflect the number of councillors who belong to each political group within the Council.
- 2.2 The rules on allocating seats are that, as far as possible:
- Not all seats on a committee can be given to a single political group
 - The majority group must be allocated the majority of seats on a committee
 - Subject to a. and b., the proportion of seats on ordinary committees allocated to a group must be proportionate to the total number of seats held by that group

- d. Subject to a. b. and c., the proportion of seats on all committees allocated to a group must be proportionate to the total number of seats held by that group

- 2.3 The committees to which these rules apply are as follows:
- Development Control Committee (16 seats and 8 substitutes)
 - Licensing and Regulatory Committee (15 seats and 7 substitutes)
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 seats and 8 substitutes)
 - Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (12 seats and 6 substitutes)
 - Standards Committee (6 seats and 3 substitutes)
 - Officer Appointments Committee (6 seats and 3 substitutes)
 - Officer Appeals Committee (6 seats and 3 substitutes)
- 2.4 At its Annual Meeting in May 2022, Council approved a request to increase the membership of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to a total of 13 members to assist with an equitable distribution of seats. However, following the review, the additional seat is no longer necessary, so it is proposed to return to 12 seats on the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee in line with the terms of reference as contained in Part 3b, section 2 of the Constitution.
- 2.5 Councillors who are not members of a political group are not automatically entitled to seats but can be allocated seats by the Council and they can then agree between them who will take the seats. The Council currently has two non-grouped members, and it is proposed that they are allocated one seat on the Officer Appointments Committee and one seat on the Officer Appeals Committee.
- 2.6 The calculation to allocate seats to political groups requires the rounding up or down of calculated figures to give whole numbers. It is therefore very difficult to create a perfect allocation of seats and some adjustments may be needed to create an equitable allocation between political groups. This can include adjusting the number of councillors that sit on each committee. The proposed allocation of seats and substitutes to committees is attached at Appendix A to this report.

The appointment of councillors to committees

- 2.7 Subject to Council approval of the allocation of seats and substitutes on committees, the Group Leaders are asked to nominate which members from their group will be appointed to the seats and to notify the Monitoring Officer of those nominations.
- 2.8 The non-grouped members are also asked to agree between them on who will take the seats allocated to them and to notify the Monitoring

Officer. If agreement cannot be reached, then Council may be asked to vote on which non-grouped councillor is appointed to each committee.

2.9 It should be noted that each Group that is represented on a committee has been allocated a substitute place on that committee and the remaining substitute seats have then been distributed by political balance.

2.10 The nominations should be made to the Monitoring Officer within 14 days, on which the Monitoring Officer will appoint members to committees.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

3.1 None

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

4.1 None

5. Risks associated with the proposals

5.1 None

6. Implications arising from the proposals

6.1 None

7. Appendices referenced in this report

7.1 Appendix A: Allocation of seats and substitutes to committees

8. Background documents associated with this report

8.1 West Suffolk Council Constitution, Part 3b, section 2: "Responsibility for Council (non-executive) Functions": [Part 3 - Section 2 - Responsibility for Council Non Executive Functions April 2021.pdf \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

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Allocation of seats																										
Committee			Development Control Committee			Licensing & Regulatory Committee			Overview & Scrutiny Committee			Performance & Audit Scrutiny Committee			Officer Appeals			Officer Appointments			Standards			OVERALL		
No of seats			16			15			16			12			6			6			7			78		
	No of members	%	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places
Conservative Group	41	64.06%	10.25	10	11	9.61	10	10	10.25	10	11	7.69	8	8	3.84	4	3	3.84	4	3	4.48	4	4	49.97	50	50
Independent Group	17	26.56%	4.25	4	4	3.98	4	4	4.25	4	4	3.19	3	3	1.59	2	2	1.59	2	2	1.86	2	2	20.72	21	21
Labour Group	4	6.25%	1.00	1	1	0.94	1	1	1.00	1	1	0.75	1	1	0.38	0	0	0.38	0	0	0.44	0	1	4.88	5	5
Non Grouped Independent	1	1.56%	0.25	0	0	0.23	0	0	0.25	0	0	0.19	0	0	0.09	0	1	0.09	0	0	0.11	0	0	1.22	1	1
Non Grouped Independent	1	1.56%	0.25	0	0	0.23	0	0	0.25	0	0	0.19	0	0	0.09	0	0	0.09	0	1	0.11	0	0	1.22	1	1
TOTAL	64	100.00%	16.00	16	16	15.00	15	15	16.00	16	16	12.00	12	12	6.00	6	6	6.00	6	6	7.00	7	7	78.00	78	78

