

Council



Title	Agenda
Date	Tuesday 26 March 2024
Time	7.00 pm
Venue	Conference Chamber West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds
Membership	<p>All Councillors</p> <p>You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to transact the business on the agenda set out below.</p>  <p>Ian Gallin Chief Executive 18 March 2024</p>
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, IP33 3YU
Contact information	Telephone: 01284 757176 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk Website: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk
Access to agenda and reports before the meeting	<p>The agenda and reports will be available to view at least five clear days before the meeting on our website.</p> <p>It is intended that the meeting will be livestreamed. The link to join the livestream broadcast will be made available on the Council's website prior to the meeting.</p>
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 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 (subject to the Chair's discretion). 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 no later than midday on the Friday before the meeting is scheduled to take place.</p> <p>This can be done online by sending the request together with their statement or question in full and confirmation of their</p>

	<p>address or workplace to democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk or telephoning 01284 757176 / 01638 719363.</p> <p>See section 6.8 of the Council Procedure Rules of the Constitution regarding the scope of questions/statements that may be asked/made.</p>
Accessibility	<p>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.</p>
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 - 18
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024 (copy attached).	
2. Chair's announcements	19 - 20
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 February 2024 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. Public participation**
- Council Procedure Rules Section 6.** Members of the public who live or work in the district may put questions 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**. The Chair may use their discretion to extend or reduce the time allowed if they feel it appropriate. 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** (subject to the Chair's discretion).

The member to whom the question is directed may refer it to another member or may choose to give a written response. 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 **by no later than midday on Friday 22 March 2024**. This can be done online by sending the request together with their statement or question in full and confirmation of their address or workplace to democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk or telephoning 01284 757176 / 01638 719363.

See section 6.8 of the [Council Procedure Rules](#) of the Constitution regarding the scope of questions/statements that may be asked/made.

6. Leader's statement

Paper number: **COU/WS/24/006 TO FOLLOW**

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

The Leader will introduce the statement and members may ask the Leader questions:

- a. On the Leader's statement
- b. On any Council matter

A total of 30 minutes will be allowed for all 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.

The Chair may use their discretion to extend or reduce the time allowed if they feel it appropriate.

7. Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet

There are no referrals emanating from the last meeting of Cabinet held on 12 March 2024.

8. Pay Policy Statement 2024 to 2025

Report number: **COU/WS/24/007**

9. West Suffolk Council Constitution: proposed amendments 35 - 50

Report number: **COU/WS/24/008**

10. Any other urgent business

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

Part 2 – exempt

None

Council



Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held on **Tuesday 20 February 2024** 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

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

329. Remembrance

Before commencing business, all members were asked to stand and observe a minute's silence in remembrance of former Forest Heath District Councillor Bill Bishop, and former St Edmundsbury Borough and West Suffolk Councillor Mary Evans 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.

330. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

331. **Chair's announcements**

The Chair firstly reported that in response to the concerning news that His Majesty King Charles III had been diagnosed with cancer, he had written on behalf of West Suffolk Council to His Majesty to wish him well and a speedy recovery.

The Chair then announced the following forthcoming events and encouraged members to attend:

- Sunday 17 March 2024 at The Apex, Bury St Edmunds at 6.30pm: The Chair's Charity Concert. This would feature a performance by The Voice Squad.
- Monday 8 April 2024 at St Edmundsbury Cathedral at 11am: Memorial service to celebrate the life of the late former Councillor Mary Evans.
- Friday 10 May 2024 at 7pm (venue to be confirmed): The Chair's Civic Dinner.

The Chair subsequently reported on the civic engagements and charity activities which he and the Vice-Chair had attended since the last ordinary meeting of Council on 19 December 2023.

Specific attention was drawn to the '819th traditional opening ceremony of the King's Lynn Mart' that the Chair had attended on 14 February 2024.

332. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Anderson, Pat Hanlon, John Griffiths, Andrew Martin and Tracy Whitehand.

Councillor John Augustine was also unable to attend the meeting.

333. **Declarations of interests**

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

334. **Public participation**

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

1. **Mr Aaron Leeves**, a resident of the district, had previously submitted a question in connection with the impacts of achieving carbon net zero in Bury St Edmunds, together with the effects on the local economy.

However, as required by the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution, Mr Leeves failed to ask the question he had submitted and raised matters unrelated to the Council agenda. Despite the Chair politely asking Mr Leeves to ask the question he had submitted, Mr Leeves continued to talk over the Chair.

As Mr Leeves ignored the Chair's requests for the previously submitted question to be asked, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, the

Chair asked Mr Leeves to leave the meeting. Mr Leeves continued to speak over the Chair and ignored requests to leave so a security officer was required to step in and assist with Mr Leeves' removal from the Conference Chamber.

Once Mr Leeves had left the Chamber, the Chair then welcomed the next registered public speaker to the meeting.

2. **Dr Rachel Wood**, a resident of the district, made a statement in connection with agenda item 10, 'Motion on Notice – West Suffolk Archives'.

Dr Wood's statement was in response to Suffolk County Council's recent decision to close the West Suffolk archive facility in Bury St Edmunds and centralise the service at The Hold in Ipswich.

Dr Wood placed emphasis on the fact that the existing archives office in Bury St Edmunds held historical records for the whole of the western half of Suffolk and provided examples of archives that she felt were of such historical importance that they should remain in Bury St Edmunds. Access to these, and other records currently stored in Bury St Edmunds was considered to be at risk if relocated to Ipswich.

It was acknowledged that some collections may remain in Bury St Edmunds; however, Dr Wood feared that what was being suggested would break up the heritage of western Suffolk.

