

Council



Title	Agenda
Date	Tuesday 26 September 2023
Time	7.00 pm
Venue	Conference Chamber West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds
Membership	All Councillors You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to transact the business on the agenda set out below.  Ian Gallin Chief Executive 18 September 2023
Interests – declaration and restriction on participation	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable 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.
Quorum	One third of the Council (22 members)
Committee administrator	Claire Skoyles Democratic Services Officer Telephone 01284 757176 Email democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Venue	Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds
Contact information	Telephone: 01284 757176 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 - 10
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023 (copy attached).	
2. Chair's announcements	11 - 14
To receive announcements (if any) from the Chair.	
A list of civic events/engagements attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair since the last ordinary meeting of Council held on 20 June 2023 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 disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable 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	15 - 22
Paper number: COU/WS/23/013	
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 25 September 2023.** The written notification should **detail the full question** to be asked at the meeting of the Council.

7. Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

23 - 70

Report number: **COU/WS/23/014**

A. Referrals from Cabinet: 13 June 2023 and 18 July 2023

There are no referrals emanating from the last meetings of Cabinet held on 13 June 2023 (verbally reported at Council on 20 June 2023) and 18 July 2023.

B. Referrals from Cabinet: 19 September 2023

These referrals have been compiled before the decisions have been taken by the Cabinet and are based on the recommendations contained within each of the reports listed

below. Any amendments made by the Cabinet to the recommendations within these reports will be notified to members in advance of the meeting accordingly.

1. Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report 2022 to 2023

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

2. Treasury Management Report (June 2023)

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

3. De-carbonisation Initiatives Fund

Portfolio holder: Councillors Gerald Kelly and David Taylor

4. Western Way Project

Portfolio holders: Councillors Cliff Waterman, Victor Lukaniuk, Ian Shipp and Diane Hind

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 8. Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel | 71 - 78 |
| Report number: COU/WS/23/015 | |
| 9. Review of polling districts and polling places | 79 - 96 |
| Report number: COU/WS/23/016 | |
| 10. Mildenhall Parish - change of name | 97 - 100 |
| Report number: COU/WS/23/017 | |
| 11. 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 20 June 2023** at **7.00 pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present

Councillors

Chair Roger Dicker

Vice Chair Pat Hanlon

Richard Alecock	Gerald Kelly	Jools Savage
Michael Anderson	Rowena Lindberg	Marilyn Sayer
Peter Armitage	Jon London	Ian Shipp
John Augustine	Aaron Luccarini	Andrew Smith
Mick Bradshaw	Victor Lukaniuk	David Smith
Tony Brown	Charlie Lynch	Karen Soons
Carol Bull	Birgitte Mager	Sarah Stamp
Patrick Chung	Margaret Marks	Frank Stennett
Nick Clarke	Joe Mason	David Taylor
Dawn Dicker	Sara Mildmay-White	Jim Thorndyke
Paul Firman	Lora-Jane Miller-	Julia Wakelam
Susan Glossop	Jones	Don Waldron
John Griffiths	Richard O'Driscoll	Cliff Waterman
Donna Higgins	Sue Perry	Indy Wijenayaka
Diane Hind	Joanna Rayner	Phil Wittam
Beccy Hopfensperger	Karen Richardson	
Ian Houlder	Richard Rout	
Janne Jarvis	Marion Rushbrook	

294. **Remembrance**

Before commencing business, all members were asked to stand and observe a minute's silence in remembrance of former Forest Heath District Councillor Pat Barker, and former St Edmundsbury Borough Councillor Bob Cockle who had both sadly died recently. The Chair made a statement of condolence, reflecting on each of the late councillors' contributions during their time on their respective councils.

295. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 March 2023 and 23 May 2023 (Annual Meeting of Council) were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

296. **Chair's announcements**

The Chair reported on the civic engagements and charity activities which he and the Vice-Chair had attended since their election at the Annual Meeting on 23 May 2023.

The Chair specifically made reference to attending:

- The civic service in Felixstowe on Sunday 18 June 2023
- A community lunch in Gazeley, a village located in his ward, earlier that day

297. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sarah Broughton, Mike Chester, Andy Drummond, Luke Halpin, Rachel Hood, Andrew Martin, Andy Neal, Sarah Pugh, Liz Smith, Andrew Speed, Tracy Whitehand and Kevin Yarrow.

298. **Declarations of interests**

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

299. **Leader's statement (Paper number: COU/WS/23/009)**

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, presented his Leader's Statement as outlined in paper number: COU/WS/23/009.

In his introductory remarks, Councillor Waterman:

- Suffolk Day:** reflected on the benefits of living in Suffolk together with drawing attention to the range of events being held in the district and across the county to celebrate Suffolk Day on 21 June 2023.
- West Suffolk:** drew attention to the various positive aspects of living, working and visiting West Suffolk, particularly highlighting examples within the district's towns.
- West Suffolk Working Partnership:** set out an outline of the core areas upon which the West Suffolk Working Partnership would be focusing its efforts in the coming months, which included (but not limited to): protecting the environment; business growth; the right housing development in the right place; and supporting residents with the cost of living crisis through the extensive families and communities work.
- Invitation to all ward members:** urged members to accept his offer to all members to discuss pertinent matters within their wards within the next year.
- Cabinet – 13 June 2023:** that the first meeting of his Cabinet was held on 13 June 2023 at the Mildenhall Hub, where amongst other

issues considered, it had agreed the establishment of a number of working groups. This included a new Environment and Sustainability Working Group which would commence work very shortly in accordance with its approved terms of reference. It was intended that the venues for Cabinet meetings would alternate between West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds and the Mildenhall Hub to encourage better access to open democracy.

- f. **Gender balance and diversity:** that he very much supported equality and diversity amongst West Suffolk councillors to build on the excellent breadth of knowledge and skills the Council already had. In response to a question following his introductory remarks, the Leader reinforced this view. He was extremely proud of his Cabinet, which he felt demonstrated a range of exceptional talent; however, he recognised the important issue of improving gender equality and increasing diversity particularly in the wider context of society.
- g. **Events:** provided details of current and forthcoming events including the Makers Markets and Young Traders Market competition; the hosting of the Jobs and Skills Fair in Haverhill Arts Centre; the Mutiny in Colour art exhibition; and various events commemorating Armed Forces Week.
- h. **Council priorities:** that work was progressing to develop the Council's priorities, which included working with partners and organisations to support the identification of challenges and opportunities.

The Leader responded to a range of questions relating to:

- a. **New administration:** that the detail of the broad agenda upon which the new administration was working would be forthcoming in due course. Priorities were being carefully developed and reviews of ongoing issues, such as the examples given of street lighting provision and the present restricted growth in Brandon due to the protection of stone curlews, were being undertaken and would be progressed accordingly.
- b. **'Debate not hate':** welcomed support from all councillors for the Local Government Association's (LGA) 'debate not hate' campaign. A programme of training developed by the LGA would be offered to councillors in due course.
- c. **Families and Communities portfolio:** that the Families and Communities portfolio was extensive which would support the work of members within their wards. This included working positively with partners and communities, including providing support to voluntary sector organisations, where possible. The West Suffolk Grant Working Party had been re-established which in due course, would look at recommending the awarding of Community Chest funding to successful applicants, which included a range of voluntary sector organisations.

Consultations were currently being carried out on the Public Space Protection Orders and Cumulative Impact Assessment areas in the

district. Taking the outcome of the consultations into account, appropriate recommendations on whether to renew or not would be presented to Cabinet in September 2023.

The Leader agreed that it was unacceptable, not only locally but on a national scale, for unclaimed benefits to reach such significant levels. He aimed to actively pursue this matter with Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and other partners, where appropriate, to encourage greater uptake of benefit claim entitlement.

The Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities added to the Leader's response, stating that the portfolio covered such a wide-ranging spectrum, the Leader's statement had not focussed on specific areas of work. The direction of the portfolio was however, being developed and further detail would be shared with all members in due course.

- d. **Leaders of political groups:** providing confirmation that the leader of the largest minority group, the Conservative Group, was Councillor Nick Clarke. The leaders of the Progressive Alliance Grouping and the Independents were Councillors David Smith and Victor Lukaniuk respectively.
- e. **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA):** providing confirmation that in accordance with the adopted Members' Allowances Scheme, Councillor David Smith would receive an SRA of £1,447.86 per annum as Group Leader of the Progressive Alliance minority group. In line with the requirements of the Members' Allowances Scheme, Councillor Victor Lukaniuk would claim one SRA as Deputy Leader of the Council and not as leader of the Independents minority group. Whilst the Deputy Leader was not responsible for a specific portfolio, his workload remained significant. Councillor Waterman added that a budget was provided for all allowances payable under the Members' Allowances Scheme.

300. **Public participation**

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

1. **Jo Owen**, a resident in the district, made a statement in connection with the process followed to erect 5G communication monopoles in Bury St Edmunds. She expressed her views on what she felt were the potential effects on human health and biodiversity in the locality and felt there had been a lack of transparency and consultation when the decision was taken to erect a 5G mast near to her home. Concern was particularly expressed regarding exposure to, in her view, potentially harmful levels of radiation emitted from the 5G masts.

In response, Councillor Jim Thorndyke, Portfolio Holder for Planning, stated that the Government required local planning authorities (LPAs) to 'support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G)'. The Government further advised that 'local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only.

They should not seek to question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure'. Councillor Thorndyke added that supplementary information, including details of consultation undertaken, was required to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency (RF) public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). Applicants were required to 'self-certify' that the proposal fell within the recommended guidelines.

Councillor Thorndyke also stated that the Council would continue to lobby Government on the considerations LPAs were to take into account when determining applications for 5G mast and antennae development.

2. **Aaron Leeves**, a resident in the district, made a statement in connection with "the effects the Agenda 2030 and The Great Reset are having on our children and families' lives, and how the World Health Organisation and World Economic Forum are dictating how we should live our lives." Specific reference was given to, in his view, the impacts of the sustainable goals set out in Agenda 2030, and the detrimental impacts to the health and well being of society of the COVID-19 lockdowns; the COVID-19 vaccine; the erection of 5G communication masts; and scanning technology. He also felt that in his view, there was over sexualisation of children in the education system.

In response, Councillor Gerald Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, stated that the newly established West Suffolk Environment and Sustainability Working Group would be reviewing the Council's approach to environmental issues and climate change. The group would consider a range of topics, supported by evidence, and would report back to Cabinet in due course.

3. **Dylan Roques**, a resident in the district, asked a question in connection with ways in which to encourage people under the age of 30 to stand as a councillor.

In response, Councillor Donna Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, supported the sentiments and with the help of officers, would look to develop a programme to encourage more young people to become engaged with the work of the council, the democratic process and the role and functions of a councillor. In the meantime, Councillor Higgins welcomed approaches from young people to discuss this and any other council-related matter.

4. **Geoff Mealing**, a resident in the district, provided his own views on the works of Alfred Kinsey and John Money. He then referred to the content of sex education taught in schools and how he felt that children were inappropriately exposed to certain aspects at too young an age. Reference was made to the LGBTQAI+ community as part of his statement.

In response, Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, stated that the Council was proud to raise the LGBTQAI+ flag outside West Suffolk House in recognition of Pride month. A considered approach was taken on how to teach sex education in schools and that everyone had the right to their own identity.

5. **Donna Smith**, a resident in the district, provided her views and doubts felt regarding the work of specific philanthropists she quoted, and of the World Health Organisation. She also gave her views on the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Particular concern was expressed that she was to temporarily lose her employment in the care sector for not being vaccinated against COVID-19. Reassurance was sought from the Council that similar impositions and restrictions would not happen again.

In response, Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, respected Ms Smith's views; however, this was not within the Council's responsibility to accept.

No further questions were asked. The Chair concluded this item and invited the members of the public present to remain in the meeting to observe the following agenda items should they wish to do so.

301. Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

There were no referrals emanating from the last meetings of Cabinet held on 11 April 2023 and 13 June 2023.

302. Annual Scrutiny Report 2022 to 2023 (Report number: COU/WS/23/010)

Council received and noted the West Suffolk Annual Scrutiny Report for 2022 to 2023.

Article 7 of the Council's Constitution required that 'the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and 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.'

Councillor Ian Shipp, outgoing Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee drew relevant issues to the attention of Council. He placed his thanks on record to the outgoing Committee, its partners and to the former Cabinet, and acknowledged the work of officers that had supported him and the then Committee. He also wished to place on record his support for the incoming Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillors Sarah Broughton and Marion Rushbrook, and as a present member of Cabinet, he looked forward to working with the Committee in the future.

Councillor Ian Houlder, outgoing Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (PASC) drew attention to the specific work of the outgoing PASC and its two sub-committees. He placed his thanks on record to the former Committee and to the teams in Finance and Internal Audit for their continuing support. He too, wished his support to be placed on record for the incoming Chair and Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, Councillors Peter Armitage and Andy Neal.

No questions were asked.

303. **Independent Remuneration Panel appointment process (Report number: COU/WS/23/011)**

Council considered this report which sought approval for a number of recommendations to commence the process towards appointing a new Independent Remuneration Panel.

West Suffolk Council's Members' Allowances Scheme was required to be reviewed in full by a newly appointed independent remuneration panel. The panel would make recommendations to Council on the level of remuneration, allowances and expenses for councillors. These recommendations must be considered by the Council, although the Council was within its right to agree alternative proposals. A new scheme must be adopted by December 2023 in order for it to be adopted before the current scheme expired in February 2024. The scheme would then be subject to annual review.

An independent remuneration panel must comprise a minimum of three members. The process for appointing must command public confidence, and both the process, and the panel, should not only be independent, but seen to be independent.

The report recommended that the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) would be appointed for no longer than a four-year term, as proposed in the terms of reference for the IRP attached at Appendix A.

The IRP's work would be supported by officers of the Council, who would offer appropriate training, briefing and support to panel members. Members also considered the appointment of an advisor to the panel who could act as a conduit between council officers, elected members and the panel. Person specifications for IRP members and the advisor to the panel were attached at Appendices B and C respectively.

Councillor Gerald Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including the proposed arrangements for the IRP appointment process, as set out in section 2. This would be carried out in accordance with the timeline provided in section 3.1.

In response to a question, Councillor Kelly informed Council that once appointed, the Independent Remuneration Panel would be expected to fully review the entire Members' Allowances Scheme, including the range of roles and level of remuneration covered under the scheme's Special Responsibility Allowances. It would be for the Council to consider whether to accept the IRP's recommendations or not.

On the motion of Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Diane Hind, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That:

1. The process for appointing a new Independent Remuneration Panel for West Suffolk Council, as set out in section 2 of Report number: COU/WS/23/011, be agreed.

2. Delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the respective Group Leaders, to each appoint a member from the Progressive Alliance Grouping and the Conservative Group to join the Portfolio Holder, being a member of the Independents, to sit on the proposed Selection Panel, as set out in paragraph 2.2.1.
3. The terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel, as set in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/23/011, be approved.
4. The person specifications for IRP members as set out in Appendix B, be agreed.
5. The appointment of an advisor to the panel, as set out in Appendix C, be agreed.

304. **Constitution Review Group (Report number: COU/WS/23/012)**

Council considered this report which sought approval for the establishment of a Constitution Review Group in accordance with the proposed terms of reference attached to the report.

The Constitution Review Group was originally formed in 2019 for the development of the Constitution for West Suffolk Council. Thereafter it was recognised that it would be helpful to continue as a smaller group in order to assess how the Constitution operated and make recommendations for change where necessary and appropriate.

Councillor Gerald Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council. These included recognising that the Constitution must evolve to accord with changes in legislation and the Administration it was proposed that the Constitution Review Group continued to operate with the terms of reference attached at Appendix A to the report with the proposed membership arrangements set out in section 2.2 of the report.

On the motion of Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Diane Hind, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

It be agreed that the Constitution Review Group continues to operate in accordance with the terms of reference attached at Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/23/012 and the membership as set out in section 2.2 of the same report.