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Allocation of substitutes																										
Committee			Development Control Committee			Licensing & Regulatory Committee			Overview & Scrutiny Committee			Performance & Audit Scrutiny Committee			Officer Appeals			Officer Appointments			Standards			OVERALL		
No of substitutes			8			7			8			6			3			3			3			38		
	No of members	%	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places	Entitled Places (exact)	Entitled Places (rounded)	Allocated Places
Conservative Group	41	64.06%	5.13	5	5	4.48	4	4	5.13	5	5	3.84	4	4	1.92	2	2	1.92	2	2	1.92	2	1	24.34	24	23
Independent Group	17	26.56%	2.13	2	2	1.86	2	2	2.13	2	2	1.59	2	1	0.80	1	1	0.80	1	1	0.80	1	1	10.09	10	10
Labour Group	4	6.25%	0.50	1	1	0.44	0	1	0.50	1	1	0.38	0	1	0.19	0	0	0.19	0	0	0.19	0	1	2.38	2	5
Non Grouped Independent	1	1.56%	0.13	0	0	0.11	0	0	0.13	0	0	0.09	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.59	1	0
Non Grouped Independent	1	1.56%	0.13	0	0	0.11	0	0	0.13	0	0	0.09	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.59	1	0
TOTAL	64	100.00%	8.00	8	8	7.00	7	7	8.00	8	8	6.00	6	6	3.00	3	3	3.00	3	3	3.00	3	3	38.00	38	38

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West Suffolk Annual Scrutiny Report 2021 to 2022

Report number:	COU/WS/22/013	
Report to and date:	Council	14 June 2022
Documents attached:	West Suffolk Annual Scrutiny Report 2021 to 2022	
Recommendation:	It is recommended that the West Suffolk Annual Scrutiny Report 2021 to 2022, as referenced as Report number: COU/WS/22/013, be noted.	

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Annual Scrutiny Report 2021 to 2022

Introduction



Councillor Ian Shipp

Chair of the Overview and
Scrutiny Committee 2021 to 2022



Councillor Ian Houlder

Chair of the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee 2021 to 2022

The West Suffolk Scrutiny Annual Report 2021 to 2022 highlights the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee over the past year.

This report presents some of the accomplishments and highlights of the scrutiny committees which have a vital role in helping the authority to continue to improve and strengthen. The following report aims to give a flavour of the work undertaken during 2021 to 2022 and to confirm to Council it has operated to deliver its role in line with its terms of reference.

The work has been varied and we have done our utmost to make it transparent, relevant, and insightful. We would like to thank councillors, officers, partners, and members of the public who have taken part in this important work and hope you find this annual report both informative and interesting.

We hope it may also encourage you to follow the progress of the scrutiny function at West Suffolk Council and you are welcome to find out more about our work on the Council's website.

Roll and approach to scrutiny at West Suffolk

West Suffolk has two such committees.

The primary purpose of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to improve the delivery of services provided to West Suffolk communities. It does this by reviewing and scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of Council functions. It also undertakes specific reviews to look at new and evolving policies or an issue affecting the area and makes recommendations for improvements to the Council or Cabinet.

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee has the specific role of monitoring the budget and overseeing the performance of services by considering a range of information such as performance indicators, inspection reports and action plan monitoring. It approves the Council's Statement of Accounts and is also the Council's audit committee. The Committee also carries out the Treasury Management function.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Key themes during 2021 to 2022

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee focus over the year is set out below:

Activity	Outcome
In June, the committee received the outcomes and recommendations from the West Suffolk Website Review Working Group.	The committee endorsed the action plan developed by the West Suffolk Website Review Working Group setting out 15 improvements identified for implementation, with support from the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities.
Activity	Outcome
In July, the committee heard from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive on the Draft West Suffolk Annual Report 2020 to 2021.	The committee made a number of suggestions for incorporation into the final document, for the Cabinet's consideration.
Activity	Outcome
In September, the committee held a Councillor Call for Action hearing on the Impact of the Eastern Relief Road and A14 Junction 45 on the Moreton Hall Residential Area.	The committee formulated a number of recommendations for Suffolk County Council's consideration. These would be monitored by the committee through regular updates from Suffolk County Council, with the first in January 2022.
Activity	Outcome
In November, the committee heard from the Cabinet Member for Housing on their responsibility for strategic health.	The committee supported linking strategic health and housing together and building health more into the planning process.