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, thanked Dr Wood for her detailed and eloquent statement. The motion on notice at item 10 on the agenda broadly addressed the issues she had raised. He urged members to consider what Dr Wood had said when the debate on the motion on the notice was held later in the meeting.

No further questions were asked or statements made. 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.

335. **Leader's statement (Paper number: COU/WS/24/001)**

Councillor Waterman, Leader of the Council, presented his Leader's Statement as outlined in paper number: COU/WS/24/001.

Following the distribution and publication of the agenda and papers for this meeting, a typographical error had been identified in paragraph 13. of the Leader's Statement in respect of the following sentence, which should read, as indicated by emboldened text:

'When the County Council looked at relocating the archive in early 2023, they considered the option of moving to Western Way costing around **£3.5** million or staying at Raingate Street at around **£5** million.'

In his introductory remarks, Councillor Waterman:

- a. **Budget:** reported that the budget had been formulated within the context of the new recently adopted strategic priorities. A two-year balanced budget had been achieved whilst delivering much needed, quality services to the residents of West Suffolk. Proposals would bring the new priorities to a reality, together with income from investments. Certainty regarding future funding was however imperative, and stringent lobbying of central government to seek that certainty would continue.
- b. **Engagement:** he and his Cabinet had visited the district's towns and engaged with ward members to better understand strengths, issues and challenges within the towns and their communities. Further engagement was planned for visiting the rural areas. Councillor Waterman thanked his Cabinet for their work and commitment to these and for additional hours spent in meetings.
- c. **Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge:** explained that every five years, as part of its membership requirements, the Council was required by the LGA to undertake a peer review. The review, which was due to be undertaken between 23 July 2024 and 26 July 2024, was amongst other criteria, was expected to measure the effectiveness of the Council's ability to deliver against its ambitions. This would be the Council's first review since the creation of West Suffolk Council in 2019.
- d. **Environment:** reported that ten properties at Euston Estates and four Metcalfe Almshouses in Hawstead had been successfully retro-fitted to improve energy efficiency and warmer homes utilising government schemes and private investment. In addition, Suffolk Public Sector Leaders were offering grants for better loft insulation to eligible applicants in Suffolk.

Part A: Questions on the Leader's statement

In accordance with the recently amended Council Procedure Rules, the Leader firstly responded to a range of questions relating to his statement itself:

- a. **Budget gap forecast:** whilst a budget gap of £5.7 million for 2026 to 2027 and £6.28 million for 2027 to 2028 had currently been forecast, this was largely due to uncertainty from government regarding grant levels that may be received in the medium to longer term. Best and worst case scenarios were set out in Report number: COU/WS/24/003, which also explained the level of reserves the Council had which may need to be utilised to bridge the gap, if necessary.
- b. **Staff costs:** the relatively small increase in the staff establishment and associated costs, were set out in Report number: COU/WS/24/003. Some were due to the improvements being made to the grounds maintenance service as a result of the review held recently; however, the majority was largely due to extra burdens being placed upon the Council by central government. £1 million worth of savings had been made in the 2024 to 2025 budget, therefore the Council was continuing

to be financially prudent, which was becoming increasingly difficult to achieve year on year.

- c. **West Suffolk archives:** having met with the Leader and Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council (SCC) within the last week, the issue of SCC's proposal to relocate the West Suffolk archives from Bury St Edmunds to Ipswich had been raised by Councillor Waterman; however, Councillor Waterman reported that the SCC Leader and Chief Executive were not open to discussion on the matter at that time.
- d. **Cabinet visit to Clare:** the purpose of the visit (and to the other towns in the district) was to enable the Cabinet to better understand the assets and challenges of the town so that Cabinet members could make more informed choices when discussing topics affecting the town. Although local ward members were invited to meet with Cabinet on the various town visits, it was not the intention to meet with wider community organisations and groups at that time. Opportunities for wider engagement with the community and others would come forward at the appropriate time.
- e. **Environmental resilience:** deferred to Councillor Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory to respond to a question. Councillor Kelly referred to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) policy paper 'Understanding climate adaptation and the third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3)'. This paper prompted councils, businesses and communities to consider what climate change meant to them and actions they could take locally and collaboratively in some circumstances, to address climate change and how to ensure emergency and business continuity plans needed to be in place to mitigate the effects of climate change.

This matter was due to be considered at the next Town and Parish Forum on 18 March 2024 as a means for identifying potential actions and methods for making suitable adaptations to tackle the effects of climate change, including ways in which to mitigate the effects of flooding which had been of particular impact to communities in recent weeks.

- f. **Markets:** deferred to Councillor Indy Wijenayaka, Portfolio Holder for Growth to respond to several questions connected with the district's markets. The markets were extremely valuable to West Suffolk and efforts were being made to support their viability. External factors, such as the cost-of-living crisis which had influenced people's spending habits had made it increasingly challenging; however, a plan was in place to support and invest in the markets, such as through initiatives like the 'Makers' Markets'. Options for the location and development of Newmarket market were currently being carefully assessed in order to achieve an optimum solution moving forward.
- g. **Small grants to small independent retailers:** spending habits on the 'high street' had changed significantly in recent years, which was a significant challenge nationally. It was recognised that some small independent retailers in West Suffolk were thriving, yet some were

struggling. The request for small grants for small independent retailers was acknowledged; however, confirmation on whether this could be progressed was not forthcoming at the present time.