305. **Any other urgent business**

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

The meeting concluded at 8.25 pm

Signed by:

Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

Civic communication for Council

20 June to 26 September 2023

Event	Venue	Date	Time	Attending
West Suffolk Council Meeting	Council Chamber, West Suffolk House	Tuesday 20 June 2023	7pm to 8.30pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
Gazeley Community Lunch	Gazeley Village Hall	Tuesday 20 June 2023	12.30pm to 2pm	Chair of Council
Suffolk Day in Ipswich	The Cornhill in Ipswich town centre	Wednesday 21 June 2023	8.30am to 11am	Chair of Council
Tuddenham St Mary Village Hall Reception	Tuddenham St Mary Village Hall, School Close, Tuddenham	Thursday 22 June 2023	7pm to 9pm	Chair of Council
Armed Forces Day in Haverhill	High Street/Market Square, Haverhill	Saturday 24 June 2023	10am to 2pm	Chair of Council
Visit to the Coffee Caravan	Gazeley Village Hall	Wednesday 28 June 2023	10am to 12pm	Chair of Council
West Suffolk Civic Service	The Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Bury Road, Kentford, Newmarket	Sunday 16 July 2023	3pm to 6pm	Chair of Council
RAF Mildenhall 100th Air Refueling Wing Change of Command	RAF Mildenhall	Monday 17 July 2023	10am to 1pm	Chair of Council
Urban Frame Mutiny in Colour, official launch in Haverhill	Haverhill Arts Centre	Thursday 20 July 2023	7pm to 8pm	Chair of Council

Ipswich Mayor's at Home Reception	The Bobby Robson Suite, Ipswich Town Football Club, Ipswich	Friday 21 July 2023	6.30pm to 8.30pm	Chair of Council
Royal British Legion V J Day Service	Abbey Gardens Rose Garden	Saturday 12 August 2023	10.45am to 12pm	Chair of Council
An evening on the Sail Barge Victor with Ipswich Mayor	Leaves from Common Quay, Ipswich Waterfront	Friday 18 August 2023	6.30pm to 9.30pm	Chair of Council
RAF Mildenhall New Mayors & Chairs BBQ	Middleton Hall, RAF Mildenhall	Saturday 19 August 2023	12pm to 3pm	Chair of Council
Visit to Clare Town Council	The Old School, Callis Street, Clare, Sudbury	Wednesday 23 August 2023	11am to 2pm	Chair of Council
The Downham Market Swing Band Orchestra Concert	The Jubilee Centre, Recreation Way, Mildenhall	Saturday 2 September 2023	7.30pm to 9.30pm	Chair of Council
Bury St Edmunds Royal British Legion New Standard Dedication Service	St Mary's Church, Honey Hill, Bury St Edmunds	Sunday 3 September 2023	11am to 12.30pm	Chair of Council
Italian Style Community Lunch	St Mary's Church, Kentford	Sunday 3 September 2023	1pm to 3pm	Chair of Council
Civic Leaders morning at RAF Lakenheath	Eagles Landing, Royal Air Force Lakenheath	Friday 8 September 2023	9am to 1pm	Chair of Council
Mid Suffolk Chairman's Summer BBQ	Alder Carr Farm, Creeting St. Mary, Needham Market IP6 8LX	Saturday 9 September 2023	6.30 to 9.30pm	Chair of Council
Battle of Britain Parade and Service	Angel Hill / St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds	Sunday 17 September 2023	9am to 2pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council

West Suffolk Council Meeting	Council Chamber, West Suffolk House	Tuesday 26 September 2023	7pm to 8.30pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
After Council Reception	Breakout Area	Tuesday 26 September 2023	8.30pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council

This page is intentionally left blank

Leader’s statement

Report number:	COU/WS/23/013	
Report to and date:	Council	26 September 2023
Documents attached:	None	

Leader’s Statement

1. It may have been the summer, a time of putting up your feet and going on holiday, but I know councillors – no matter on which side of the chamber you sit - have been working hard during this time for their communities.
2. Equally our staff have been working to keep delivering services, including during the recent record temperatures. Our residents have been very understanding too and have helped where they can, for instance getting their bins out early. Thank you everyone for your dedication to keeping West Suffolk running smoothly.
3. Since my last statement there has been much work and conversation between the new administration with partners and other councillors as we look at the reviews we are carrying out and how we are going to deliver on our priorities.
4. We have also been looking at the financial challenges which are putting massive burdens on public services and in some instances have overwhelmed other authorities.
5. I want to reassure West Suffolk communities we are not in that position. But like our residents who are suffering under the cost-of-living crisis we must take prudent steps to ensure a tight hold on our finances against current and future challenges.

Western Way

6. I will not dwell on this until we hold the debate in Council and as I write this I am looking forward to the discussion in Cabinet. However, I am clear that we have to make decisions on the challenges we are facing now and not in the past and make sure we have certainty over the council’s finances. Providing leisure services and better health and wellbeing outcomes is a priority for us and I believe we can achieve that while ensuring we have certainty and reduced risk for our budget. I believe the solution being proposed means we can achieve this while protecting ourselves from reduced national funding, soaring inflation and the increased cost of living and materials. This means we can do more with our money and be in a good financial position.

Talking to our partners

Health

7. I have been meeting with partners and health colleagues for the Community Connect event hosted here in Bury St Edmunds with the West Suffolk Alliance. This was a great opportunity to hear about the good practice that is going on in West Suffolk and a showcase of initiatives we and partners are involved in to deliver.
8. The good health of our communities is not just the responsibility of our GPs or hospitals – the Alliance and West Suffolk Council knows we all have a role to play. Not only is prevention better than cure but also to make sure the right support is there in the community when people come out of hospital they can continue to live and stay well in their communities. This is not only better for those who need care, makes stronger more resilient communities and makes the public service pound stretch further to do more good. This is needed even more during this time of cost-of-living crisis. The Alliance recognises this and that by sharing the same aim we can break down boundaries – both organisational and geographic.

Business

9. I was really pleased to talk at the West Suffolk Forum meeting held by the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce at the EpiCentre in Haverhill. A vibrant town, like the rest of West Suffolk, which is full of good prospects for economic growth.
10. I spoke of how West Suffolk Council has a clear vision – a vision of stable and sustainable growth and economic prosperity for our communities and businesses. I talked about West Suffolk being in an ideal position to be part of the national economic engine and an active part of the Cambridge Sub-region. But we also need to deal with the challenges of moving people, goods and data about freely – such as improving rail and transport links like the A14 and A11.
11. This can only be achieved by working together and we started a vital two way conversation with businesses about the future direction for West Suffolk. My main message was we are listening, and we want to work and engage with you. This conversation is helping us further understand the opportunities and challenges businesses face and they are learning the issues we have too. We are using this to help form the right course of action and then deliver speedily. I also want to ensure that we not only provide the right measures and facilities for businesses themselves but vitally for their employees. Making sure that West Suffolk remains not only a great place to have a business but to live in.

Business Festival

12. As such I am looking forward to the Business Festival, which is in its thirteenth year, and runs from 2 October to 13 October under the theme of 'the future of work.' With over 20 events across the two weeks this year's festival includes a showcase of the amazing West Suffolk College XR lab, a session on AI, future

supply chain opportunities at Sizewell C, a young traders' market, skills escalator days which bring school children into contact with industry, as well as many more events, finishing with a bang at the Bury Free Press Business Awards.

Business Support

13. We, along with Suffolk's other councils (Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council) as well as the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), have partnered to invest in business support and development services, including advice to reduce carbon emissions.
14. By working in partnership, over £1 million will be invested in Suffolk business support to March 2025. The initiative has combined local authority funding of £632,047 from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK by investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. In addition, £153,407 will come from Suffolk County Council and £300,000 from New Anglia LEP.
15. Suffolk's economy is primarily composed of micro and small enterprises, accounting for 98.1 per cent of all businesses. The partners recognise that to unlock their potential, tackle challenges and significantly boost economic growth, these businesses require targeted support.
16. The funding will see a team of experienced business advisers from the New Anglia Growth Hub offer a free, impartial service across Suffolk. The services will be accessible to any business that is located within Suffolk, including social enterprises. There will be a range of support and advice offered, including business resilience, business growth, access to funding and marketing.
17. Additionally, an intensive three-month programme providing wrap-around support will be available to small and medium-sized businesses looking to scale up.

Opportunities

18. Two jobs, skills and wellbeing fairs are being held this autumn in West Suffolk for people to attend, where local businesses and training providers will be advertising their vacancies and courses.
19. Mildenhall has already hosted the first fair on Wednesday 13 September at The Jubilee Centre. The second fair will be in Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday 4 October, 10am to 12.30pm, at The Apex as part of the West Suffolk Business Festival.
20. Both fairs offer the opportunity to meet and speak with representatives from an abundance of local employers and providers, all in one place. West Suffolk Council's support for these events is part of our drive to support our residents in learning new skills and finding employment. The council is also keen to ensure that our area continues to punch above its weight across all

employment sectors, and these fairs help our local businesses who share this ambition to recruit to their workforce.

21. Both fairs are being delivered in partnership between West Suffolk Council and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Changing Places

22. I am pleased to hear that upgraded conveniences with Newmarket's first Changing Places facility are now open following the £330,000 upgrade of the Guineas public toilets.
23. The toilets have been refurbished and new facilities have been added including the town's first public Changing Places toilet with external access. Councillor Hind visited the new facilities and I am sure can tell you more about the scheme. The project is not only about helping people access Newmarket and attracting more visitors but making facilities more energy efficient and kinder to the environment.
24. The project has been run in close association with the Guineas and other town centre organisations, to minimise disruption. I'm pleased that residents and visitors to the town for the autumn meetings will be able to use these high-quality facilities.

Cost-of-living

25. I would like to remind you all that by the time you read this and we meet for Council there will only be days left for people to apply for the Community Chest fund.
26. The council is again looking to help projects that will also support residents through the continuing cost-of-living crisis. Our local organisations are vital in supporting our communities through this financial crisis which is set to get worse.
27. West Suffolk Council opened applications for its annual Community Chest on 12 July with more than £460,000 made available to invest in work that will support West Suffolk residents. Community initiatives to help residents' health and wellbeing and support people through the cost-of-living crisis, only have until 6pm on Friday 29 September to apply.
28. Charities, community groups, voluntary organisations, faith groups and social enterprises can all apply.

Environment

29. Doing more to tackle climate change has always been a priority for me and the new administration. It is not just about what the council can do ourselves but how we encourage our communities, businesses and local organisations.

30. Which is why I am pleased to see proposals to pick up the pace and do more with residents and businesses to reduce carbon emissions and tackle climate change will be heard at Cabinet.
31. I am in the unenviable position of writing this before a decision is made by Cabinet so I cannot say what has been agreed but hopefully the plans will be in front of you at Council. I do want to thank the Environment and Sustainability Working Group, which includes councillors from across the chamber, for their work on this and understanding the vision and goal we want to achieve.
32. The proposals include a range of initiatives to help people and businesses do more, save money and reduce the council's own impact on the environment.
33. You will have also seen from the papers the proposal for a £1million decarbonisation fund to support third-party organisations to reduce their net power consumption. The first call on this fund would then be for parish and town councils to upgrade their remaining streetlights to LED in order to obtain the environmental benefits.
34. While the Council was on track to meet its commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 it needed to accelerate schemes to stay on target.
35. The recommendations include a new action plan building on the consistent progress being made towards carbon net zero on the council's own activities and highlights some specific opportunities:
 - Businesses to be supported to meet the challenge of increasing utility costs and reduce carbon emissions through a business plan to increase the scope of the Solar for Business scheme which installs fully funded PV systems on organisations roofs.
 - Residents are to be supported with:
 - Housing to be helped to become more energy efficient by ensuring the Housing Strategy addresses environmental performance, by investigating further support for the current Warm Homes Suffolk scheme and by using the opportunities in the emerging Local Plan to enhance the performance of new homes, including a minimum biodiversity net gain.
 - Communications campaigns to engage effort on reducing waste, increasing recycling of what waste is left, promoting local food production and increasing biodiversity.
 - The council's activities will come under tighter environmental focus. Decisions councillors are asked to make will be assessed for environmental impact, and paperless working and the use of virtual or hybrid meeting will continue.
 - The council's leading role in renewable energy would be expanded to investigate opportunities in wind and hydrogen energy sources.

36. I think there are excellent steps forward in bringing more pace and action to our ambitions to tackle climate change. It's our intention to keep the Environment and Sustainability Working Party going even after this report, so that it can both review our performance on a regular basis and also keep developing ways in which we can improve our performance in this area. Full details of this will be brought to council for approval very shortly.

Mutiny In Colour

37. If you have not seen it, I would urge you to join the 18,000 people who have visited or bought tickets for the Mutiny In Colour exhibitions.
38. There's not long left to enjoy the work of internationally renowned contemporary artists including Banksy, in this exciting exhibition which had spanned three West Suffolk towns.
39. It is currently on at our own Moyse's Hall Museum in Bury St Edmunds, and the National Horseracing Museum in Newmarket with each venue offering different, exciting pieces to see, all in their own unique setting.
40. The exhibition, which launched in early June, has been supported by John Brandler of Brandler Galleries who owns much of the artwork displayed.
41. The exhibition has now left Haverhill Arts Centre where more than 100 works of modern art were on show.
42. It is the final month to see Mutiny at Moyse's Hall and the National Horse Racing Museum when the exhibition ends on Sunday, 1 October. Moyse's Hall is the only place that you can see the original Suffolk Banksy, Sandcastle Child while the NHRM is the only place where people can see life-sized, high-resolution photographs of all seven pieces of Banksy's work in the Ukraine, much of which has since been destroyed in the war there.
43. I want to thank everyone who has been involved in bringing and hosting this internationally important exhibition. It has meant people from across West Suffolk and beyond could experience art that would normally be curated in this way in major cities. At the same time it has brought visitors and supported local businesses.

MPs

44. I will be meeting with local MPs to raise issues brought up at the meetings we have had already over the summer as well as challenges and barriers that are keeping West Suffolk from reaching its full potential. There are many things Government and its agencies can do or unlock to help our area including certainty over funding, making clear announcements on what councils will be expected to do about new recycling and waste policies as well what budget will come with that. We all feel frustrated about having to wait for the long overdue government legislation to be brought in to allow us to reduce waste and improve recycling. Rest assured I will be making our case in the strongest terms.

45. There are many ways that our influence as a council extends beyond our day to day activities, and I just want to give a little flavour here of some of the things I am doing as leader. As a council we are a full member of the East of England Local Government Association, and I have been appointed as chair to the Local Government Employer Panel and the associated Regional Joint Council, one of the three boards which the organisation runs.
46. There are also many local organisations which we work with, and I have been meeting as many as I can over the past months and will continue to do so.
47. I'd also like to take this opportunity to say a few words about the new Cabinet. The administration has been in office for just over the famous 100 days now, and in that time, we have been able to deal with the challenges we have to face, set our priorities and put the building blocks in place to deliver our vision.
48. For example, the decision to discontinue using glyphosate-based weed killers which was taken last year with the overwhelming support of council has led to problems with weeds and untidy verges. Cabinet has taken this task on, and a small working group under Councillor Shipp's leadership is now working on durable and workable solutions to make sure we are properly managing our green areas.
49. In addition to strengthen the role of scrutiny and oversight by councillors we have reinstated the regular quarterly meetings between the leader, chief executive and chairs and vice chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny and Performance and Audit Scrutiny committees. The first one for many a long year was held last month.
50. There is also an enormous amount of work being put in behind the scenes by all the members of Cabinet, and you will see the evidence of this in the coming months and years. To recognise this enormous amount of work, we have now instigated a Cabinet and Leader's Office in this building, and at any given time you are likely to find myself or members of the cabinet in there.

And finally....Christmas

51. It feels too soon to talk about Christmas. However, I would like to take this opportunity to say a magical, memorable experience is set to entertain families of all ages in West Suffolk this Christmas.
52. As I type this, we are on our way already to selling nearly 1,000 tickets just in the first week for the event set in an all-weather auditorium in the stunning Abbey Gardens. Children and adults alike will enjoy an Oscar winning modern retelling of Peter and the Wolf, accompanied by live performances from the fantastic Orpheus Sinfonia.
53. Ticket prices have been kept low and children under five can go for free, although they must have a ticket and be accompanied by an adult. In total, 16 performances will take place from Thursday 7 December to Sunday 10 December, with screenings each day at 1pm, 3.15pm, 5.30pm and 7.45pm.

54. Peter and the Wolf is being organised by West Suffolk Council as part of the Christmas in Bury St Edmunds partnership of events and activities as well as our drive to support our communities, businesses and town centres.

I hope to see you all there.

Councillor Cliff Waterman
Leader of West Suffolk Council

Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

Report number:	COU/WS/23/014	
Report to and date:	Council	26 September 2023
Documents attached:	Report number: CAB/WS/23/040 'De-carbonisation Fund'	
	Report number: CAB/WS/23/041 'Western Way Project'	
	Addendum to Report number: CAB/WS/23/041 'Western Way Project'	

A. Referrals from Cabinet: 13 June 2023 and 18 July 2023

There are no referrals emanating from the last meetings of Cabinet held on 13 June 2023 (verbally reported at Council on 20 June 2023) and 18 July 2023.