Activity	Outcome
In January 2022, the committee received a progress report from the West Suffolk Markets Review Working Group.	The committee noted the work carried out by the Review Group to date. It was expected that the findings and recommendations from the Review Group would be presented to the committee and Cabinet in summer 2022.
Activity	Outcome
In January 2022, the committee received a progress report on the Councillor Call for Action recommendations from Suffolk County Council.	The committee was disappointed with the responses received from Suffolk County Council and made a number of further recommendations, which were endorsed by Cabinet.
Activity	Outcome
In March 2022, the committee received a report on Homes for Life, setting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many Homes for Life were being built; and - What is specifically being built for the aging population. 	The committee noted the new building regulation standards which replaced "homes for life" being utilised across West Suffolk for the purpose of having accessible and adaptable dwellings – specifically M2(2) and M4(3). All developments were expected to meet this as a minimum standard.
Activity	Outcome
In March 2022, the committee considered a member suggestion to develop anti-idling options.	The committee agreed to progress the development of anti-idling enforcement options with the aim of making recommendations to Cabinet.

Other areas of focus

The committee has a key role in scrutinising community safety. In June 2021, the committee received the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Annual Report from the Chair of the Partnership, Councillor Joanna Spicer.

Councillor Margaret Marks, the council's representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee updates the committee on a quarterly basis on the work undertaken by the Health Scrutiny Committee, giving members the opportunity to discuss issues raised and where necessary, give their support on proposals.

Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Key themes during 2021 to 2022

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny's programme continues to be impacted by Covid-19 given the dramatic impact the pandemic has had on West Suffolk Council's financial position.

The committee has received quarterly financial and performance reports to understand how the pandemic continues to impact on the achievement of West Suffolk Council's objectives, recognising the need for the council's priorities to change during the recovery phase.

The committee has evaluated quarterly and annual financial resilience reports to understand how the pandemic continues to impact on West Suffolk Council's longer term financial position.

The committee continues to assess how the pandemic has impacted on the work of West Suffolk Council's internal and external audit services, assessing whether, in the environment, sufficient assurance can be gained to provide audit opinions for the council.

The committee has evaluated the development of West Suffolk Council's budget, including both the annual and medium-term financial budget, to understand the longer-term effects of the pandemic on the council's finances to 2026.

The Health and Safety Sub-Committee has evaluated what steps West Suffolk Council is taking to protect staff and the public during the recovery phase of the pandemic, in terms of both physical equipment and measures and the wellbeing of staff.



Scrutiny on a page

Over the past year, the scrutiny committees have collectively considered the following:

West Suffolk Council Annual Report 2020 to 2021	Internal Audit Annual Report and Mid-year Report	Arrangements for appointment of external auditors from 2023-2024
Community Safety Partnership Annual Report	Internal Audit Plan	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2020 to 2021
Reports on the activity of Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee	Year-end performance out-turn	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) – Annual Report and Review of RIPA Guidance
Consideration of Councillor Call for Action	Quarterly performance reports	Health and safety summary report 2020 to 2021
Monitoring the Cabinet Decisions Plan	Annual financial resilience report	Health and safety incidence reports
Air quality and anti-idling campaign update	Financial resilience strategy	Health and safety measures to support COVID-19
Quarterly financial resilience reports	Annual Governance Statement	Health and safety policy amendments
External Audit Plan	Statement of Accounts	Health and safety training report
External Audit Annual Report and Annual Audit Letter	Sustainable medium term budget reports	Impact of COVID-19 on staff wellbeing

The year ahead

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has committed to three reviews during the next year:

- Final report and draft recommendations from the West Suffolk Markets Review Working Group.
- A review of West Suffolk Council's approach to modern day slavery (this review is presently awaiting new government guidance).
- A review of 20mph zones and their signage and work with Suffolk County Council, as the authority responsible for 20mph zones, to understand how councillors could work with their communities to support them through the process.
- To progress the development of anti-idling enforcement options with the aim of making recommendations to Cabinet.

Both committees will also be continuing to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the council's services and on the council's financial and non-financial performance.