- h. **Suffolk County Council (SCC) budget:** felt disappointment regarding the way SCC's budget had been presented, as while recognising the difficult decisions that had needed to be made, Councillor Waterman felt many opportunities for collaborative working and engagement were missed by SCC. Acknowledgement of SCC's withdrawal of £3 million Housing Related Support from its budget was made and it was felt other options could have been explored, particularly working with Suffolk district and borough councils before making this decision. Councillor Waterman reported that Suffolk Public Sector Leaders would potentially in the short term ameliorate this much needed support. While not wishing to comment further on other aspects raised in connection with SCC's budget, Councillor Waterman also expressed his reservations regarding SCC's changes to the way in which Suffolk's arts organisations would be able to seek funding from SCC moving forward.
- i. **New Housing, Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy:** together with Councillor Richard O'Driscoll, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Waterman urged members to respond to the consultation on this new strategy before it closed on 18 March 2024.
- j. **Corn Exchange, Haverhill:** agreed that the Corn Exchange in Haverhill was of historical importance and working with partners, investigations would be undertaken into whether an appropriate business case could be devised to safeguard the future of the building.

This concluded questions on Part A of the Leader's Statement. The Chair had exercised his discretion to extend the 30 minute time allocation for this item by quite some length to conclude Part A. He therefore made the decision not to call for questions on Part B, 'Questions to the Leader on any Council matter' so that he could move on with business.

336. **Referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet (Report number: COU/WS/24/002)**

Council considered the referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet, as contained within report number: COU/WS/24/001.

A. Referrals from Cabinet: 6 February 2024

1. Treasury Management Report (December 2023)

Approval was sought for the Treasury Management Report (December 2023).

Councillor Diane Hind, Portfolio Holder for Resources drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, which included thanking the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee and Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for their work in scrutinising the treasury management report.

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

Resolved:

That the Treasury Management Report (December 2023), as contained in Report number: FRS/WS/24/001, be approved.

2. Financial Resilience Strategy Statement 2024 to 2025 and Treasury Management Code of Practice

Approval was sought for the Financial Resilience Strategy Statement 2024 to 2025 and Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Councillor Diane Hind, Portfolio Holder for Resources drew relevant issues to the attention of Council.

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

Resolved:

That

1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024 to 2025 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report number: FRS/WS/24/002, be approved.
2. The Treasury Management Code of Practice, as set out in Appendix 2 to Report number: FRS/WS/24/002, be approved.

3. Budget and Council Tax setting: 2024 to 2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2028

The recommendations emanating from the Cabinet's consideration of this report, together with its approval of the recommendation contained in Report number: CAB/WS/24/007 'Recommendation of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 25 January 2024 - Delivering a sustainable medium-term budget' were contained within Report number: COU/WS/24/003 'Budget and Council Tax setting: 2024 to 2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2028', for consideration as agenda item 8 on the Council agenda.

Members therefore noted that no decision was required at this stage.

337. Budget and Council Tax setting 2024 to 2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2028 (Report number: COU/WS/24/003)

(Councillor Frank Stennett declared that he was the Chair of Newmarket Cricket Club and left the meeting when it moved into private session and did not take part in the debate on the exempt business cases. He returned to the meeting when back in public session.)

Council considered this report, which presented proposals for the budget and council tax setting in 2024 to 2025 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024 to 2028.

Councillor Diane Hind, Portfolio Holder for Resources, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Council. The budget had been created to invest in West Suffolk's future, improve services and keep charges low. It invested in a fair, thriving and sustainable future for West Suffolk and improved essential services, whilst meeting significant national and local financial challenges. The budget would support and help drive the delivery of the authority's ambitious strategic priorities. Investment in these areas included:

- Strengthening essential services such as improving grass cutting and grounds maintenance operation making tidier streets and better biodiversity.
- Funding leisure improvements as well as protecting swimming pools from closing due to high utility costs, better equipment and investment in our leisure centres, play areas and open spaces.
- Ways to bring more affordable homes to West Suffolk and reduce the risk of people becoming homeless.
- Working alone and together with partners to improve and rent out property for businesses to create jobs and help our town centres as well as improve skills.
- Funding commissioning work around Brandon and potential economic benefits on the A11, A1307 and A14 corridors.
- Improving parking facilities across West Suffolk.
- Supporting crucial groups and volunteers that are the backbone of society and provide vital support for local communities.
- Topping up the Net Zero fund totalling now £11.75 million to support further investment in council assets, including the leisure portfolio and the authority's highly successful solar for business scheme.

The Council would continue to invest in initiatives that generated income and wider benefits, such as Solar for Business. In addition, £1 million would be made in savings or new local income over the next two years as part of the Council's forthcoming service improvement and behaving commercially programmes. This would be in addition to the £1 million already achieved in the current year's budget to make the Council as efficient as possible.

West Suffolk Council was forecasting a two-year balanced budget despite an additional £5 million in pressures (around six per cent of the overall £78 million gross budget). This had been caused by increased inflation, cost of living and higher demand for services, additional demands from Government and traditional reduced funding.

This year Government had given a settlement that did not meet the costs of running services and expected in their calculations that all councils put up Council Tax to the maximum amount available (2.99 per cent). On 6 February 2024, the Cabinet recommended to Council that the level of Band D council tax for 2024 to 2025 be set at £197.82, which represented a Band D weekly increase of 11 pence. Noting that 70 percent of West Suffolk residents were in bands A to C, these would actually see a lower increase. The Council Tax paid to West Suffolk Council was only around 11 percent of the total bill and

covered under a fifth of the cost of services. The Council had also agreed to extend up to 100 percent discount on Council Tax to many low income and vulnerable residents, including those in work.