B. Referrals from Cabinet: 19 September 2023

The following referrals have been compiled before the decisions have been taken by the Cabinet and are based on the recommendations contained within each of the reports listed below. Any amendments made by the Cabinet to the recommendations within these reports will be notified to members in advance of the meeting accordingly.

1. Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report 2022 to 2023

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

Cabinet Report number: [CAB/WS/23/037](#)

Financial Resilience Sub-Committee Report number: [FRS/WS/23/003](#)

Recommended:

That the Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report 2022 to 2023, as contained in Report number: FRS/WS/23/003, be approved.

- 1.1 Following the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee's consideration of report number: [FRS/WS/23/03](#) on 17 July 2023, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee received a verbal report on the Sub-Committee's consideration of the report.
- 1.2 The Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report (2022 to 2023) included tables summarising the interest earned and average rate of return achieved; treasury management investment activity during the year; investments held as at 31 March 2023; external borrowings and temporary loans; capital financing requirement and internal borrowing.
- 1.3 The report also contained information on the council's borrowing strategy and sources of borrowing; borrowing and capital costs (affordability); liability benchmark; borrowing and income (proportionality) and borrowing and asset yields.
- 1.4 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the report and did not raise any specific issues.
- 1.5 On 19 September 2023, the Cabinet will consider the recommendation of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, as reproduced above. Pending any comments made by the Cabinet, this recommendation is referred to Council for final approval.

2. Treasury Management Report (June 2023)

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

Cabinet Report number: [CAB/WS/23/038](#)

Financial Resilience Sub-Committee Report number: [FRS/WS/23/004](#)

Recommended:

That the Treasury Management Report (June 2023), as contained in Report number FRS/WS/23/004, be approved.

- 2.1 Following the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee's consideration of report number [FRS/WS/23/004](#) on 17 July 2023, the Committee received a verbal report on the Sub-Committee's consideration of the report.

- 2.2 The report showed the position as at 30 June 2023. At this point, the Council held £49.5 million of investments and borrowing of £9.6 million. Interest receivable in the first quarter was driving a budget surplus of £315,930 due to rising interest rates and high levels of cash invested. The surplus was being held in the capital projects financing reserve in order to mitigate the risk of future borrowing in the current interest environment. The Council's liability benchmark and cashflow forecast showed that the Council would not need to borrow externally within the short to medium-term this financial year.
- 2.3 Following the latest inflation report the Council has seen that the market was expecting a slightly lower projection in the Bank of England's interest rate increase at their next meeting. The Council continues to seek external advice regarding the timing of external borrowing requirements and that was not predicted for cash flow reasons for the next 12 to 24 months. Officers were also in discussions with the Council's advisors, Arlingclose to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide some Treasury Management and oversight training.
- 2.4 The Sub-Committee scrutinised the investment activity for 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023, and asked questions to which responses were provided.
- 2.5 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 27 July 2023 scrutinised the report. In particular, discussions were held on Arlingclose, the Council's treasury advisors around general advice provided, quarterly reports produced and training they provided.
- 2.6 On 19 September 2023, the Cabinet will consider the recommendation of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, as reproduced above. Pending any comments made by the Cabinet, this recommendation is referred to Council for final approval.

Continued over page...

3. De-carbonisation Initiatives Fund

Portfolio holders: Councillors Gerald Kelly and David Taylor

Cabinet Report number: [CAB/WS/23/040](#). Also attached in full to this Council report

Recommended, that:

- 1. A Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund of £1 million be created, funded by the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve.**
- 2. The first call on that fund be a grant scheme for the upgrade of streetlights owned by town and parish councils to light-emitting diode (LED) lanterns on the basis outlined in Report number CAB/WS/23/040.**
- 3. Cabinet be authorised, if applicable, to agree the use of any remaining balance in the Fund for additional decarbonisation initiatives.**
- 4. The Council's Section 151 Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Council's prudential indicators.**

- 3.1 At their meeting on 19 September 2023, the Cabinet will be receiving the report of the Environment and Sustainability Working Group which confirms the Council's commitment to addressing the Climate and Environment Emergency and to reaching net zero by 2030 in respect of Council operations. In June 2023, the Leader of the Council also expressed the new Cabinet's wish to consider additional actions the Council could take to support and encourage West Suffolk residents, businesses and partners to address climate change.
- 3.2 Report number CAB/WS/23/040 is seeking to create a £1 million fund to support third parties in pursuing de-carbonisation initiatives. It also identifies an initial priority area for that spending which could result in a large environmental improvement for the district in keeping with the Council's adopted priorities. Namely, the upgrade of streetlighting owned by town and parish councils.
- 3.3 Therefore, members are requested to refer to Report number CAB/WS/23/040, as attached to this report, which sets out the proposals in full.
- 3.4 Pending any comments made by the Cabinet, these recommendations are referred to Council for final approval.

Continued over page....

4. Western Way Project

Portfolio holders: Councillors Cliff Waterman, Victor Lukaniuk, Ian Shipp and Diane Hind

Cabinet Report number: [CAB/WS/23/041](#). Also attached in full to this report
Addendum to Cabinet Report number: CAB/WS/23/041. Also attached in full

Recommended, that:

- 1. The delivery of the Western Way project in Bury St Edmunds be revised as set out in this report and in accordance with the following resolutions.**
- 2. Officers be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Resources, to deliver a refurbishment of the existing Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre provided that the total cost of these works is fully met by the Council's already available budgets for the centre and any new third-party funding that can be obtained, as set out in section 3 of this report.**
- 3. A budget of £75,000, funded from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve, be approved to develop an initial business case for alternative options for the Olding Road site.**
- 4. The existing allocation of up to £1 million from the original West Suffolk Operational Hub project towards remediation of the former council depot be retained on an invest-to-save basis in the Council's Capital Programme to cover the cost of any immediate works to the existing Olding Road site which will add value to this asset and/or reduce holding costs irrespective of which future option for its use is adopted; any expenditure from this allocation to be approved by the Council's section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.**
- 5. A provision of up to £2.4 million from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve is approved to fund any abortive costs arising from the new approach to the Western Way project.**
- 6. The current Section 73 planning application to allow phasing of the original planning consent for Western Way remain on hold until a new decision is reached by Council on the future of the Olding Road site.**
- 7. Officers be authorised to appoint a new external project team and contractor(s) to progress the new approach, within the new spending authorities set out above and in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.**
- 8. The Council's Section 151 Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Council's prudential indicators.**

- 4.1 Phase 1 of the current Western Way (WW) project in Bury St Edmunds was approved in principle by Council in December 2022, and its final target budget was approved by Cabinet in March 2023 (approximately £61 million including land acquisition costs). However, approval to sign a contract and deliver the first stage of the project was subject to financial tests being met after the final stage of tendering with the preferred contractor, Morgan Sindall, in summer 2023. A business case for phase 2 of the project had not yet been considered by councillors, but a further budget of up to £10 million was approved to address the remainder of the site in the meantime.
- 4.2 When the new Cabinet was appointed in May 2023, it announced its intention to review the future of the WW project in the light of changed economic circumstances. This report is the outcome of those deliberations by the Cabinet.
- 4.3 As things stand, second stage tenders from sub-contractors have been received for the phase 1 scheme and are still being evaluated and value-engineered by the contractor and project team to reduce their cost to a viable level. There is also considerable pressure on the revenue side of the project, for example increased interest rates, which would have needed to be explored and mitigated if the project had gone ahead.
- 4.4 Work to further adapt the scheme to meet the viability tests would delay not only certainty on the future of leisure services but also improvements to the current leisure facilities themselves (either as a newbuild or refurbishment). Certainty over the other elements of the project (a pre-school, archive and health facility) would also be affected.
- 4.5 Ultimately though, even if the viability test can be met, this will still be a very large capital investment in excess of £50 million for West Suffolk Council (WSC). The project also relies on achieving significant new income streams at a time of great economic uncertainty.
- 4.6 A project at this scale (with further project costs and time required to both confirm and then maintain its possible viability), carries significant risk to the authority and taxpayers at a time of major financial pressure on local authorities and household budgets. Pressure which has worsened since December 2022. The risk of this financial investment is felt by Cabinet to currently outweigh the potential outcomes of the WW scheme.
- 4.7 For this reason, after careful consideration, it is proposed by Cabinet to cancel the Western Way project. This will stop all work on a new leisure centre and defers a decision on the Olding Road site until further reports are received. To ensure the ongoing security of leisure facilities for Bury St Edmunds and a large catchment, it is proposed that essential refurbishment works take place to the current Bury Leisure Centre (BLC) instead. This will guarantee its security as a facility for the medium-term.

- 4.8 This approach replaces the risks of a very large and complex capital project, and the revenue risks of it being underwritten by new savings and income, with those of a smaller and simpler capital project, which will be funded entirely within existing revenue budget commitments so as not to put further pressure on the Council's budget. While, at the same time, keeping all options for the future of the Olding Road site open.
- 4.9 More rationale for the proposal is contained in the press statement released by Cabinet on 8 September 2023 and attached to this report as Appendix 1 to Report number CAB/WS/23/041.
- 4.10 The remainder of Report number CAB/WS/23/041 sets out the practical implications and risks of this new proposal and seeks new authorities to take the project forward accordingly. This is divided into the various different elements of the project.
- 4.11 Therefore, Members are requested to refer to Report number CAB/WS/23/041, as attached to this report, which sets out the proposals in full.
- 4.12 In addition, a summary of the identified opportunities, risks and financial implications contained in an addendum to Report number CAB/WS/23/041, is attached. This analysis has been undertaken by the Council's statutory officers and was circulated to Cabinet prior to its meeting on 19 September 2023 for consideration in conjunction with the full report.
- 4.13 Pending any comments made by the Cabinet, these recommendations are referred to Council for final approval.

This page is intentionally left blank

Decarbonisation initiatives fund

Report number:	CAB/WS/23/040	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	19 September 2023
	Council	26 September 2023
Cabinet members:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Tel: 07968 396389 Email: Gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Councillor David Taylor Portfolio Holder for Operations Tel: 07583 078524 Email: David.taylor@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Alex Wilson Strategic Director Tel: 01284 757695 Email: alex.wilson@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

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

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: **Subject to approval by Council, it is recommended that:**

- 1. A Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund of £1 million be created, funded by the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve.**
- 2. The first call on that fund be a grant scheme for the upgrade of streetlights owned by town and parish councils to light-emitting diode (LED) lanterns on the basis outlined in this paper.**
- 3. Cabinet be authorised, if applicable, to agree the use of any remaining balance in the Fund for additional decarbonisation initiatives.**
- 4. The Council’s Section 151 Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Council’s prudential indicators.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 Elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting, Cabinet is receiving the report of the Environmental Working Group which confirms the Council's commitment to addressing the Climate and Environment Emergency and to reaching net zero by 2030 in respect of Council operations. In June 2023, the Leader of the Council also expressed the new Cabinet's wish to consider additional actions the Council could take to support and encourage West Suffolk residents, businesses and partners to address climate change.
- 1.2 This paper seeks to create a £1 million fund to support third-parties in pursuing de-carbonisation initiatives. It also identifies an initial priority area for that spending which could result in a large environmental improvement for the district in keeping with the Council's adopted priorities. Namely, the upgrade of streetlighting owned by town and parish councils.
- 1.3 By way of background, the majority of streetlights in West Suffolk are owned and maintained by Suffolk County Council (SCC) as the highway authority – around 80 per cent of approximately 20,000 lights. For a variety of local and historical reasons, the remaining 20 per cent are owned by West Suffolk Council (WSC), town and parish councils, registered social landlords, etc. Around 10 per cent or 2,000 in number are owned by town and parish councils.
- 1.4 Following an audit of streetlights in 2022, WSC has already agreed:
 - (a) to discuss with SCC the ownership of lights which clearly fulfil a highway safety function but are not currently owned by the highway authority; and
 - (b) to examine WSC's ownership of lights as part of a wider review of our relationship with town and parish councils with the aim of ensuring that, where WSC continues to own a streetlight, this is on a consistent basis across the whole of West Suffolk.
- 1.5 This paper does not propose to change these agreed actions, or that WSC intervenes any further in relation to the historical ownership patterns of third-parties' streetlights. Nor does this paper seek to make any changes to local decisions about how lights are managed and their hours of operation. Instead, it seeks to address another issue revealed by the audit. Namely that town and parish councils still operate many streetlights with older lanterns which have not yet been upgraded to modern light-emitting diode (LED) lanterns. As WSC does not own them, we do not have detailed knowledge of the status and condition of these lights. However, we understand from the audit that it is likely that the majority of the 2,000 parish owned lights are not yet LED. We also understand that around three-quarters of these lights are, like WSC's own lights, managed by SCC under a central maintenance contract.

- 1.6 Town and parish councils are not averse to this LED conversion process – some have already committed to do it and, as current lanterns fail, they will need to be converted to LED in any event as they cannot be replaced. However, in terms of the direct or opportunity cost, the upfront capital expense of conversion is problematic for some of these smaller local authorities to take on. Some town councils have faced bills of several hundred thousand pounds because they own over 500 lights. It has also, to date, not been possible to identify external grants for upgrading streetlights because, as assets, they tend to fall outside of eligibility criteria.
- 1.7 Conversion to LED, when combined with a greater range of flexibility in how a light is used, can reduce the energy consumption of a streetlight by up to 80 per cent depending on the choices of the owner/operator. Clearly this saves the light's owner a large sum in energy costs (particularly at present). But, just as importantly, and the reason for this proposal, it saves a large amount of carbon emissions. Which is why SCC and WSC have already committed to upgrade all of their own lights to LED. WSC now wishes to assist with bringing all council-owned lights up to that modern environmental standard as quickly as possible by initially targeting its new decarbonisation fund at this objective. Including, for reasons of equity, supporting those councils which have very recently started the upgrade process but have not yet received any significant return on that investment.
- 1.8 In relation to an environmental return on the Council's investment, this is hard to calculate accurately at this stage of the project (see section 2 for how this information will be collected and monitored).
- 1.9 However, assuming the number of lights still to convert to LED might be, hypothetically, in the range of 1,500 to 1,800 of the 2,000 parish and town council streetlights, this could potentially mean that these lights are currently emitting over 115 tonnes of CO₂ or using over 600,000 kilowatt hours of energy a year. If local councils were able to convert these lights, this could reduce to around 30 tonnes a year. A reduction equivalent to taking at least 75 average homes entirely off the electricity grid, or around 20 gasoline-fuelled cars off the road. This will also, via the local council's own budgets, release savings to spend on other local priorities (although this sum cannot currently be calculated by WSC as we do not know the running costs).

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 The proposal to Cabinet and Council is that West Suffolk Council creates a Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund of £1 million to support third-parties to reduce their net power consumption. The capital will be made available from within the council's Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve. As such, from a WSC point of view, the financial impact would be one of an opportunity cost rather than a direct impact on revenue budgets i.e. we are doing this instead of investing that funding in a different priority.

2.2 The first call on this fund would then be for parish and town councils to upgrade their remaining streetlights to LED in order to obtain the environmental benefits. Any additional or alternative uses for this fund will be considered at a future date, if considered necessary.

2.3 It is proposed that the streetlighting grant scheme is operated on the following basis:

- (a) It is an environmental initiative only, and it is only available to town and parish councils in relation to streetlights they own which provide a safety function for public highways, public rights of way, public open spaces or public car parks.
- (b) The awarding of a grant to town or parish councils for the purpose of upgrading streetlights will not result in a transfer of maintenance or other responsibilities to West Suffolk Council. Town and parish councils taking part would therefore be required to confirm their understanding that WSC will not take on any future ownership role in the upgraded lights.
- (c) No precedent will be set in relation to environmental upgrades of any other third-party assets, particularly those for which other funding schemes exist.
- (d) Acknowledging that some town and parish councils have already started to upgrade their lights at their own cost, the grant can be paid in relation to any LED upgrades carried out since 1 April 2022. This is because these upgrades would not yet have generated large savings to that council. No earlier upgrades will be covered.
- (e) The cut-off date for signing up to the WSC grant scheme is 31 January 2024.
- (f) The grant will cover 100% of the cost of works, including condition surveys, subject to the provisions below.
- (g) WSC reserves the right to review implementation of the scheme if the estimated expenditure exceeds £1 million.
- (h) Participating councils will make their own choices about the specification for upgrading lanterns and from whom to procure those works. The only technical condition is that they must be LED.
- (i) Subject to a condition survey, the grant will also cover the cost of essential repairs to, or replacement of, any lighting columns or brackets which is required to enable the first installation of LED lanterns on that specific column/bracket. WSC will fund the cost of any condition survey as part of the grant scheme.
- (j) Participating councils must therefore also confirm by 31 January 2024 if they wish to carry out the condition survey and works themselves or to

ask WSC to procure the works on their behalf via that town or parish council's existing SCC maintenance contract.

- (k) WSC must receive estimates for any condition surveys and subsequent conversion works to be commissioned directly by the town or parish council by 31 March 2024. Those works must be completed by 31 March 2025. Quotations must be obtained in accordance with the town or parish council's normal procurement rules but WSC reserves the right to refuse to fund the full cost of any works which it does not believe offer good value for money to WSC taxpayers.
- (l) Grants will be paid in relation to actual costs incurred, not a notional rate.
- (m) Participating councils must indemnify WSC from any liability occurring from faults or errors arising from the works, and agree to take on any follow-up work with contractors if applicable.
- (n) The participating councils must sign-up to agreed publicity with WSC to ensure the environmental credentials of the scheme, and the source of the funding, are promoted.

2.4 As mentioned above, while WSC has basic data on the number and location of lights from its 2022 audit, we don't own the lights or have any idea of their current status or condition. Therefore, until we seek expressions of interest from parish and town councils and seek condition surveys it will be hard to estimate the likely cost of the grant scheme accurately.

2.5 However, extrapolating estimates WSC has had for its own lights and estimates shared by some of the town councils, it could cost between £750,000 and £1 million to convert the parish and town council lights to LED. If this estimate is exceeded, a further report will be made to councillors (see proposed condition (g) above).

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 West Suffolk Council does not have to offer this grant to local councils as it has no statutory obligation to maintain streetlights and is not required to work with other local lighting authorities to review street lighting distribution and operation. So doing nothing is an option. However, the potential environment and cost benefits of LED upgrades would have a significant impact on local communities. Specifically, this is a chance to ensure that the technical performance of these important community assets is consistently high across the district, and to make a high-impact investment in decarbonisation.
- 3.2 There is the option to only offer part or match-funding. A 100% grant is expected to make it easier to get local council sign-up quickly and thereby

unlock the benefits. Hence this being recommended. But clearly this results in a larger opportunity cost to WSC in terms of this being the first-call on the £1 million decarbonisation fund.

- 3.3 Another option considered was to offer a grant towards replacing the lantern only. Environmentally the benefit is achieved by changing the lantern. However, in some instances this can't take place until the condition of the wider fitting is addressed. As such, the condition of lighting columns and brackets is often a large part of the capital cost quoted for conversion. For instance, the SCC contractor addresses the whole lighting installation not just the lantern, as part of a single set of works. For this reason, it is recommended that the grant is also available for essential maintenance works to the lighting column provided this is linked to the upgrade of the lantern to LED and a condition survey. If this principle is supported, it will also be more efficient to offer assistance to the town and parish councils in relation to arranging the condition surveys. Done centrally, this would be at a relatively small marginal cost to WSC as part of the overall grant scheme. Whereas to an individual town or parish council it could be a large one-off cost in relation to their annual budgets and act as a disincentive to take part.

4. Risks associated with the proposals

- 4.1 There is no equivalent or precedent for a grant of this nature being offered to local councils by a district council authority. This and other operational risk can be mitigated with explicit and well-defined grant conditions (see earlier section of report).
- 4.2 In addition, the initial outlay of £1 million in capital represents a significant commitment for West Suffolk Council. The risk of a cost over-run is mitigated by requiring a cut-off date for sign-up and being able to ascertain the likely total cost of works before any expenditure on the upgrades takes place (since there will be condition surveys/quotations for new works and certainty on cost in relation to works already carried out). If the value of the works is likely to exceed the £1 million available a new report will be brought to Cabinet before proceeding.

5. Implications arising from the proposals

- 5.1 Financial – covered in the report
- 5.2 Legal compliance – not applicable at this stage but any grant conditions will be prepared with legal input.
- 5.3 Personal data processing – not applicable.
- 5.4 Equalities – not applicable.
- 5.5 Crime and disorder – not applicable at this stage. However, there is extensive research carried out in Suffolk and nationally on the impact of street lighting on crime and safety for parishes to draw upon when making future decisions about their own lights.

- 5.6 Environment or sustainability – covered in the report.
- 5.7 HR or staffing – establishing the grant will be carried out within existing workloads of officers.
- 5.8 Changes to existing policies – not applicable at this stage.
- 5.9 External organisations (such as businesses, community groups) – the grant and later options will affect parish and town councils.

6. Appendices referenced in this report

- 6.1 None

7. Background documents associated with this report

- 7.1 [Street Lighting \(Report number: CAB/WS/22/058\)](#)
- 7.2 [Street Lighting \(Report number: CAB/WS/22/027\)](#)

Western Way Project

Report number:	CAB/WS/23/041	
Report to and date(s):	Cabinet	19 September 2023
	Council	26 September 2023
Cabinet member(s):	Councillor Cliff Waterman Leader of the Council Telephone: 01284 757001 Email: cliff.waterman@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Councillor Victor Lukaniuk Deputy Leader of the Council Telephone: 07850 984500 Email: victor.lukaniuk@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Councillor Ian Shipp Portfolio Holder for Leisure Telephone: 07368 134769 Email: ian.shipp@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Councillor Diane Hind Portfolio Holder for Resources Telephone: 07890 198957 Email: diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
	Alex Wilson Strategic Director Telephone: 01284 757695 Email: alex.wilson@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **The decision made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours. This item will be referred to Council for a final decision and is, therefore, not subject to call-in. For the same reason, this item was not included on the Cabinet Decisions Plan.**

Wards impacted: **All wards**

Recommendation: Subject to approval by Council, it is recommended that:

- 1. The delivery of the Western Way project in Bury St Edmunds be revised as set out in this report and in accordance with the following resolutions;**
- 2. Officers be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Resources, to deliver a refurbishment of the existing Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre provided that the total cost of these works is fully met by the Council's already available budgets for the centre and any new third-party funding that can be obtained, as set out in section 3 of this report;**
- 3. A budget of £75,000, funded from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve, be approved to develop an initial business case for alternative options for the Olding Road site;**
- 4. The existing allocation of up to £1 million from the original West Suffolk Operational Hub project towards remediation of the former council depot be retained on an invest-to-save basis in the Council's Capital Programme to cover the cost of any immediate works to the existing Olding Road site which will add value to this asset and/or reduce holding costs irrespective of which future option for its use is adopted; any expenditure from this allocation to be approved by the Council's section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources;**
- 5. A provision of up to £2.4 million from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve is approved to fund any abortive costs arising from the new approach to the Western Way project;**
- 6. The current Section 73 planning application to allow phasing of the original planning consent for Western Way remain on hold until a new decision is reached by Council on the future of the Olding Road site;**
- 7. Officers be authorised to appoint a new external project team and contractor(s) to progress the new approach, within the new spending**

authorities set out above and in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules; and

- 8. The Council's Section 151 Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Council's prudential indicators.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 Phase 1 of the current Western Way (WW) project in Bury St Edmunds was approved in principle by Council in December 2022, and its final target budget was approved by Cabinet in March 2023 (approximately £61 million including land acquisition costs). However, approval to sign a contract and deliver the first stage of the project was subject to financial tests being met after the final stage of tendering with the preferred contractor, Morgan Sindall, in summer 2023. A business case for phase 2 of the project had not yet been considered by councillors, but a further budget of up to £10 million was approved to address the remainder of the site in the meantime.
- 1.2 When the new Cabinet was appointed in May 2023, it announced its intention to review the future of the WW project in the light of changed economic circumstances. This report is the outcome of those deliberations by the Cabinet.
- 1.3 As things stand, second stage tenders from sub-contractors have been received for the phase 1 scheme and are still being evaluated and value-engineered by the contractor and project team to reduce their cost to a viable level. There is also considerable pressure on the revenue side of the project, for example increased interest rates, which would have needed to be explored and mitigated if the project had gone ahead (see paragraph 1.6 below).
- 1.4 Work to further adapt the scheme to meet the viability tests would delay not only certainty on the future of leisure services but also improvements to the current leisure facilities themselves (either as a newbuild or refurbishment). Certainty over the other elements of the project (a pre-school, archive and health facility) would also be affected.
- 1.5 Ultimately though, even if the viability test can be met, this will still be a very large capital investment in excess of £50 million for West Suffolk Council (WSC). The project also relies on achieving significant new income streams at a time of great economic uncertainty.
- 1.6 A project at this scale (with further project costs and time required to both confirm and then maintain its possible viability), carries significant risk to the authority and taxpayers at a time of major financial pressure on local authorities and household budgets. Pressure which has worsened since December 2022. The risk of this financial investment is felt by Cabinet to currently outweigh the potential outcomes of the WW scheme.
- 1.7 For this reason, after careful consideration, it is proposed by Cabinet to cancel the Western Way project. This will stop all work on a new leisure centre and defers a decision on the Olding Road site until further reports are received. To ensure the ongoing security of leisure facilities for Bury St Edmunds and a large catchment, it is proposed that essential refurbishment

works take place to the current Bury Leisure Centre (BLC) instead. This will guarantee its security as a facility for the medium-term.

- 1.8 This approach replaces the risks of a very large and complex capital project, and the revenue risks of it being underwritten by new savings and income, with those of a smaller and simpler capital project, which will be funded entirely within existing revenue budget commitments so as not to put further pressure on the Council's budget. While, at the same time, keeping all options for the future of the Olding Road site open.
- 1.9 More rationale for the proposal is contained in the press statement released by Cabinet on 8 September 2023 and attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- 1.10 The remainder of this report sets out the practical implications and risks of this new proposal, and seeks new authorities to take the project forward accordingly. This is divided into the various different elements of the project.

2. Olding Road site (former depot and logistics building and car park)

- 2.1 All options for the Olding Road site are still open other than for any replacement of the BLC. What Cabinet is proposing is a reappraisal of options so that this valuable asset does not remain unused for longer than necessary.
- 2.2 As set out in the recommendations, it is therefore proposed that a project budget of up to £75,000 be approved, funded from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve, to support development of these options and the presentation of a new business case to councillors.

Holding Costs for Olding Road site

- 2.3 The current Olding Road building is empty and, as previously reported to councillors in December 2022, would require refurbishment to re-let commercially. The building is currently incurring holding costs of around £300,000 per annum (business rates, utilities, security, etc) which had been planned to be passed over to the contractor on their occupation of the site for redevelopment. If the WW project does not now proceed as planned then these costs will need to be accommodated within the Council's overall budget until such time as the future use of the site is known. These costs will be included in ongoing budget monitoring and reported in any forecast budget outturn position to ensure transparency.
- 2.4 Short term uses for the site will also be considered in order to try and minimise these holding costs during the options appraisal work. Some of the proposed enabling works may also assist with holding costs, for instance in reducing current security costs (see next section).

Enabling or Remediation Works for the Olding Road site

- 2.5 The existing WW capital budget includes £1 million from the original West Suffolk Operational Hub project for remediation of the former council depot. It is proposed that an authority to spend up to this sum remains in place so that it can be spent on any works that would add value to the Olding Road site, whether or not WW proceeded. This approach makes good sense in asset management terms and, while various new options will now need to be considered for the site, retaining the original budget of up to £1 million will still allow some planned enabling works to continue regardless of its future use.
- 2.6 A good example would be to conclude some of the environmental remediation of the external areas and the partial stripping out of the former council depot building (not needed in any future context so simply an unavoidable cost that is currently being deferred at a time of high inflation).
- 2.7 Any enabling/added value works would also need to be approved by the Council's S151 (Chief Finance) Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.
- 2.8 In terms of this existing delegation for enabling/added works, it is also worth recording that the Council has already secured from UKPN the ability to export renewable energy from the site, at a cost of £83,000 for the necessary works. These rights could already be used by West Suffolk House and its recently installed battery and, in any context for the future of the Olding Road site, there is likely to be considerable renewable energy generation through PV panels. Including from canopies over surface car parks.

3 Refurbishment of the existing leisure centre

What funding is available for a refurbishment?

- 3.1 There is already a planned maintenance budget for BLC included within council budgets. If WW had gone ahead, this maintenance budget would have moved to the new leisure centre (and been reduced to reflect a newer building, which was part of the business case). But if there is now certainty on retaining the existing BLC building, the risk of abortive costs from doing anything other than essential maintenance on the existing building in the interim is removed. This means that the current maintenance budget can be released to offset some of the refurbishment cost now proposed to the existing site. For reference, the current provision in the Council's asset management programme is a one-off allocation of £450,000 in 2024/25.
- 3.2 The last reviews of the WW business case by councillors in December 2022 and March 2023 also took into account the Council's existing annual revenue provision for addressing the condition of BLC from 2025/26 onwards. This money is available because, at the outline business case stage for WW in

2018, it was identified that there was no 'do nothing' option for the leisure centre and a sum would be needed either to pay for some form of refurbishment or to put towards the cost of a new centre. This recurring annual sum is £724,000 and is incorporated in the Council's budgets and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. In other words, it is already in the Council's future base budget, and savings targets for the Council take that fact into account.

3.3 This annual sum is therefore still available for a refurbishment project of BLC. Furthermore, provided that the ongoing annual revenue cost of that refurbishment stays within the £724,000 from 2025/26 and the one-off 2024/25 maintenance allowance, then there will be no new impact on the budget. Depending on the timing of any refurbishment works, there could be a potential impact on the 2024/25 revenue budget as the £724,000 provision is not currently allowed for within it. Cabinet will therefore take the necessary steps to manage this within the refurbishment project.

3.4 In very simple terms, the £724,000 available for BLC will need to be used for two things (meaning the size of one affects the size of the other):

(a) the revenue impacts of retaining an existing building compared to a new one. These are:

(i) mitigating the impact of any disruption to the centre during building works: It is impossible to predict the length or extent of any disruption before an essential maintenance and refurbishment scheme is worked up. However, if there is any disruption some mitigation may be required, and this was factored into previous estimates for refurbishment options.

(ii) the impact on Abbeycroft Leisure (ACL)'s income/council costs of staying in the existing centre: There was an estimated net saving/income to the Council of around £475,000 a year in relation to the Council employing ACL to manage BLC and maintaining the new building. ACL and the Council will need to review these estimates in relation to a retained BLC. Future management fee discussions would, however, take into account any running cost savings for ACL that might result from upgrades to plant or the addition of new renewables at BLC as part of the refurbishment; and

(b) Meeting the annual borrowing costs for essential maintenance at the leisure centre i.e. the cost of the actual maintenance and some refurbishment. The spending power this sum offers is dictated significantly by not just prevailing interest rates but the length and method of borrowing. Borrowing will also prudently reflect the expected life of the investment made on the building itself.

3.5 As a positive impact on what can be spent, a refurbishment budget for BLC could also still potentially be supplemented by two other sources of funding:

(a) Section 106 (developer) funding secured by the local planning authority to address the impact of new housing growth.

The 2022 indoor facilities assessment has provided a planning policy evidence base that there is a need to provide extra leisure capacity to cater for anticipated population growth coming forward under at least the current local plan.

The WW business case estimated that a sum of around £500,000 would therefore be secured from developers in coming years (based on agreements already signed and expected new schemes).

It may be possible to factor some of this sum into a refurbishment project for BLC, immediately or in the future. Alternatively, different outlets for the new capacity and funding will be sought.

(b) Grants

The Council would always seek external national or local funding for capital projects. In the case of the refurbishment of BLC, now that there is certainty it will remain in operation for at least the medium-term we may be able to apply for energy efficiency grants from government (as these only apply to existing buildings).

- 3.6 It may also be possible to continue the work to date to secure cheaper forms of borrowing from national or local schemes to support investments in renewable energy (although these will only offer marginal benefits compared to normal Public Works Loans Board loans).
- 3.7 For the above reasons, it is not possible ahead of more detailed work being carried out to identify what final capital sum will actually be available for a refurbishment. However, to summarise this section of the report, what can be identified now is which factors will dictate the upper limit of what can be spent. Namely:
- (a) existing planned maintenance budgets for BLC (a one-off £450,000 in 2024/25);
 - (b) the existing £724,000 annual asset management provision for BLC in the MTFS from 2025/26 which can be used to support both revenue impacts and capital borrowing on the existing facilities; and
 - (c) any third-party funds the Council can attract (as yet unknown).
- 3.8 Accordingly, the recommendation in this paper seeks to authorise officers, in consultation with relevant cabinet members, to deliver a project which can be funded within these three sources of funding.

What is the available funding for a refurbishment likely to cover?