The 2023 to 2024 budget approved in February 2023, included support for the introduction of a long term empty homes premium after twelve months of a property becoming vacant and this 2024 to 2025 budget included proposals to implement additional powers given to local government to levy a second homes premium within the district from April 2025. These financial levers enabled local councils to use council tax to achieve behavioural changes linked to bringing empty properties and second homes back into general use within the locality.

The budget process had also given the opportunity to listen to residents, businesses and car park users by simplifying some parking charges and abolishing others. This was part of a common sense review of charges and tariffs for services the Council delivered to tailor them so they remained in line with their true costs, following high inflation and price rises but avoided blanket rises. Equally charges had been frozen in some areas, such as cost of market stalls, to help local traders and encourage markets and vitality of local town centres.

Members considered the report in detail, which included the following issues for securing a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025 and plans for the medium term from 2024 to 2028, together with corresponding detailed appendices:

- Section 1: Summary: as provided above.
- Section 2: Context: which included reference to the Council's robust financial planning and management enabling the Council to deliver both services and the strategic aims of West Suffolk. This was, despite previous reductions in national funding as well as the severe impact of COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis on finances, the Council could put forward a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025 and an indicative balanced budget for the following year 2025 to 2026. Details were also provided on the Council's 'Investing in our Growth Agenda'; innovation in service delivery; the ambition for the Council to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030; and the implications of 'Simpler Recycling'.
- Section 3: Provisional local government finance settlement: which included reference to the Revenue Support Grant; Rural Services Delivery Grant; Services Grant; the future of New Homes Bonus; Funding Guarantee Grant; business rates estimate for 2024 to 2025; Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief and council tax referendum limits.
- Section 4: Council tax for 2024 to 2025: which included reference to the recently approved West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024 to 2025; changes to the Long Term Empty Property Premium and Second Homes arrangements.
- Section 5: Setting the budget – 2024 to 2025 and across the medium term to 2027 to 2028: which included reference to inflation assumptions assumed in the MTF5; fees and charges (as approved by Cabinet on 6 February 2024); and delivering a sustainable future beyond 2024 to 2025.

- Section 6: Capital programme 2024 to 2028: which included reference to the planned capital expenditure over four years to 2027/2028; disposal of surplus assets; and estimated income from asset disposals 2024 to 2028
- Section 7: Minimum revenue provision (MRP)
- Section 8: General fund balance
- Section 9: Earmarked reserves
- Section 10: Strategic priorities and MTFS reserve, which included details of the grant receipts put into this reserve from New Homes Bonus (including Funding Guarantee from 2023 to 2024)
- Section 11: Adequacy of reserves
- Section 12: Calculation of the council tax

Councillor Hind commended the Finance Team, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, together with officers and Cabinet colleagues, for their work in being able to secure a balanced budget for 2024 to 2025 before moving approval of all six recommendations set out in the report. The motion was duly seconded by Councillor Cliff Waterman, who reserved his right to speak until the end of the debate.

A detailed debate ensued which included a number of comments, observations and questions, including:

- a. **Exempt papers:** to promote openness and transparency it was questioned whether it was absolutely necessary for the three business cases (exempt Attachment D, appendices 2d, 2e and 2f) to be exempt. These had not been published in the public domain due to their commercial sensitivity.
- b. **Budget pressures:** whilst external factors, such as inflation were acknowledged for creating budgetary challenges, some budget pressures were considered to have been as a result of political decisions. Together with other examples, the £1 million Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund, which had initially allocated funds towards the upgrading of town and parish council-owned streetlights to LED was given, as well as referring to the proposed investment in industrial units rather than say, for example, leisure centres. It was questioned whether these were the most appropriate use of monies in challenging times.

During her right of reply, Councillor Hind stated that the upgrading of street lighting was supporting town and parish councils to deliver both energy and cost efficiencies which accorded with the Council's own strategic environmental resilience priority; and the Council remained committed to and was continuing to invest in growth as well as its leisure centres across the district.

- c. **Comments relating to the forecasted budget gaps for 2026/2027 and 2027/2028; the robustness of the exempt business cases; increases in capital expenditure and external borrowing; and the depletion of the Council's reserves:** these comments were acknowledged by Councillor Hind during her right of reply.

- d. **Premium on second homes:** whether it was appropriate to impose up to a 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes (furnished properties which are unoccupied or occupied periodically). Council was being asked to support the implementation of the second home premium with effect from April 2025, noting that a decision to revoke this determination could be made at any point up to 31 March 2025. Some members felt that this proposal would not release much-needed housing which appeared to be the aim of the premium.

During her right of reply, Councillor Hind stated that the implementation of the Council Tax premium on Long Term Empty and Second Homes aimed to bring properties back into use to help relieve pressure on existing housing stock. She quoted that as at 1 February 2024, 2,548 were currently on the Housing Register in need of affordable housing to rent. 550 homes could be brought back into much needed use to support those on the Register and to help enable people to remain resident within their own locality.

- e. **Attachment G - 'Net Zero Decarbonisation Fund – January 2024 Update':** Councillor Charlie Lynch made specific reference to the figures quoted under the fleet intervention at Table G1, namely that for an investment of £1,160,000 to upgrade the fleet to electric vehicles, this was currently projected to provide a net return figure of minus £155,000, and a carbon saving of 85 tonnes of CO₂e, which he felt was disappointing. Following reference to alternative suggestions that may provide better carbon, public health and financial savings, he requested that the above be reanalysed to ensure the proposed investment in the electric vehicle fleet was good value for money and would achieve sufficient carbon savings and benefit to public health.

During her right of reply, Councillor Hind stated that a written response would be provided to the issue outlined above and in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, this would be circulated to all members and published on the Council's website.

In addition to the above, the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holders spoke in support of the budget, with particular reference given to how it would benefit the delivery of priorities, services, aims and ambitions within their own portfolios, where applicable.