- 3.9 As set out in the section above, we are not yet able to identify the sum that is likely to be available for essential maintenance and refurbishment. It is possible however to manage expectations about what may be achievable without significant external funding. Namely that this will be a basic refurbishment to address immediate issues only and to secure the continued operation of BLC in the short to medium-term. Protecting the existing leisure provision, and the health and wellbeing benefits for the community, is the Cabinet's main priority at this time of economic uncertainty.
- 3.10 This means it is important to disregard the "light" and "heavy" refurbishment options contained in the December 2022 business case review for WW. Those two options (ranging from £13 million to over £20 million) proposed varying degrees of additional upgrades to BLC on top of the basic maintenance required. With a view to positioning the building for a further 15-20 years of operation and addressing changed market conditions as well immediate maintenance. As explained in the December 2022 report, neither would be affordable without increasing the existing asset management sum of £724,000 a year. Thereby breaching the financial test for the new delegations proposed in the earlier sections of this report.
- 3.11 Instead, the primary and prudent focus of any refurbishment project for BLC will be on the fabric and infrastructure of the existing building, rather than providing new or different facilities. With grants, it may also be possible to invest in further energy efficiency measures (passive and mechanical). However, other than minor cosmetic changes, this new approach will be about ensuring BLC continues to operate for the medium-term. Further investment may also be required after 5-10 years to address subsequent planned maintenance issues, as would be the case in any building of this age. To enable a fund to be in place ready for this later investment, and to include other leisure centre sites in West Suffolk, Cabinet will also propose a further annual provision in the Council's longer-term budgets. This will be addressed through future budget-setting processes rather than in this report which addresses the immediate spending priorities.
- 3.12 The last external and independent condition survey of BLC was carried out in November 2022 to inform the December 2022 WW business case review. It identified a potential scheme of works over a period ranging from 1 to 5 years (covering the maintenance responsibilities of both WSC as landlord and ACL as tenant). The cost estimate to the two organisations for this package of works was £8.9 million, assuming a start in December 2023 and therefore at inflated rates may now be higher. New issues may also have arisen so, to inform any refurbishment, this survey work will need to be updated and a scheme of essential works developed with the appointed contractor(s) as part of the new approved project and its budget.
- 3.13 The full extent of these £8.9million works would have allowed the existing site to extend its useful life for around 10 years. However, given the constraints set out earlier in the report, it is very unlikely that the existing

budget provision will be sufficient to support this level of investment unless external funding can also be found by WSC or ACL. Meaning essential maintenance may need to be prioritised. Cabinet therefore asks that the risks of deferring some of these works is acknowledged and accepted by members when considering this change in approach.

- 3.14 Cabinet also acknowledges that taking this approach to secure the medium-term future of BLC does not change the need to ensure that the asset management plan continues to address the long-term condition of all leisure centres. This will continue to be referenced in budget-setting processes.

4 Anglian Lane site

- 4.1 The Anglian Lane site potentially provided off-site car parking for the full WW scheme. However, it was not included in the phase 1 capital scheme (or financial model) as this parking would only have been required for phase 2. If Council approves this report, the Anglian Lane site will be marketed to test demand and the potential investment needed to maximise the value of the asset to the Council, in the short to long-term.
- 4.2 No new decision is needed at this time because all potential actions at Anglian Lane can be managed separately under the Council's existing best value processes for managing commercial property.

5 Wider project issues affecting sections 2 to 4 above

Partners

- 5.1 Partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors have been involved in all stages of the WW project. It is important to maintain that partnership approach with what happens next with the project.
- 5.2 The Council will therefore liaise closely with Abbeycroft (ACL) to ensure that the new approach to BLC is implemented smoothly. As our strategic partner for leisure, ACL will also liaise with users of the current centre and local and national sporting organisations to explain the change in approach.
- 5.3 Alongside a leisure centre, the proposed phase 1 WW scheme also included a pre-school, archive building and small health facility. The pre-school and archive were Suffolk County Council (SCC) projects. WSC will work with SCC under the One Public Estate (OPE) Programme to support alternative delivery options for these two facilities, including examining whether they can still form a part of any new project for the Olding Road site.
- 5.4 The small health facility in phase 1 of WW was being built by WSC at commercial risk, ancillary to the leisure centre (as in Brandon, Mildenhall and Haverhill). The Integrated Care Board (ICB) had expressed a potential

interest in taking this phase 1 facility but no formal agreement had been signed with the NHS. Meaning there is no immediate impact of this proposed decision on confirmed NHS estate plans. Again, WSC will now work with the ICB to support their estates needs under the OPE Programme and look at all potential options.

- 5.5 The revised phase 1 plans for WW already delayed any changes to the skatepark until phase 2. So, to an extent, the proposed new approach has no effect on previous aspirations to upgrade this facility, funding dependent. It will remain as it is for the time being and future options can then be explored alongside new plans for Olding Road in close consultation with the Bury Skatepark Experience user group charity.

Abortive costs

- 5.6 Project costs (fees for design, consultant, contractor, planning, etc and staff costs) have been reported and approved throughout the life of the WW project. Members have already noted that project costs of £4.2 million pre-dating the construction stage have been addressed and funded from the Council's revenue budgets; mainly met through grants and partner contributions. This means there is no new impact on revenue budgets from those earlier costs associated with this decision.
- 5.7 Now that the current construction stage of the project is to be cancelled (subject to approval of this report and its recommendations), we will be able to establish what has already been spent of its previously approved total capital budget of up to £75 million (for phase 1 and the remainder of the site). A current estimate is around £2.4 million pounds.
- 5.8 As with the earlier developmental stages of the project, not all of this sum will be abortive because some of the work relates to the current BLC (to provide alternative options to WW in business cases) or to enabling works and site and building surveys for Olding Road and Anglian Lane which would have been required whatever happened with the sites. Ultimately, until the new options for the Olding Road site are agreed, it will be hard to identify how much of the work-to-date can be carried forward or not. The planning consent obtained for WW in 2020 is also helpful, even if the specific scheme it covers is not taken forward and a new application is needed. However, Cabinet wants to be transparent that a large part of the £2.4 million work to-date is likely to be redundant (therefore abortive) and revenue funding will need to be confirmed.
- 5.9 Cabinet feels, however, that the risk of proceeding at the current time, given economic uncertainties, outweighs this cost of stopping the current project. Nonetheless, that cost has to be addressed in the Council's budgets. At present, it is factored into the capital estimates for the WW project (because the revenue spending to date could have been capitalised at the time the construction project commenced). If the project does not proceed, as Cabinet now recommends it doesn't, then it will remain as revenue expenditure and will need to be met from revenue budgets. Given the scale of the abortive

revenue cost risk it has previously been agreed that the risk would be underwritten by reserves. It is therefore proposed that a provision of £2.4 million from the Strategic Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Strategy reserve is now approved by members to fund the abortive costs (which may end up being less than the £2.4million once work to establish re-use is concluded).

Planning Consent

- 5.10 Full planning permission was granted for the original WW project on 23 December 2021 for a single phased, public service development as well as outline planning consent for a nursery. A Section 73 planning application was submitted this year, for which most planning and consultant fees have been paid, to secure a phased approach and further amendments to the site and building layouts following the NHS decision to withdraw from Phase 1. The amendment application, due to be presented to Development Control Committee in October/November this year, has currently been put on hold.
- 5.11 It is proposed that the Section 73 application remains on hold until the feasibility work for the Olding Road site has been concluded and further planning advice can be sought to fully understand the impact of continuing or discontinuing the application process to retain as much flexibility for the Olding Road site as possible.

Procurement

- 5.12 Clearly, if Council approves these recommendations, the current tendering process will end, as will existing relationships with the contractor, design team and other consultants. The aforementioned estimate of abortive costs includes payment for their services to date.
- 5.13 However, to take the revised plans for all sites forward at pace, there will need to be external support - the Council does not have the in-house expertise or capacity to do all of this work. And it would be logical, provided that best value is achieved for taxpayers, to capitalise on the existence of a mobilised project team and contractors with a good understanding of the sites if those partners themselves wished to continue to be part of the scheme. This could also minimise the socio-economic impact of the current WW scheme not going ahead in full for the local supply-chain, which was an important strategic consideration for the original project.
- 5.14 Accordingly, it is proposed to authorise officers to appoint a new project team to support delivery of the various recommendations in this paper for all three sites within the WW scheme (i.e. Olding Road, Anglian Lane and BLC). Including entering into new Pre-Construction Services Agreements (PCSA) with preferred contractors if this would allow the Council to access early supply-chain advice ahead of a main contract appointment so long as this is within the new budgets approved in this report.

- 5.15 Where it makes good sense to all parties to maintain an existing client/contractor relationship which has already been tested competitively for value for money, this could be done by direct call-off from an existing procurement framework. Which is permitted by the Council's existing contract procedure rules.

6. Alternative options that have been considered

- 6.1 The report explains why these new recommendations are being made as an alternative to the options set out in previous business cases. Information on those other options is available via the listed background reports.

7. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 7.1 The wider project has been and is subject to extensive consultation and engagement. In relation to this report more information is provided in section 5.

8. Risks associated with the proposals

- 8.1 Risks associated with this decision are explained in the report itself. Governance for any new projects will include robust risk management as a standard requirement of project management procedures.

9. Implications arising from the proposals

- 9.1 Financial – as set out in report.
- 9.2 Legal compliance – the Council's contract procedure rules will be followed for any new appointments. The project to date has been managed through a series of gateway reviews, and contractors and external advisors have been commissioned accordingly, to limit the financial exposure to the Council. Hence being able to take this decision now. The current collaboration agreement for the existing project with SCC will need to be terminated if these recommendations are agreed and hopefully replaced with a new one for the successor project(s).
- 9.3 Personal data processing – not applicable.
- 9.4 Equalities –the equalities benefits that would have been realised by the previous project are now superseded by the new projects (if the recommendations in this paper are approved). These were as set out in the final business case for WW (see background papers) and any SCC reports relating to Suffolk Archive and the pre-school. Work to assess the equalities impacts of the future development of the linked sites will be as follows:

- The proposed options appraisal for the Olding Road site will take account of equalities considerations.
- Any work to refurbish the existing leisure centre that will result in temporary change in service provision will be assessed for equalities impacts as part of the agreed mitigation plan.
- SCC will need to factor a separate assessment of equalities impacts into any decisions they take around alternative provision of the pre-school and archive.

9.5 Crime and disorder – not directly applicable to the decisions. Members are to note, however, that we have put in place additional security measures associated with the Olding Road site given it remains empty.

9.6 Safeguarding – not applicable to the decisions.

9.7 Environment or sustainability – as set out in the report. The new project for Olding Road will seek to carry forward as much of the proposed renewables as possible and the energy efficiency of BLC will be examined as part of the refurbishment project.

9.8 HR or staffing – council staff currently engaged on the project from multiple disciplines will need to be transferred to the new projects and any spare capacity they now have will be redeployed to other priorities, within existing budgets.

9.9 Changes to existing policies – not applicable to the decisions. The new Olding Road scheme, if required, will be tested against the existing masterplan and development management policies.

9.10 External organisations (such as businesses, community groups) – as set out in section 5 of the report.

10. Appendices referenced in this report

10.1 Appendix 1 – Press release issued 9 September 2023

11. Background documents associated with this report

- 11.1 Outline Business Case for WWD, October 2018
- 11.2 Final Business Case for WWD, September 2019
- 11.3 External Assurance Review, January 2020
- 11.4 Final Business Case Update and Review, June 2021
- 11.5 Western Way Project Review - December 2022
- 11.6 Gateway report to Cabinet – March 2023
- 11.7 At the time of this meeting, all documents above can be found at www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/wwd in addition to the committee report database on the Council's website.

Appendix 1

Proposal to pause Western Way project during time of financial uncertainty for public services

A recommendation is set to be made to change plans for the new Western Way leisure facilities in Bury St Edmunds due to national financial uncertainty for public services.

Instead, West Suffolk Council would reinvest in the existing Bury St Edmunds leisure facilities to bring them up to scratch and to ensure the pool provision remains open during these challenging times, using an existing £724,000 a year budget.

The move follows a review of the Western Way project in the light of economic uncertainties around build costs and borrowing interest rates plus the even greater financial burdens being placed on public services across the UK with reduced national funding. All of which add further financial risk to the project and the council's funding at a challenging time and when residents rely more and more on council services.

While West Suffolk Council's financial position remains robust some other authorities across the UK have had to bring in emergency measures and Government help to meet the financial pressures made worse by the current economic state.

The pause means the council can look at possible alternatives for the Olding Road site while maintaining leisure services in Bury St Edmunds. By concentrating on re-investing in the current facilities the Council can look to attract outside funding for the centre which needs repairs and facilities brought back up to scratch.

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of West Suffolk Council, said in a statement:

"Keeping leisure centres open and helping improve the health and wellbeing of local communities is a priority. But to do so in this cost-of-living crisis and with reduced public funding means we need certainty over our budgets so we can continue to deliver high quality services and initiatives. Given the level of investment involved, Western Way is a massive project and potential financial risk during this national economic crisis.

"These proposals are a sensible way forward and safest in terms of risk to the public purse while providing communities access to much needed leisure services now and in the future.

"The council like all public services is facing extreme pressure from inflation, interest rates and the energy crisis. In May, we said we would be considering the Western Way project before making any final decisions to proceed. We understand the original aspirations for Western Way but things have changed since the original case was made and we have to take our decision to proceed in 2023, and not in the past.

"We believe that the challenging economic conditions mean it is right to pause and re-think the re-use of the Olding Road site. This is to make sure we get this decision right, and that the project is still affordable and not pressured into the wrong decision potentially committing us to a significant sum and risks for a new leisure centre. There are abortive costs in stopping, but with the present uncertainties the

risks of carrying on could be greater. At this time around £2.4 million of the previously agreed capital project has already been spent and the council will be using as much of that work as it can in helping look at options going forward. Some of that funding paid for works that would have needed to be done, whatever option is chosen. While the majority will be abortive, costs to spend even more at this time would be too risky.

“To remove this pressure, and to ensure the viability of the current leisure centre we are proposing taking the most risk-averse approach by using existing budget put aside to address its condition. This means staying in the existing leisure centre for the next few years and using that earmarked money to carry out essential repairs and maintenance – catching up on the refurbishments put on hold while the case to build a new centre was explored. This focuses in on a small capital project that is less risky to manage at a time of great uncertainty and provides residents with leisure facilities.

“Staying in the current building means we are able to apply to the competitive national bidding processes for Sport England support for existing swimming pools and also government decarbonisation budgets which are only available to existing buildings. However, there is no guarantee we will get this funding.

“This is a decision for all councillors to take. An initial report will be presented to Cabinet and Council in September which will include a recommendation to start work on that refurbishment as soon as possible. We would then report back later on new options for the Olding Road site, hopefully by early 2024, when we have had chance to carry out that work.

“We would like to thank all project stakeholders and partners for their support on the project to date. In fact, we are very keen that they remain partners in the project as we explore new ideas - all options are still open.

“We have also enjoyed working with Morgan Sindall as our preferred contractor for Western Way since 2022 and we are keen to continue that relationship with them for the revised project if possible so that we can carry forward that momentum and shared understanding.”

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet: 19 September 2023

Addendum to Cabinet Report number: CAB/WS/23/041

(for inclusion with the full report (CAB/WS/23/041) within the 'Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet' to Council (COU/WS/23/014) – 26 September 2023)

Western Way Project – summary of identified opportunities, risks and financial implications.

Analysis by Council's statutory officers

The Cabinet paper issued for 19 September 2023 is a summary of issues and risks associated with the recommendations made regarding stopping the Western Way (WW) project and was prepared by the lead councillors and officers for the project on behalf of the lead cabinet members.

However, to assist councillors in their decision on this major project at Council on 26 September 2023, the Council's three statutory officers (the Chief Executive, s151 (Chief Financial) Officer and the Monitoring Officer) have carried out a subsequent analysis of the paper to ensure that it already contains all of the necessary information on opportunities, risks and financial implications. This addendum summarises that analysis.

The risks associated with the decision have been listed in the following table, cross-referenced to the relevant sections of the Cabinet/Council report. These are separated into: (A) risks associated with carrying on with the current project and; (B) risks associated with changing the approach. This is to show the balance of risks considered by Cabinet when reaching their recommendation to Council.

A. Risks already identified in the report(s) associated with carrying on with current WW project (default position)

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
1	<p>The condition of Bury Leisure Centre (BLC) must be addressed as there is no do-nothing option</p>	<p>Para 3.2 and background papers</p>
2	<p>The previous comparison made between the newbuild option and refurbishment options in the approved WW business case did not include the 'essential maintenance only' option</p>	<p>Para 3.10 and background papers</p>

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
3	New revenue impacts such as interest rates and inflation impact on the viability of the project and wider impacts on the Council's borrowing budgets.	Paras 1.3 to 1.9 and Appendix 1
4	The spending power of the revenue generated by the WW project is diminished by higher than previously forecast interest rates	3.4 and 3.6. Background papers
5	Impact of scale of borrowing in wider context of council finances	Para 1.5 and Appendix 1 plus an update to the earlier estimate in background papers.
6	The current phase 1 project is not yet viable.	Paras 1.3–1.6
	Second stage tenders from sub-contractors have been received for the phase 1 scheme and are still being evaluated and value-engineered by the contractor and project team to reduce their cost to a viable level.	Paras 1.1 and 9.2 and background papers
	The project to date has been managed through a series of gateway reviews, and contractors and external advisors have been commissioned accordingly, to limit the financial exposure to the Council. Hence Cabinet being able to recommend a change in approach at this stage.	