In summary, the majority of members acknowledged that despite the significant financial challenges being faced, the Council had achieved a positive and robust budget that invested in West Suffolk's future, improved services, moved forward with its 'greener' ambitions and kept charges low. Investments would continue to be made in essential services and initiatives that would drive the Council's strategic priorities within a context of national financial challenges.

As it had previously been indicated that members wished to discuss the specific content of the exempt appendices, at this point, Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, proposed that the meeting move into private session.

The motion was duly seconded by Councillor Andrew Smith. The motion was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the following items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt categories of information as prescribed in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and indicated against each item and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Discussion was held on the following three business cases detailed in the exempt appendices:

- A £1.2 million investment in the commercial unit at Anglian Lane site in Bury St Edmunds to regenerate the asset whilst increasing its rental income – exempt business case at Appendix 2d.
- A £1.1 million investment in the commercial unit at 2 Hollands Road in Haverhill regenerate the asset whilst increasing its rental income – exempt business case at Appendix 2e.
- A £2.0 million investment towards a total £4.0 million capital project delivering a new sport and leisure provision at the St Felix site in Newmarket – exempt business case at Appendix 2f.

During the discussion in private session on the Anglian Lane business case, Councillor Diane Hind confirmed to Councillor Sarah Broughton that there was a presentational error in the exempt appendix. Subsequent to the meeting, written clarification was given to Councillor Broughton in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, this would be circulated to all members and placed on the Council's intranet for restricted access only.

Following due consideration, the meeting returned to public session, where Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council spoke at seconder of the motion. He felt extremely proud of the budget and had no hesitation commending its approval by Council.

The motion was then put to the statutorily required recorded vote. With 58 members present, the votes recorded were 33 votes for the motion, 3 against, and 22 abstentions; the names of those members voting for, against and abstaining, being recorded as follows:

For the motion:

Councillors Alecock, Armitage, Bradshaw, Brown, Dawn Dicker, Roger Dicker, Firman, Halpin, Higgins, Hind, Jarvis, Kelly, Lindberg, London, Luccarini, Lukaniuk, Miller-Jones, Neal, O'Driscoll, Perry, Savage, Sayer, Shipp, David Smith, Liz Smith, Taylor, Thorndyke, Wakelam, Waldron, Waterman, Wijenayaka, Wittam and Yarrow.

Against the motion:

Councillors Mager, Speed and Stennett.

Abstentions:

Councillors Broughton, Bull, Chester, Chung, Clarke, Drummond, Glossop, Hood, Hopfensperger, Houlder, Lynch, Marks, Mason, Mildmay-White, Pugh, Rayner, Richardson, Rout, Rushbrook, Andrew Smith, Soons and Stamp.

It was therefore

Resolved:

That

1. having taken into account the information received by Cabinet on 6 February 2024 (Report number: CAB/WS/24/010) including the report by the Director (Resources and Property) (Section 151 Officer) set out in Attachment C, together with the up to date information and advice contained in Report number: COU/WS/24/003, the level of West Suffolk Council's band D Council Tax for 2024 to 2025 be set at £197.82 (the level of Council Tax beyond 2024 to 2025 will be set in accordance with the annual budget process for the relevant financial year).
2. Subject to recommendation 1 above, the following formal council tax resolutions be adopted:
 - a. the revenue and capital budget for 2024 to 2028, plus 2023 to 2024 capital projects that subsequently require to be carried forward at the year end, attached at Attachment A to Report number: COU/WS/24/003, and as detailed in Attachment D (Appendices 1 to 6), Attachment E and Attachment F, be approved.
 - b. A general fund balance of £5 million be agreed to be maintained, as detailed in paragraph 8.2.
 - c. The statutory calculations under Section 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, attached at Attachment I, be noted.
 - d. The Suffolk County Council and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk precepts issued to West Suffolk Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and outlined at paragraphs 12.6 and 12.7 below, be noted.
 - e. In accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the amounts shown in Schedule D of Attachment H be agreed as the amount of Council Tax for

the year 2024 to 2025 for each of the categories of dwellings shown.

3. The Director (Resources and Property), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, be authorised to vire funds between existing Earmarked Reserves (as set out at Attachment D, Appendix 3) as deemed appropriate throughout the medium term financial planning period.
4. Approval be given to delegate authority to the Director (Resources and Property) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources to formulate and implement in full, Government grant, discount or relief schemes (examples include but not limited to those set out in paragraphs 3.14 to 3.16 and 4.7 to 4.10), so long as they are as a minimum, revenue cost neutral to the council.
5. Approval be given to the change to the Second Home Premium set out in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.10.
6. Approval be given to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy (as set out in Attachment F).

At this point at 9.20pm, it was proposed by Councillor Cliff Waterman, seconded by Councillor Carol Bull, that the meeting be adjourned for a short comfort break. The motion was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved:

That the Council meeting be adjourned immediately for a short comfort break.

The meeting resumed at 9.27pm.

(During the comfort break, Councillors Sarah Broughton, Andy Drummond, Paul Firman, Susan Glossop, Rachel Hood, Ian Houlder, Sara Mildmay-White, Sarah Pugh, Richard Rout, Karen Soons, Andrew Speed and Frank Stennett left the meeting and did not return.)

338. **Calendar of meetings 2024 to 2025 (Report number: COU/WS/24/004)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval for the proposed calendar of meetings for West Suffolk Council in 2024 to 2025.

Councillor Gerald Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that the calendar took into account known events which could have a widespread impact on attendance such as school holidays.

No venues were stipulated on the calendar as this allowed for meetings to be held at West Suffolk House, Mildenhall Hub or other venues as appropriate

and in liaison with the relevant Chair. Under current legislation some meetings were also able to be operated entirely virtually (for example, Staff Consultative Panel, Financial Resilience Sub-Committee) and it was envisaged that would continue and would be at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.

The practice of scheduling two additional reserve meetings of Council and three additional reserve meetings of Cabinet had been continued and those meetings would be held if needed. The meetings would continue to be publicised as normal, and members would receive notification of these in accordance with current processes.

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

Resolved:

That the Calendar of Meetings 2024 to 2025, as attached at Appendix A to Report number: COU/WS/24/004, be approved.

339. Motion on notice - West Suffolk archives (Paper number: COU/WS/24/005)

(For openness and transparency, Councillor Patrick Chung declared that he was a trustee of the Bury St Edmunds Society. He remained in the meeting and voted on the motion.)

Under section nine of the Council Procedure Rules detailed in the Constitution, Council had been given written notice of a motion submitted by Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, as set out in Paper number: COU/WS/24/005 accordingly.

As previously advised, the Chair called upon Councillor Julia Wakelam to introduce and move the motion. Councillor Wakelam drew attention to a number of issues relating to Suffolk County Council's (SCC) proposal to close the West Suffolk archives branch in Raingate Street, Bury St Edmunds and centralise this service to The Hold in Ipswich.

While recognising the severe financial pressures faced by the County Council, Councillor Wakelam expressed her deep sadness regarding this proposed closure. She felt that the anticipated revenue savings of around £140,000 a year for SCC as a result of the consolidation of Suffolk archives was a relatively insignificant sum within the context of SCC's entire budget and considered an alternative solution could be found. She urged members to support the motion which called for SCC to suspend the implementation of the change and work with all local stakeholders, including West Suffolk Council and Bury St Edmunds Town Council, to explore all alternative options within the County Council's available capital and revenue budgets for keeping access to local historical records within West Suffolk.

Councillor Wakelam thanked Dr Wood, the registered public speaker that had spoken on this matter earlier in the meeting, and others that wished to keep the archives in West Suffolk.

Councillor Wakelam provided a history of the West Suffolk archives, examples of records stored at the Raingate Street branch and the rationale for keeping them in West Suffolk, as set out in the paper. She felt gravely disappointed that no public consultation on SCC's proposal had been held and the impact on residents regarding accessibility to the archives not only in terms of travel costs inflicted for visiting The Hold in Ipswich but also the ease in which to find a specific record. Concern was also expressed that The Hold had insufficient storage provision to accommodate the West Suffolk archives.

Councillor Wakelam encouraged members to support the motion and hoped that if sufficient pressure was put on SCC, it would rethink its proposal and engage with stakeholders to explore alternative options.

The motion was duly seconded by Councillor Victor Lukaniuk.

In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules regarding the debating motions on notice, the Chair reminded members that only five other members may speak on the motion for a maximum of three minutes each. The Chair exercised his discretion and permitted six members to speak.

The majority of members that spoke on the motion were in support and echoed Councillor Wakelam's concerns.

A request was made for a recorded vote, which was duly supported by more than the Constitutionally required ten members.

Councillor Nick Clarke, Leader of the Conservative Group expressed his support for keeping the West Suffolk archives in Bury St Edmunds; however, he did not feel approval of this motion was the most appropriate way to achieve that and suggested the motion be withdrawn.

Councillor Beccy Hopfensperger, member of both West Suffolk Council and Cabinet member at Suffolk County Council (SCC) considered that approval of the motion would not add anything meaningful to the solution. At its budget meeting on 15 February 2024, SCC had resolved not to commit any additional expenditure to the archives located in Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft. As well as the revenue savings to be made, it was anticipated that it would cost over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. She added that it had been a difficult decision to relocate the archives to The Hold in Ipswich; however, SCC needed to reconsider its options following West Suffolk Council's decision to cancel the Western Way project where it had previously been proposed to relocate the West Suffolk archives service. She felt this motion should have been raised at that time when SCC's options were being considered.

Councillor Hopfensperger noted the request in the motion for SCC to engage with stakeholders and informed that she had received confirmation from the SCC Cabinet member with the responsibility for the archives, had agreed to meet with Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of West Suffolk Council (WSC). In addition, and recognising the importance of local historic records and enabling access to them, the SCC Cabinet member had committed to

engaging with local stakeholders, including WSC with a view to agreeing a suitable solution moving forward.

Following Councillor Wakelam's right of reply, which included welcoming stakeholder engagement with SCC, the motion was put to the recorded vote. With 46 members present, the votes recorded were 32 votes for the motion, none against, and 14 abstentions; the names of those members voting for and abstaining being recorded as follows:

For the motion:

Councillors Alecock, Armitage, Bradshaw, Brown, Dawn Dicker, Roger Dicker, Halpin, Higgins, Hind, Jarvis, Kelly, Lindberg, London, Luccarini, Lukaniuk, Miller-Jones, Neal, O'Driscoll, Perry, Savage, Sayer, Shipp, David Smith, Liz Smith, Taylor, Thorndyke, Wakelam, Waldron, Waterman, Wijenayaka, Wittam and Yarrow.

Against the motion:

None

Abstentions:

Councillors Bull, Chester, Chung, Clarke, Hopfensperger, Lynch, Mager, Marks, Mason, Rayner, Richardson, Rushbrook, Andrew Smith and Stamp.