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
7	<p>The project does not achieve the projected new income streams/savings required to support borrowing (thereby increasing the cost of running the leisure centre in council revenue budgets)</p> <p>The WW business case is built on significant revenue savings and new income from the leisure centre, renewable energy plus some rents and other savings. Estimates made at the time of the final gateway test will therefore have to be first achieved and then maintained over the life of the borrowing. These new income and saving risks would have then formed part of the Council's budgets and medium-term financial strategy, and would have been managed and taken into account when setting annual budgets and in the s151 officer's annual assessment of reserves and balances report.</p> <p>Gateway 2 for the WW project required sign-off by the s151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources that break-even tests against existing revenue budget provisions would be likely to be met based on the latest forecasts. This was supported by external advice. But see risks above.</p>	<p>Paras 1.5–1.6 and background papers</p> <p>Paras 1.1 and 3.1–3.3 and background papers</p>
8	<p>Whilst we are working through the final gateway there continues to be a delay in and uncertainty over the decision on the investment of leisure facilities in Bury and surrounding areas</p> <p>See risk 6 above for process to be followed. As explained in the main report, carrying on with viability work will also involve extra time and cost. A reasonable estimate of that for the purposes of this addendum/decision would be 3-6 months, with a requirement to release a further £100,000 a month from the existing capital project budget to fund this work (which would need to be recovered through the value engineering/savings).</p>	<p>Paras 1.4-1.7 and 3.9 plus new information in this addendum</p>
9	<p>Essential maintenance is kept to a minimum pending the new leisure centre opening - avoiding abortive costs but affecting user experience</p> <p>Whilst the WWD project is being developed works to the existing site have been kept to a minimum to avoid abortive costs. The Cabinet's recommendation means that the current maintenance budget can be released to offset some of the essential maintenance cost now proposed to the existing site.</p>	<p>Para 3.1</p>
10	<p>There is uncertainty over whether other facilities will also be delivered (archive, pre-school and health facility)</p> <p>As per risk 8, any delay to achieving viability on the project creates uncertainty for partners in respect of other facilities in the hub.</p>	<p>Para 1.4</p>

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
11	There is uncertainty that the Council's Anglian Lane site can be released for commercial uses (and generate income for taxpayers)	Paras 4.1-4.2
12	The Olding Road building is currently empty and incurring holding costs of £300,000 a year	Para 2.3
13	Pending any transfer of the site to a contractor, holding costs of vacant properties are not kept to a minimum e.g. security.	Paras 2.5 and 9.5 and background papers
14	National grants only available to existing buildings (and specifically existing swimming pools) are not obtained	Para 3.5
15	Risks involved in the current project are not properly identified and mitigated	Para 8.1 and background papers
	The current project had financial safeguards and gateway tests in relation to a final decision to proceed	Para 1.1 and 9.2 and background papers

B. Risks already identified in the report associated with stopping the current project (as per recommendations)

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
1	<p>The condition of Bury Leisure Centre (BLC) must be addressed as there is no do-nothing option</p> <p>Under the new recommendations, immediate maintenance issues (amount afforded within existing budgets) for BLC will be addressed to secure its operation in the short to medium-term. The Cabinet's proposal is essentially to replace the risks of a very large and complex capital project, and the revenue risks of it being underwritten by new savings and income, with the risks of a smaller and simpler capital project, which will be funded entirely within existing revenue budget commitments. So as not to put further pressure on the Council's budget in the short term. These two sets of risks are summarised in this report.</p>	Rec 2 Para 3.2 and Appendix 1
2	<p>The Western Way (WW) project is cancelled even though it is viable</p> <p>The recommendation is not being made by Cabinet because of a view on the likely viability of project, as this viability work is not completed. It is based on an appraisal of the other risks in section A of this addendum i.e. it is assumed the project could still be viable but the other risks are felt to be too great at the current time.</p>	Paras 1.3-1.9 and Appendix 1
	<p>Further work is required to ensure that the project meets the approved viability/gateway tests (see ancillary risks in section A)</p>	Paras 1.3-1.6
3	<p>Refurbishment of the leisure centre does not stay within available budgets meaning the project increases the cost of running BLC above what is currently provided for in budgets</p> <p>The budget for the essential works have to be limited by what is already budgeted in the Council's MTFs/maintenance budgets (plus external funding) to mitigate this risk. Delegated authorities being proposed are subject to these budgets not being exceeded. If this becomes the case the matter will be referred back to councillors.</p> <p>Essential maintenance may need to be prioritised to achieve this. Cabinet asks that the risks of deferring some of these works is acknowledged and accepted by members when considering this change in approach. (Also see risk 16 below)</p>	Rec 2 Paras 3.1-3.8 Para 3.13

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
4	There is uncertainty over what the available budget will deliver The report explains why it is not possible at this stage to identify what sum will be available, and therefore what works might be commissioned. Instead, it is only possible to identify what will eventually determine that budget if work on the project is authorised to start. Therefore, to avoid any further delay in works to BLC (see risks in section A) it is proposed to progress with the project under delegated authority, on this basis.	Rec 2 Paras 3.1-3.14
5	Expectations are raised about what may be possible to achieve with the available budget It is clearly stated in the report that this new approach will address immediate issues only and secure the continued operation of BLC in the short to medium-term.	Paras 3.9-3.14
6	There is disruption to service levels during essential maintenance works, affecting user access to BLC and revenue budgets. Disruption will be kept to a minimum and any that there is will require mitigation which will be funded from the existing budgetary provision. The level of works required will also not be as significant as the upgrade works previously proposed to councillors as alternative options to a newbuild.	Paras 3.4 and 3.10 and background papers
7	Sporting clubs and organisations who use BLC will be impacted by the change in plans/refurbishment works The Council will liaise closely with Abbeycroft (ACL) to ensure that the new approach to BLC is implemented smoothly. As our strategic partner for leisure, ACL will also liaise with users of the current centre and local and national sporting organisations to explain the change in approach and engage them in any changes.	Para 5.2
8	The net revenue impact of mitigating disruption to BLC during refurbishment and of staying in the existing building diminishes what is left in the £724,000 MTFS provision to support borrowing for capital works Only the balance of the £724,000 funding after deducting revenue impacts will be available to support borrowing. This is a key part of the financial safeguards in the recommendations in the new approach to ensure there is no additional impact on taxpayers. And this sum will be established with ACL before any construction contracts are entered into. This sum can also be supplemented by existing maintenance budgets and any external funding obtained. If the cost of the required works exceeds available budgets a new report will be presented to councillors for them to decide next steps.	Rec 2 Paras 3.4-3.8
9	The spending power of the £724,000 budget is This is a risk applicable to the existing WW project too and will be factored into the appraisal of the available capital spending (and plans adjusted	Paras 3.4 and 3.6

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
	diminished by higher than previously forecast interest rates	
10	The spending power of the £724,000 is diminished by being unable to borrow for longer than the expected life of any investment in an ageing building.	Para 3.4
11	Energy efficiency improvements will not be delivered	Paras 2.8, 3.5 and 3.11 and background papers
12	Ability to reduce ongoing maintenance cost through a move to a newer building is lost	Para 3.1
13	The ability to spend Section 106 (developer funding) secured by the local planning authority to address the impact of new housing growth may be impacted.	Para 3.5
14	The requirements identified in the latest needs	Para 3.5

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
	assessment for leisure facilities are not met by essential maintenance only	
15	Longer-term refurbishment proposals which included upgrades of the existing facilities to reflect changed market conditions/different community need are not affordable within existing budgets. Including provision of an 8-lane competition pool.	Paras 3.5 and 3.10-3.11 and background papers
16	Further investment may also be required after 5-10 years to address subsequent planned maintenance issues (as would be the case in any building of this age).	Paras 3.11-3.13

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report	
17	Taking this approach to secure the medium-term future of BLC does not change the need to ensure that the asset management plan continues to address the long-term condition of all leisure centres.	In the long-term (to be assessed again after 10years – depending on the final essential maintenance project) further investment in the existing or in a new BLC is still likely to be needed given the age of the current BLC. This will continue to be referenced in budget-setting processes and Cabinet feels the short-term benefits outweigh the long-term costs of taking this approach.	Para 3.14 and background papers
18	Partnership working to date may be lost	The report is clear that the Council will continue to work with all the previous partners to address their estate needs under the One Public Estate Programme. Including looking at options on the Olding Road site as well as elsewhere in the town.	Paras 5.1-5.4
19	A pre-school will not be delivered	A pre-school has always been part of the WW project because of a deficit in places in the local area, and s106 funding is available to put towards it in this part of Bury St Edmunds. We have indicated to SCC that we are keen to continue to work on this element of the project in the ongoing scheme and/or identify an alternative solution.	Para 5.3
20	A new archive will not be delivered	The proposal to replace the current West Suffolk branch of Suffolk Archives at WW was confirmed by SCC earlier in 2023 after a business case process. We have indicated to SCC that we are keen to continue to work on this element of the project in the ongoing scheme and/or identify an alternative solution.	Para 5.3
21	A new community health facility will not be delivered	The small health facility in phase 1 of WW was being built by WSC at commercial risk, ancillary to the leisure centre. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) had expressed a potential interest in taking this phase 1 facility but no formal agreement had been signed with the NHS. Meaning there is no immediate impact of this proposed decision on confirmed NHS estate plans. Again, WSC will now work with the ICB to support their estates needs under the OPE Programme and look at all potential options.	Para 5.4
22	An upgrade to the skatepark will not be delivered	The revised phase 1 plans for WW already delayed any changes to the skatepark until phase 2. So, to an extent, the proposed new approach has no	Para 5.5

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
	effect on previous aspirations to upgrade this facility, funding dependent. It will remain as it is for the time being and future options can then be explored alongside new plans for Olding Road in close consultation with the Bury Skatepark Experience user group charity.	
23	Equalities benefits of the WW project will not be delivered.	Para 9.4 and background papers
24	Decisions on the future of Olding Road are delayed and the asset is un-used	Rec 3 Paras 2.1-2.2
25	The Olding Road building is currently empty and incurring holding costs of £300,000 a year	Para 2.3
	Short-term uses for the site will also be considered to try and minimise these holding costs during the options appraisal work. Some of the proposed enabling works may also assist with holding costs, for instance in reducing current security costs	Para 2.4
26	Holding costs of vacant properties are not kept to a minimum	Rec 4 Paras 2.5-2.7
	Early market-testing of options for the Anglian Lane are part of the proposals.	Paras 4.1 – 4.2
27	Unavoidable works as site owner of Olding Road (e.g. remediation of external areas) are delayed increasing the impact of inflation	Rec 4 Paras 2.5-2.7

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report	
28	Future options for Olding Road are constrained and/or the existing planning consent is invalidated before a new decision is taken	The current section 73 application (and the original planning consent) will remain on hold pending a decision on the future of Olding Road by councillors	Rec 6 Paras 5.10-5.11
		Decisions on Olding Road and Anglian Lane will be informed by market-testing of Anglian Lane in autumn 2023 and/or the feasibility study for Olding Road	Rec 3
29	New decisions on the future of the Olding Road site will not be evidence-based and/or properly considered	A new feasibility study will be prepared and submitted to councillors. A budget to obtain external advice for the report is provided.	Rec 3 Paras 1.7-1.8 and 2.1-2.2
		All options are open at this stage except immediate replacement of leisure centre	Paras 1.8, 2.1-2.2
30	The ability to maximise the value of renewable energy generated on the Olding Road site is lost	The new feasibility study will look to preserve these benefits. A contract has been entered into with UKPN funded by existing project costs to secure export capacity from PV panels and battery.	Paras 2.1–2.2 and 2.8
31	The potential value of the Anglian Lane site is not maximised	The Anglian Lane site will be marketed to test demand and the potential investment needed to maximise the value of the asset to the Council, in the short to long-term.	Para 4.1-4.2
32	Abortive costs are incurred as a result of the new approach and are not addressed in budgets	If the current construction stage of the project is cancelled, we will be able to establish what has already been spent of its previously approved total capital budget of up to £75 million (for phase 1 and the remainder of the site). A current estimate is around £2.4 million pounds and provision will be made in the Council's reserves (strategic priorities and MTFS reserve) to address this.	Rec 5 Paras 5.6-5.9
		SCC will not incur any of these abortive project costs under the terms of the collaboration agreement with WSC as WSC has made the decision to cancel the project. Due to the nature of the phase 1 scheme, the core design for the spaces allocated to SCC for its archive and pre-school would have been required whatever their end use. So the abortive costs which could be solely	Para 9.2 plus new information in this addendum

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
	<p>attributed to the specialist SCC requirements is not pro-rata to the relative size of those facilities in the overall scheme (which in itself was quite small).</p> <p>Members have already noted that project costs of £4.2 million pre-dating the construction stage have been addressed and funded from the Council's revenue budgets; mainly met through grants and partner contributions. This means there is no new impact on revenue budgets from those earlier costs associated with this decision</p>	<p>due to queries received since publication.</p> <p>Para 5.6</p>
33	<p>Abortive costs are not kept to a minimum</p>	<p>As with the earlier developmental stages of the project, not all of this sum will be abortive because some of the work relates to the current BLC (to provide alternative options to WW in business cases) or to enabling works and site and building surveys for Olding Road and Anglian Lane which would have been required whatever happened with the sites. Ultimately, until the new options for the Olding Road site are agreed, it will be hard to identify how much of the work-to-date can be carried forward or not. The planning consent obtained for WW in 2020 has some value, even if the specific scheme it covers is not taken forward and a new application is needed.</p>
34	<p>Loss of existing knowledge of contractor and consultant team/loss of pace in project resulting in additional costs</p>	<p>Authority given to appoint consultant and contractor team immediately, allowing retention of existing team where applicable</p>
35	<p>Best value may not be achieved for any new appointments</p>	<p>Contract procedure rules will be followed</p>
36	<p>Impact on the contractor and their supply-chain from loss of potential earnings if phase 1 scheme does not go ahead.</p>	<p>It would be logical, provided that best value is achieved for taxpayers, to capitalise on the existence of a mobilised project team and contractors with a good understanding of the sites if those partners themselves wished to continue to be part of the scheme. This could also minimise the socio-economic impact of the current WW scheme not going ahead in full for the</p>

Risk	Summary of issues and any mitigation highlighted in report	Reference in report
	local supply-chain, which was an important strategic consideration for the original project.	
37	Risks involved in the current project are not properly identified and mitigated	Once approved, new projects will have new risk management processes developed as part of normal project governance Para 8.1
38	Adequate provision is not made in the Council's budgets in respect of the decisions	The Council's Section 151 Officer would be authorised to make the necessary changes to the Council's prudential indicators. Budgets for meeting new costs are identified in the report. Recs 2-5 and 8 Sections 2-5
39	Councillor oversight of new decisions is not robust	Key recommendations are subject to oversight by Cabinet members before they can be implemented Recs 2 and 4
		Delegations contain safeguards in terms of outcomes and spending limits. Where these cannot be met, it is implicit that the matter must be referred back to councillors under the constitution Recs 2-5 and 7
		Officer actions are covered by the existing delegations in the constitution and council policies and procedures. Again, where actions are not within these defined restrictions, the matter will be referred back to councillors. Recs 1-8
		Decisions on the Olding Road site require a further council report Recs 3 and 6 Para 2.2
40	Lack of awareness that decisions would be taken about project during this meeting cycle.	Cabinet announced its intention in Spring 2023 to carry out a review alongside completion of second stage of tendering in summer 2023, and this was widely communicated externally and internally. Para 1.2

Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel

Report number:	COU/WS/23/015	
Report to and date:	Council	26 September 2023
Cabinet member:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Tel: 07968 396389 Email: Gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Selection Panel)	Councillor Carol Bull Tel: 01953 681513 Email: carol.bull@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Teresa Halliday Monitoring Officer Tel: 01284 757144 Email: Teresa.halliday@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **Not applicable as this is not an executive matter**

Wards impacted: **Not applicable**

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

- 1. appoints the four individuals listed in Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/23/015 to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a term of up to four years.**

- 2. No appointment be made to the role of advisor to the Independent Remuneration Panel for the reasons set out in section 2.3 of Report number: COU/WS/23/015.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 Elected members are entitled to receive an annual allowance which recognises their work and time commitment to the role. In addition, they are entitled to claim expenses for travelling and other costs incurred when undertaking their duties as a councillor. Those councillors who undertake additional duties, such as chairing a committee or acting as the lead member (portfolio holder) for an area of council activity, are entitled to an additional allowance due to the extra time they can incur in such duties.