It was therefore

Resolved:

That

1. recognising the severe financial pressure faced by Suffolk County Council, West Suffolk Council nonetheless expresses its sadness at the County Council's proposal to close the West Suffolk archive and centralise this service to Ipswich; and therefore
2. calls upon Suffolk County Council to suspend the implementation of this change until such time as it has worked with all local stakeholders, including West Suffolk Council and Bury St Edmunds Town Council, to explore all alternative options within the County Council's available capital and revenue budgets for keeping access to local historical records within West Suffolk.

340. Any other urgent business

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

341. Exclusion of press and public

See minute 337. above.

342. Exempt appendices: Budget and Council Tax setting 2024 to 2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2028 (paragraph 3)

See minute 337. above.

The meeting concluded at 9.56 pm

Signed by:

Chair

Civic communication for Council

20 February to 26 March 2024

Event	Venue	Date	Time	Attending
West Suffolk Council Meeting	Council Chamber West Suffolk House	Tuesday 20 February 2024	7pm to 10pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council
West Row Parish Council meeting	St Peter's Church Hall, West Row	Wednesday 21 February 2024	7pm to 9pm	Chair of Council
Luke Southgate Memorial Service	St Olaves Precinct Bury St Edmunds	Saturday 24 February 2024	10.30am to 12pm	Vice Chair of Council
Newmarket Town Council meeting	King Edward VII Memorial Hall Newmarket	Monday 26 February 2024	6.15pm to 8.15pm	Chair of Council
Bury St Edmunds Town Council meeting	Bury St Edmunds Town Council, Bury St Edmunds	Wednesday 28 February 2024	7pm to 9pm	Chair of Council
Mildenhall High Town Council meeting	The Pavilion, Mildenhall	Thursday 29 February 2024	7pm to 9pm	Chair of Council
St. John Ambulance Honours and Awards event	St John Ambulance, Ipswich	Saturday 2 March 2024	3pm to 5pm	Vice Chair of Council
Babergh Chair's Civic Service	Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford	Sunday 3 March 2024	2.30pm to 4.30pm	Chair of Council
Barrow cum Denham Parish Council meeting	Barrow Village Hall, Barrow	Monday 4 March 2024	7.15pm to 9.15pm	Chair of Council

Opening of new Primark store in Bury St Edmunds	Primark, Charter Square, Bury St Edmunds	Wednesday 6 March 2024	9am to 10.30am	Chair of Council
Ipswich Mayor's Ball	Ipswich Town Hall and Corn Exchange, Ipswich	Friday 8 March 2024	7pm to 11.30pm	Chair of Council
Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council meeting	Fornham St Martin Village Hall Fornham St Martin	Monday 11 March 2024	7.30pm to 9pm	Chair of Council
Suffolk Justice Service	St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds	Sunday 17 March 2024	3.30pm to 5.30pm	Chair of Council
Chair's Charity Concert with The Voice Squad	The Apex, Bury St Edmunds	Sunday 17 March 2024	6.30pm to 8.30pm	Chair of Council
50th anniversary of South Cambridgeshire District Council	South Cambs Hall, Cambridge	Wednesday 20 March 2024	6pm to 8pm	Chair of Council
SSAFA Annual General Meeting	Community Centre, Needham Market	Friday 22 March 2024	10am to 2pm	Chair of Council
West Suffolk Council Meeting	Council Chamber, West Suffolk House	Tuesday 26 March 2024	7pm to 9pm	Chair and Vice Chair of Council

Pay Policy Statement 2024 to 2025

Report number:	COU/WS/24/007	
Report to and date:	Council	26 March 2024
Cabinet member:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Tel: 07968 396389 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officers:	Jen Eves Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory Services) Tel: 01284 757015 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk Wendy Canham Service Manager (HR, Payroll, Learning & Development and Health & Safety) Tel: 01284 757006 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

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

Wards impacted: **All wards**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that the Pay Policy Statement for 2024 to 2025, as contained in Appendix A to Report number COU/WS/24/007, be approved.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 and supporting guidance provides details of matters that must be included in this statutory pay policy, but, also, emphasises that each local authority has the autonomy to take its own decisions on pay and pay policies. The Pay Policy Statement must be approved formally by full Council each year. The statement can be amended in year, must be published on the Council’s website and must be complied with when setting the terms and conditions of Chief Officers.
- 1.2 This Pay Policy Statement includes:
- a. the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers (senior staff)
 - b. the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
 - c. the relationship between the remuneration of the highest and lowest paid employees
 - d. other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration, fees and charges and other discretionary payments
 - e. the gender pay position
- 1.3 The Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency provides guidance on good practice in this area. The Council’s approach to data transparency is to establish the Council as an open and transparent Council that, in time, not only embraces the principles of the Code, but, publishes all information that is likely to be of benefit to the communities and economy of our area.
- 1.4 Data can already be accessed through the “open data” link on our website. The Pay Policy Statement is published in that section annually.

2. Alternative options that have been considered

- 2.1 There are no alternative options as under Section 38/11 of the Localism Act 2011, local authorities must produce and publish a Pay Policy Statement annually.

3. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 3.1 Whilst there is no requirement to consult on this statement, it has been shared with Unison.

4. Risks associated with the proposals

- 4.1 There are no decisions to be made. Failure to comply with the legislation would be a breach of the Act.

5. Appendices referenced in this report

- 5.1 Appendix A - Pay Policy Statement 2024 to 2025.