The detail on the level of remuneration, allowances and expenses entitled by councillors forms the Members' Allowances Scheme. This must be produced in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) and is required to be adopted by the Council.

- 1.2 The Regulations also require local authorities to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to make recommendations on the level of basic and special responsibility allowances and associated matters that are paid to councillors.
- 1.3 West Suffolk Council's Members' Allowances Scheme is required to be reviewed in full by a newly appointed independent remuneration panel. The panel will make recommendations to Council on the level of remuneration, allowances and expenses for councillors. These recommendations must be considered by the Council, although the Council may wish to agree alternative proposals proposed by its own members. A new scheme must be adopted by December 2023 before the current scheme expires in February 2024. The scheme will then be subject to annual review.
- 1.4 On 20 June 2023, Council agreed the process for appointing a minimum of three members to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), together with an advisor to the panel, for a period of up to four years. The appointment process included forming a selection panel that would interview shortlisted applicants, and would make recommendations to the Council on whom to appoint.

- 1.5 The selection panel comprised:

Councillor Gerald Kelly	Portfolio Holder for Governance and member of the Independents Group
Councillor Carol Bull	Chair of the Selection Panel and member of the Conservative Group
Councillor Diane Hind	Member of the Progressive Alliance Grouping
Tracy Colman	Independent Person (of the Suffolk authorities' consortium)
Alex Wilson	Strategic Director
Teresa Halliday	Monitoring Officer

2. **Proposals within this report**

2.1 The positions were advertised from 31 July to 25 August 2023. Six applications were received for the role of member, one for the role of advisor and one application had been received for both roles. Seven were selected for interview for membership of the panel (including the applicant that had applied for both roles) with one selected for interview for the role of advisor.

2.2 **Panel members**

2.2.1 Prior to their interview, one candidate withdrew their application.

2.2.2 The selection panel has made recommendations based on ensuring that the Remuneration Panel comprises individuals with a good range of skills, experiences and insights. Candidates were probed during interview on their understanding of the process and familiarity of the existing Members' Allowances Scheme, their integrity, and their ability to work collaboratively as a team.

2.2.3 The individuals, whose biographies are summarised in Appendix A attached to this report, are recommended for appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

2.3 **Advisor to the panel**

2.3.1 The role of the advisor is intended to help the IRP understand the potential workloads and needs of councillors, providing expert knowledge and insight to support the IRP as it carries out its work. Applicants were expected to have significant experience of local government through having served as a council officer or councillor for a period of time.

2.3.2 Prior to their interview, the candidate selected for interview withdrew their application. The other individual that had applied for this role, whilst interviewed for the member role, did not meet the criteria for advisor.

2.3.3 No recommendation has therefore been put forward by the selection panel for the role of advisor. Instead, the selection panel has recommended that the support to the IRP is provided by the Council's officers directly, as is often the case with many reviews of Members' Allowances Schemes. This support will include research (Policy Team support) legal / statutory guidance compliance (Monitoring Officer), and contextual information on how the Council operates at present and its future strategic direction (Leadership Team and Monitoring Officer).

3. **Alternative options that have been considered**

3.1 **Panel members:** The Council may decide not to appoint the individuals recommended by the selection panel to create a new independent remuneration

panel; however, having undertaken a robust recruitment process to select individuals that are deemed to meet the requirements set out in the person specification, including acknowledging the requirement to maintain and promote independence, openness and transparency, the selection panel feels appropriate recommendations have been made.

- 3.2 **Advisor to the panel:** The Council may decide that further efforts must be undertaken to appoint an individual as an advisor to the IRP; however, having already undertaken a robust recruitment process, including placing an advertisement for an advisor with the Local Government Association to target individuals that could potentially fulfil this specific role, the selection panel feels that this role will be satisfactorily met by Council officers, as set out in 2.3 above and as has happened previously. Also see paragraph 5.1 below.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 Engagement has been undertaken with the Council's Human Resources team on an appropriate recruitment process; and with the Communications team to promote the recruitment process.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 That the Council does not accept the recommendations of the selection panel and does not appoint a minimum of three members to create a new Independent Remuneration Panel. This would either require a further recruitment process to be undertaken which would significantly impact on the timeline for adopting a new Members' Allowances Scheme prior to the expiry of the existing scheme (see Report number: [COU/WS/23/011](#) considered on 20 June 2023 for timeline) or a scheme being adopted by Council without consideration by an IRP. There is a high risk that the requirements of the 2003 Regulations would not be met. The Council's current scheme allows for an index linked annual adjustment of allowances which must only be in place for a period of four years.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.1 Financial – each member of the IRP will receive £100 plus expenses for each meeting attended. Meetings will be held approximately three occasions per month during October to December 2023 with additional meetings held outside of this timeframe to potentially advise on matters relating to the annual review of the scheme and any other matters, as required.
- 6.2 Legal compliance – the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

- 6.3 Personal data processing – the appointment process for the IRP has been compliant with personal data processing procedures. Each individual listed in Appendix A have given consent for their information to be shared.
- 6.4 Equalities – The recruitment to these roles was undertaken using established recruitment processes which have full regard to equality and diversity policies.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 Appendix A – summarised biographies of the recommended appointees to the IRP

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 [The Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- 8.2 The current [Members' Allowances Scheme](#) as contained in the Constitution
- 8.3 Council: 20 June 2023 - Report number: [COU/WS/23/011](#) Independent Remuneration Panel appointment process
[Appendix A](#) – terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel
[Appendix B](#) – person specification for Independent Remuneration Panel member
[Appendix C](#) - person specification for advisor to the Independent Remuneration Panel

Summarised biographies of the recommended appointees to the Independent Remuneration Panel

Tricia Bernard-Hector

I have a strong background in project management and leadership having had a career in the pharmaceutical sector and hold qualifications in both project management and international business management.

I am currently studying and in my final year before I qualify as a psychodynamic counsellor.

As a resident and former business owner within West Suffolk, I am vested in the work of the council and welcome the opportunity to be a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Sandra Cox

I have taken part in a number of Independent Remuneration Panels at town, district and county level over the past eight years and was on the previous Panel for West Suffolk Council.

I was a member of the Suffolk Police Authority from 2009 until it was dissolved in 2013.

I was also one of the five founding members who campaigned to re-open the Fisher Theatre in Bungay in 1996 as a Community and Arts Centre where I continue to be a committed and active Trustee.

David Irvine

I am retired having had a 44 year career as an agronomist and agricultural consultant and have worked in a number of national and international companies. I am used to working under pressure in a goal driven environment in the private sector where change and improvement is the norm.

Since retirement, I manage a small property portfolio and have four years experience as an Independent Person for two district councils. I am a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel and Independent member of the Standards Committee on the first, and the Independent member of the Audit and Governance committee on the second. These roles all require a high degree of integrity and probity. In addition I spent the last four years as coordinator of Bury in Bloom.

Despite retirement, I remain focused and have a keen interest in public life and a desire to serve the local authority.

Susan Putters

In my career I have experience in all aspects and levels of compensation and benefits management to include the preparation of remuneration reports.

I am currently an Independent Person as part of the Suffolk pool and therefore proficient with the Councillor Code of Conduct. I have also recently been a member of an Independent Remuneration Panel Member for two other district councils in Suffolk.

In addition, I undertake a voluntary role as board member for a Suffolk care home.

Polling district and polling place review

Report number:	COU/WS/23/016	
Report to and date:	Council	26 September 2023
Cabinet member:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Email: gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Jennifer Eves Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) Email: Jennifer.eves@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **Not applicable as this is not an executive matter**

Wards impacted: **All**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that Council:**

- 1. Approves that the compulsory polling district and places review commences on Monday 2 October 2023.**
- 2. Approves the outline timetable and approach to the review as set out in Report number: COU/WS/23/016 and at Appendix A.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.

The following definitions may help to explain the requirements:

- “Polling districts” are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided.
- “Polling places” are the buildings or areas designated by the council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person.
- “Polling stations” are the number of issuing desks in the building or area that is the designated polling place.

- 1.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years. The next compulsory review must be undertaken within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

- 1.3 The intention of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 was for reviews to be completed by the January before a UK parliamentary general election. However, since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be.

- 1.4 In addition, the Boundary Commission for England has completed a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries and published its final recommendations. It is expected that the Orders for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries will be made by 1 November 2023 and that the new boundaries will be used for the next general election.

- 1.5 As a result of this, it is important that the polling district and places review is carried out as early as possible so that the Council has agreed polling districts and polling places to be used for the next parliamentary election, which must take place before 28 January 2025, as well as the scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner elections which will be held in May 2024.

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 The review itself cannot commence earlier than 2 October 2023 but there is work which can and has been undertaken prior to the review.
- 2.2 It would be desirable for any changes in polling districts to be reflected in the electoral register published on 1 December 2023.

However, to ensure sufficient time is included in the timetable for consultation and decision making it is unlikely that the review will be complete until January 2024.

2.3 Ordinarily this would mean that the electoral register would need to be republished in early 2024 to take account of any changes to polling districts. However, as a by-election has been held during the annual canvass the Electoral Registration Officer may extend the canvass period beyond 1 December and delay publication of the revised register up to 1 February at the latest.

2.4 Taking the above into account, it is recommended that the outline timetable and approach to the review, as detailed below is approved:

Review of polling districts and places 2023	Dates
Council meeting to consider commencement of review and draft proposals for consultation	26 September
Notice of review and proposals published and commencement of formal consultation period.	2 October 2023
End of formal consultation	10 November 2023
Consider responses	By 24 November 2023
Final proposals published via meeting agenda papers and website	11 December 2023
Council meeting to consider the revised polling districts and polling places	19 December 2023
Publish electoral register	1 February 2024
Scheduled elections on new polling districts, places, and stations scheme	2 May 2024

2.5 Detailed below is a summary of the activities completed before the official commencement of the review on 2 October.

- Assessment of the final constituency proposals published by the Boundary Commission to understand the impact on polling districts and polling places.
- Liaising with electoral software suppliers about structuring the electoral register to accommodate current and future boundary changes.
- Obtaining detailed up to date maps to enable accurate designation of polling district boundaries.
- Identifying organisations with a special interest/expertise in disabled access to consult.
- Compiling details of current polling places with a summary of their suitability.

- Preparing data for the start of the review (electorate figures, turnout from previous elections).
- Checking the continued availability of polling places.
- Reviewing feedback from stakeholders and Polling Station Inspectors at previous elections, with a particular focus on comments relating to the accessibility of polling places.
- Preparing proposed changes and other comments.

2.6 The draft schedule of polling districts and polling places, included at Appendix A to this report, details the current arrangements for polling districts and polling places, the electorate and May 2023 polling station turnout and comments relating to areas that should be considered as part of the review.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

3.1 It would be possible to undertake a review with a longer timetable to be completed by 31 January 2025. However, it is important to carry out the review as early as possible so that Council has agreed polling districts and places in place for the next parliamentary election, whenever that may be, as well as at the scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner election in May 2024.

3.2 It should be noted that whilst Council is required to undertake a full polling district and polling place review every five years it can also complete interim polling district reviews if required, for example if a specific issue arises.

4. Consultation and engagement

4.1 We will undertake a proportionate consultation with stakeholders and those with an interest in the review, including but not limited to:

- Local government electors/residents of the district
- Parish and town councils
- Parish meetings
- District councillors
- County councillors
- Members of Parliament
- Residents Associations
- Local public and voluntary organisations
- Local disability groups
- Polling place venues

4.2 Information about the review, including maps with boundaries and polling places detailed, will be published on the Council's website and will be made available for inspection at West Suffolk House. Public libraries and parish and town councils will also be encouraged to

make information available where facilities are available. Press releases and other publicity will be issued where appropriate.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 If a review is not undertaken then Council will breach the requirement of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 5.2 If suitable polling districts are not in place and suitable venues are not secured for use as polling stations, then voters may be disenfranchised and there is a risk of an election petition.
- 5.3 If polling station venues are not accessible to disabled electors, then this may be a breach relating to accessibility under the Equalities Act 2010 and the Election Act 2022.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.2 Legal compliance: The process for a polling district and places review is set out in Schedule A1, Representation of the People Act 1983.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 Appendix A – schedule of polling districts and polling places, including electorate and recent polling station turnout figures and comments regarding potential changes and/or areas to be considered as part of the review.

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 [Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations | Electoral Commission guidance](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

Schedule of polling districts and polling places with proposed changes and comments

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Abbeygate	B-BE-AB1	Bury St Edmunds (Abbeygate) 1		United Reformed Church	1735	37%	N/A
Abbeygate	B-BE-AB2	Bury St Edmunds (Abbeygate) 2		Quaker Meeting House	1013	30%	N/A
Abbeygate	B-BE-AB3	Bury St Edmunds (Abbeygate) 3		Thomas Clarkson Centre	896	25%	N/A
Bardwell	W-BDW	Bardwell	B-BDW - Bardwell	Tithe Barn (Bardwell)	667	50%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-BHM	Barnham	B-BHM - Barnham	Barnham Village Hall	471	32%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-CWE	Coney Weston	B-CWE - Coney Weston	Coney Weston Village Hall	308	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-EUS	Euston	B-EUS - Euston	Barnham Village Hall	96	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-FMA	Fakenham Magna	B-FMA - Fakenham Magna	Honington and Sapiston Village Hall	142	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-HN-VL	Honington (Village)	B-HN-VL - Honington (Village)	Honington and Sapiston Village Hall	273	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Bardwell	W-SAP	Sapiston	B-SAP - Sapiston	Honington and Sapiston Village Hall	149	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Barningham	W-BGM	Barningham	B-BGM - Barningham	Barningham Village Hall	790	27%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Barningham	W-HEP	Hepworth	B-HEP - Hepworth	Hepworth Community Pavilion	428	28%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Barningham	W-HOP	Hopton	B-HOP - Hopton	Hopton Village Hall	508	35%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Barningham	W-KNE	Knettishall	B-KNE - Knettishall	Hopton Village Hall	15	35%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Barningham	W-MWE	Market Weston	B-MWE - Market Weston	Market Weston Village Hall	199	39%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Barningham	W-THE	Thelnetham	B-THE - Thelnetham	Thelnetham Village Hall	214	35%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs.
Barrow	W-BRW	Barrow		Barrow Village Hall	1547	27%	N/A
Barrow	W-DEN	Denham		St Mary`s Church (Denham)	130	41%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Well lit entrance Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs Adequate lighting inside the polling place.
Barrow	W-GSX	Great Saxham		St Andrew`s Church (Great Saxham)	147	32%	N/A *Note that the Electoral Commission is currently considering an appeal from Westley Parish Council in relation to a decision taken in February 2023 to amend the polling place for the Westley polling district.
Barrow	W-LSX	Little Saxham		St Andrew`s Church (Great Saxham)	71	32%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail.
Barrow	W-WES	Westley		Westbury Community Centre	160	25%	N/A
Brandon Central	W-BR-C	Brandon (Central)		Royal British Legion (Brandon)	2202	14%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Brandon East	W-BR-E	Brandon (East)		Brandon Day Centre	1995	13%	N/A
Brandon East	W-SAD	Santon Downham		Santon Downham Village Hall	174	30%	N/A
Brandon West	W-BR-W	Brandon (West)		Brandon Leisure and Health Hub	2244	17%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-CHD	Chedburgh		The Erskine Centre	554	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-CHV	Chevington		Chevington Village Hall	521	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-DAL	Dalham		Dalham Village Hall	181	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-DEP	Depden		The Erskine Centre	169	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-HAR	Hargrave		Hargrave Village Hall	238	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-LID	Lidgate		Lidgate Village Hall	191	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-OUS1	Ousden Part 1		Ousden Village Hall	224	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-OUS2	Ousden Part 2		Ousden Village Hall	13	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Chedburgh & Chevington	W-RED	Rede		Rede Village Hall	114	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	S-CAV	Cavendish	W-CAV - Cavendish	Cavendish Memorial Hall	774	29%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	S-CLA	Clare	W-CLA - Clare	Combined Halls of Clare	1753	24%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	S-POS	Poslingford	W-POS - Poslingford	Stansfield Village Hall	166	20%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-BND	Barnardiston		Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School	102	24%	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-HUN	Hundon		Hundon Village Hall	896	31%	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-KED	Kedington		Royal British Legion (Kedington)	1531	23%	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-SBC	Stoke By Clare		Stoke-By-Clare Village Hall	393	37%	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-STR	Stradishall		Stirling House Training and Conference Centre	377	22%	N/A
Clare, Hundon & Kedington	W-WIX	Wixoe		St Leonard`s Church (Wixoe)	109	42%	N/A
Eastgate	B-BE-EA1	Bury St Edmunds (Eastgate) 1		Garland Street Baptist Church	665	40%	N/A
Eastgate	B-BE-EA2	Bury St Edmunds (Eastgate) 2		Bury Town Football Club	1071	24%	N/A
Exning	W-EXN	Exning		Exning Community Church Hall	1728	32%	N/A
Haverhill Central	W-HH-C1	Haverhill (Central) 1		Haverhill Arts Centre	685	18%	N/A
Haverhill Central	W-HH-C2	Haverhill (Central) 2		Haverhill Arts Centre	1720	18%	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Haverhill East	W-HH-E1	Haverhill (East) 1		Chalkstone Community Centre	1292	16%	Polling Place - Liaise with Chalkstone Community Centre to set the large hall as the polling station.
Haverhill East	W-HH-E2	Haverhill (East) 2		The New Croft	1608	11%	N/A
Haverhill North	W-HH-N1	Haverhill (North) 1		New Cangle Community Primary School	2106	23%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Haverhill North	W-HH-N2	Haverhill (North) 2		Army Cadet Centre	1568	15%	N/A
Haverhill South	W-HH-S1	Haverhill (South) 1		Leiston Community Centre	2062	11%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Haverhill South	W-HH-S2	Haverhill (South) 2		St Felix Church (Haverhill)	2223	12%	Polling Place - Liaise with St Felix regarding the room allocated for use as a polling station to ensure that it is adequate size. Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Haverhill South East	W-HH-SE	Haverhill (South East)		East Town Park	1815	22%	N/A
Haverhill West	W-HH-W1	Haverhill (West) 1		Unity Schools Partnership Offices	976	21%	Polling place unlikely to be available for future use - Liaise with Unity Schools Partnership regarding the room used as a polling station and future plans for the site which may impact on use of the building as a polling station. If required, identify alternative venue for use as a polling place.
Haverhill West	W-HH-W2	Haverhill (West) 2		Unity Schools Partnership Offices	2198	16%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Haverhill West	W-HH-W3	Haverhill (West) 3		Haverhill Rugby Club	1085	17%	N/A
Horringer	B-GWH	Great Whelnetham	W-GWH - Great Whelnetham	Whelnetham Community Centre	727	29%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Horringer	B-HOR	Horringer	W-HOR - Horringer	Horringer Community Centre (Hall)	808	37%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Horringer	B-ICK	Ickworth	W-ICK - Ickworth	Horringer Community Centre (Hall)	19	37%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Horringer	B-LWH	Little Whelnetham	W-LWH - Little Whelnetham	Whelnetham Community Centre	151	29%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Horringer	B-NOW	Nowton	W-NOW - Nowton	Nowton Village Hall	129	45%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Well lit entrance Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs.
Horringer	W-HAW	Hawstead		Hawstead Village Hall	256	40%	N/A
Iceni	W-HER	Herringswell		Herringswell Village Hall	190	27%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail.
Iceni	W-REL1	Red Lodge Part 1		Red Lodge Millennium Centre	1569	16%	N/A
Iceni	W-REL2	Red Lodge Part 2		Red Lodge Sports Pavillion	1987	14%	N/A
Iceni	W-REL3	Red Lodge Part 3		Red Lodge Millennium Centre	196	16%	N/A
Ixworth	W-IXT	Ixworth Thorpe	B-IXT - Ixworth Thorpe	Ixworth Village Hall	52	31%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Ixworth	W-IXW	Ixworth	B-IXW - Ixworth	Ixworth Village Hall	1674	31%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Kentford & Moulton	W-GAZ	Gazeley		Gazeley Village Hall	577	42%	N/A
Kentford & Moulton	W-HIG	Higham		Gazeley Village Hall	121	42%	N/A
Kentford & Moulton	W-KEN	Kentford		St Mary`s Church (Kentford)	829	28%	N/A
Kentford & Moulton	W-MOU	Moulton		Moulton Village Hall	752	36%	N/A
Lakenheath	W-ELV	Elveden		Elveden Village Hall	175	26%	N/A
Lakenheath	W-ERI	Eriswell		Eriswell Reading Room	600	23%	N/A
Lakenheath	W-LK-SF	Lakenheath (Sedge Fen)		Baptist Church Hall	107	N/A - Temporary change of polling place due to building works	N/A
Lakenheath	W-LK-VL1	Lakenheath (Village) 1		Lakenheath Methodist Hall	1648	25%	N/A
Lakenheath	W-LK-VL2	Lakenheath (Village) 2		Lakenheath Community Centre	1489	20%	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Manor	W-BAR	Barton Mills		Barton Mills Village Hall	875	27%	N/A
Manor	W-CAV	Cavenham		The Club Room	125	41%	N/A
Manor	W-FRE	Freckenham,		Freckenham Village Hall	296	32%	N/A
Manor	W-TUD	Tuddenham St Mary		Tuddenham St Mary Village Hall	338	29%	N/A
Manor	W-WOR	Worlington		Worlington Village Hall	413	34%	N/A
Mildenhall Great Heath	W-ML-GH	Mildenhall (Great Heath)		St John`s Community Centre	2060	15%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Mildenhall Kingsway & Market	W-ML-KM	Mildenhall (Kingsway & Market)		The Mildenhall Social Club	2120	19%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Mildenhall Queensway	W-ML-QU	Mildenhall (Queensway)		Mildenhall Hub	1614	N/A - Uncontested election	N/A
Minden	B-BE-MI1	Bury St Edmunds (Minden) 1		Westbury Community Centre	875	24%	N/A
Minden	B-BE-MI2	Bury St Edmunds (Minden) 2		Bridge Community Church	1522	40%	N/A
Minden	B-BE-MI3	Bury St Edmunds (Minden) 3		All Saints Church (Bury St Edmunds)	1785	31%	N/A
Minden	W-BE-MI4	Bury St Edmunds (Minden) 4	B-BE-MI4 - Bury St Edmunds (Minden) 4	Westbury Community Centre	1	N/A - postal voter	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Moreton Hall	B-BE-MH1	Bury St Edmunds (Moreton Hall) 1		Moreton Hall Community Centre	1997	30%	N/A
Moreton Hall	B-BE-MH2	Bury St Edmunds (Moreton Hall) 2		Skyliner Sports Centre	3271	22%	Polling Place - Liaise with Skyliner to set the main hall as the polling station. EC polling station limit of 2250 electors exceeded. Split the polling district streets alphabetically between 2 separate polling stations.
Moreton Hall	B-BE-MH3	Bury St Edmunds (Moreton Hall) 3		Skyliner Sports Centre	493	20%	Polling Place - Liaise with Skyliner to set the main hall as the polling station.

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Newmarket East	W-NM-E1	Newmarket (East) 1		All Saints Church (Newmarket)	2234	23%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Newmarket East	W-NM-E2	Newmarket (East) 2		St Agnes Church Hall	198	31%	N/A
Newmarket East	W-NM-E3	Newmarket (East) 3		The Racing Centre	1023	13%	N/A
Newmarket East	W-NM-E4	Newmarket (East) 4		The Racing Centre	623	13%	N/A
Newmarket North	W-NM-N1	Newmarket (North) 1		Studlands Park Sports & Social Club	1593	20%	N/A
Newmarket North	W-NM-N2	Newmarket (North) 2		Exning Road WM Club	2051	19%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
Newmarket West	W-NM-W1	Newmarket (West) 1		King Edward VII Memorial Hall	927	20%	N/A
Newmarket West	W-NM-W2	Newmarket (West) 2		Newmarket Leisure Centre	1547	16%	N/A
Newmarket West	W-NM-W3	Newmarket (West) 3		The NSDA Pavilion (Rugby Club)	1269	22%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-AMP	Ampton		Great Livermere Village Hall	47	30%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-GLI	Great Livermere		Great Livermere Village Hall	164	30%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-HN-ST	Honington (Station)		RAF Honington Community Centre	313	12%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-LLI	Little Livermere		Great Livermere Village Hall	28	30%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-PAK	Pakenham		Pakenham Village Hall	701	35%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-TIM	Timworth		Great Livermere Village Hall	48	30%	N/A
Pakenham & Troston	B-TRO	Troston		Troston Village Hall	515	23%	N/A
Risby	W-CUL	Culford		Culford Village Hall	394	31%	N/A
Risby	W-FLE	Flempton		St Catherine`s Church (Flempton)	119	41%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs Adequate lighting inside the polling place.

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Risby	W-HEN	Hengrave		St Catherine`s Church (Flempton)	143	41%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs Adequate lighting inside the polling place.
Risby	W-ICK	Icklingham		The Old School Hall Icklingham	296	23%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs.
Risby	W-ING	Ingham		St Bartholomew`s Church (Ingham)	359	25%	N/A
Risby	W-LAC	Lackford		Lackford Community Meeting Room	216	31%	Undertake assessment of polling place to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Well lit entrance Non Slip access Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs.
Risby	W-RIS	Risby		Risby Village Hall	606	30%	Undertake assessment of access to room used as a polling station (Gift Horse Room) to consider the following aspects in relation to accessibility: - Level access or securely ramped with handrail Adequate door width or alternative entrance for powered wheelchairs Note that the main room at the venue is accessible. Liaise with venue to set the main room for use as a polling station.
Risby	W-WDW	Wordwell		Culford Village Hall	15	31%	N/A
Risby	W-WST	West Stow		Culford Village Hall	128	31%	N/A
Rougham	B-BCS	Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield		Methodist Church (Schoolroom)	470	32%	N/A
Rougham	B-BSC	Bradfield St Clare		Bradfield St George Village Hall	133	39%	N/A
Rougham	B-BSG	Bradfield St George		Bradfield St George Village Hall	325	39%	N/A
Rougham	B-RUS-N	Rushbrooke with Rougham (North)		Rougham Sports Hall	19	28%	N/A
Rougham	B-RUS-S	Rushbrooke with Rougham (South)		Rougham Sports Hall	912	28%	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Southgate	B-BE-SG1	Bury St Edmunds (Southgate) 1		Victory Sports Ground	1003	29%	N/A
Southgate	B-BE-SG2	Bury St Edmunds (Southgate) 2		Southgate Community Centre	2088	32%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
St Olaves	B-BE-SO1	Bury St Edmunds (St Olaves) 1		Northumberland Avenue Methodist Church	2332	20%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded.
St Olaves	B-BE-SO2	Bury St Edmunds (St Olaves) 2		New Bury Community Centre	1863	17%	N/A
Stanton	W-STN	Stanton	B-STN - Stanton	Stanton Community Village Hall	2232	N/A - Uncontested election	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
The Fornhams & Great Barton	B-FAS	Fornham All Saints		Fornham All Saints Village Hall	553	39%	N/A
The Fornhams & Great Barton	B-FSG	Fornham St Genevieve		Fornham St Martin Village Hall	80	33%	N/A
The Fornhams & Great Barton	B-FSM	Fornham St Martin		Fornham St Martin Village Hall	890	33%	N/A
The Fornhams & Great Barton	B-GB-N	Great Barton (North)		Great Barton Village Hall	1723	35%	N/A
The Fornhams & Great Barton	B-GB-SV	Great Barton (Severalls)		Great Barton Village Hall	0	35%	N/A
The Rows	W-BEC1	Beck Row Part 1		Beck Row Parish Hub	2363	17%	Review the forecast electorate growth for the polling district to ensure that the Electoral Commission polling station guidance limit of 2250 is not exceeded
The Rows	W-BEC2	Beck Row Part 2		Holywell Row Village Hall	223	N/A - Temporary change of polling place due to building works	N/A
The Rows	W-WER1	West Row Part 1		West Row Village Hall	1064	26%	N/A
The Rows	W-WER2	West Row Part 2		The Beeches	202	22%	N/A
Tollgate	B-BE-TG1	Bury St Edmunds (Tollgate) 1		Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre	974	21%	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Tollgate	B-BE-TG2	Bury St Edmunds (Tollgate) 2		Seventh Day Adventist Church	1339	28%	N/A
Tollgate	B-BE-TG3	Bury St Edmunds (Tollgate) 3		Anselm Community Centre	1856	17%	N/A
Westgate	B-BE-WE1	Bury St Edmunds (Westgate) 1		Horringer Court Middle School	1951	28%	Polling place not available for future use. Liaise with venue regarding closure plans. Identify alternative venue for use as a polling place.
Westgate	B-BE-WE2	Bury St Edmunds (Westgate) 2		West End Home Guard Club	1428	30%	N/A
Westgate	B-BE-WE3	Bury St Edmunds (Westgate) 3		West End Home Guard Club	405	30%	N/A
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	S-BRO	Brockley	W-BRO - Brockley	Brockley Village Hall	272	39%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	S-DES	Denston	W-DES - Denston	Denston Village Hall	75	33%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	S-HAK	Hawkedon	W-HAK - Hawkedon	Hawkedon Village Hall	102	29%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	S-STF	Stansfield	W-STF - Stansfield	Stansfield Village Hall	183	35%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	S-WIC2	Wickhambrook Part 2	W-WIC2 - Wickhambrook Part 2	Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre	22	27%	Change of polling district prefix to reflect change of constituency
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	W-WHE	Whepstead		Whepstead Community Centre	394	31%	N/A
Whepstead & Wickhambrook	W-WIC1	Wickhambrook Part 1		Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre	1036	27%	N/A
Withersfield	W-COW	Cowlinge		Cowlinge Village Hall	217	43%	N/A
Withersfield	W-GBR	Great Bradley		Great Bradley Village Hall	309	38%	N/A
Withersfield	W-GTH	Great Thurlow		Thurlow Village Hall	154	34%	N/A
Withersfield	W-GWR	Great Wratting		Thurlow Village Hall	169	34%	N/A
Withersfield	W-LBR	Little Bradley		Great Bradley Village Hall	42	38%	N/A
Withersfield	W-LTH	Little Thurlow		Thurlow Village Hall	185	34%	N/A
Withersfield	W-LWR	Little Wratting		Thurlow Village Hall	114	34%	N/A

Ward	Current Polling District		Proposed change (if any)	Polling place	Electorate	Polling station turnout - May 2023	Comments
	Prefix	Name	Prefix and name				
Withersfield	W-WIT	Withersfield		Withersfield Village Hall	649	29%	N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Mildenhall Parish - change of name

Report number:	COU/WS/23/017	
Report to and date:	Council	26 September 2023
Cabinet member:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Email: gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Jennifer Eves Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) Email: Jennifer.eves@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **Not applicable as this is not an executive matter**

Wards impacted: **Mildenhall (all wards)**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that Council:**

- 1. Notes the request from Mildenhall Town Council to change the name of the parish of Mildenhall.**
- 2. Approves that the name of Mildenhall Parish be changed to Mildenhall High Parish.**
- 3. Authorises the Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) to make the necessary legal order to enact the change to the parish name.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 Changing the name of a parish area can be achieved through a Community Governance Review process in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. However, such a change may also be progressed under section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972 at the request of the relevant Parish or Town Council.
- 1.2 To change the name of a parish, a decision is required by West Suffolk Council, which would then make a Parish Change of Name Order and notify the Secretary of State, Director General of the Ordnance Survey, and the Registrar General.

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 A request has been received from Mildenhall Town Council to formalise a change in the name of the parish area so that the parish be known as Mildenhall High.
- 2.2 The Town Council has advised that the Town has historically been known as Mildenhall High and the Town Council has, since May 2019, operated informally under the name of Mildenhall High Town Council. However, no order has been made to formalise the change of name of the parish area from Mildenhall to Mildenhall High.
- 2.3 Council is asked to consider the request for the change of name and, if approved, to authorise officers to prepare the necessary legal orders and issue the relevant notifications as required under section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 Council may approve the proposed name changes for the parish or decline to approve any change. If it considers a different name would be appropriate for the parish, then the consent of the Town Council would need to be sought.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 There are no specific consultation requirements where a change of parish name is being considered under section 75 of the Local Government Act. Consultation or engagement, if any, would be the responsibility of the relevant Parish/Town Council prior to making the request.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

5.1 None

6. Implications arising from the proposals

6.1 Legal compliance - This report is consistent with the requirements of section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

7.1 None

8. Background documents associated with this report

8.1 The Local Government Act 1972, Part IV, Section 75.

This page is intentionally left blank