6. Background documents associated with this report

- 6.1 None

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West Suffolk Council

Pay Policy Statement 2024/2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 West Suffolk's ambition is to contribute to building a more prosperous local community by modelling good employment practice, including ensuring fairness in the way that it pays and rewards its existing and future employees. The Council wishes to be an attractive source of potential employment to job seekers across its community and is committed to using its resources to create meaningful and fairly remunerated employment opportunities for local people.
- 1.2 We recognise that, in the context of managing scarce public resources, remuneration at all levels needs to be adequate to secure and retain high quality employees dedicated to the service of the public, but at the same time needs to avoid being unnecessarily generous or otherwise excessive. Our approach to pay and remuneration therefore is based on ensuring that the overall remuneration aligns with: -
- The responsibilities and accountabilities of particular posts
 - Market norms for the local government and public sectors
 - Pay levels in the local area, including neighbouring public sector employers.
- 1.3 It is important that local authorities are able to determine their own pay policies and structures in order to address local priorities and to compete in the local labour market. In particular, it is recognised that senior management roles in local government are complex and diverse functions in a highly politicised environment where often national and local pressures conflict. Our ability to continue to attract and retain high calibre leaders, capable of delivering this complex agenda, particularly during times of financial challenge, remains crucial if we are able to retain their current high performance levels and ensure that West Suffolk services are protected during this continuing period of economic uncertainty.
- 1.4 The last full pay review for all staff was implemented in 2019, which sought to address equality risks due to wide pay bands; recruitment and retention issues and realign grades to take into account the national living wage.

2. Legislation

- 2.1 Section 38/1 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement annually. This pay statement must be prepared and approved by full Council for the end of the 31

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March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates. The data in this report, therefore, represents the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

- 2.2 The Act, and supporting statutory guidance, provides details of matters that must be included in this statutory pay policy, but, also, emphasises that each local authority has the autonomy to take its own decisions on pay and pay policies. The Pay Policy Statement is approved formally by full Council annually. It must be published on the Council's website and be complied with when setting the terms and conditions of Chief Officer employees.
- 2.3 In October 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), issued a Transparency Code for all public sector bodies. This code required us to publish specific data on our website from February 2015. We have published data on how we organise our structures, our senior salaries for those whose remuneration is at least £50,000; the pay multiple and any trade union facility time given. The code was issued to as part of a drive to increase local accountability, giving local people the opportunity to contribute to the local decision-making process and help shape their public services.
- 2.4 The National Minimum Wage applies for those aged 21 to 22 at £10.18 with effect from 1 April 2023; 18-20 at £7.49; under 18 and apprentice rate £5.28.
- 2.5 The National Living Wage, previously applied to those over 25, now applies for those aged 23 and over at £10.42, with effect from 1 April 2023. Note from 1 April 2024 the national living wage qualifying age will lower and will apply to 21 and over.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Pay Policy Statement includes:
 - (a) the level and elements of pay for each Chief Officer.
 - (b) the pay of the lowest paid employees.
 - (c) the relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and other officers; and
 - (d) other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration, fees and charges and other discretionary payments.
- 3.2 Remuneration in this context is defined widely to include not just pay, but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

4. Principles

- 4.1 The following principles were agreed with Unison to guide the development of the single pay and reward policy:

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- Single terms and conditions across both workforces
- Affordable: within the Mid Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Attractive: to recruit and retain
- Responsible: maintains reputation
- Legal: satisfies equality requirement
- Fair: minimises risk of challenge
- Drives: new organisational values
- Rewards excellent performance
- Manages unacceptable performance; and
- Capable of achieving collective agreement

4.2 The remuneration of Chief Officers has been agreed outside of the collective agreement process and in regard to pay, based on Leadership Team pay correlating to the CE pay; these local arrangements are as agreed by the Councils in 2012.

5. Senior Pay

5.1 In this policy the senior pay group covers posts in the top three tiers of the organisation. These include the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Directors.

5.2 The Council currently has the following number of posts at this level, 1 x Chief Executive, 2 x Strategic Directors, 5 x Directors.

5.3 The management structure of the Council can be found on the Council website and on the intranet.

5.4 Chief Executive

(a) The salary for this post, a local grade, was originally established when the Joint Chief Executive was appointed in April 2012 and reviewed in 2018, following an analysis of the degree of responsibility in the role, the downward movement in market rates, benchmarking with other comparators and the ability to recruit and retain an exceptional candidate. The current range is £143816 - £156760 p.a.

(b) The salary of the Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2023 was £156760 p.a. There have been no additional bonuses, honoraria, or ex-gratia payments made.

(c) Other Conditions of Service are as prescribed by the Joint National Council (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executives National Conditions, apart from those determined locally, as detailed in this policy.

5.5 Strategic Directors and Directors

(a) The salary for these posts has been established as a local grade following an analysis of the degree of responsibility in correlation to the CEO, using the LGA national recommended job evaluation

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scheme for senior posts and reviewed as part of the senior pay review in 2018.

The posts fall within the following ranges and incremental points:

Chief Officer Role	£	£	£
Strategic Director	107889	113997	118071
Director	88829	93838	97198

An additional payment of £5,000 per year is payable to an officer undertaking the statutory Section 151 role and the statutory Monitoring Officer and £1000 is paid per year to the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

- (b) There are no other additional elements of remuneration in respect of overtime, flexi-time, bank holiday working, stand-by payments, emergency call rota, etc, paid to these senior staff, as they are expected to undertake duties outside their contractual hours and working patterns without additional payment.
- (c) Other terms and conditions are as prescribed by the NJC for Local Authority Services apart from those terms agreed locally, as detailed in this policy.
- (d) It is important to ensure that our Leadership Team salaries remain competitive and are set at a level that will continue to attract highly effective and experienced applicants for these roles in the challenging local government labour market. Marketing testing and data analysis on labour market rates for salaries will continue to be independently obtained from the LGA as required to ensure salaries are competitive and that we recruitment and retain the right calibre of officers.

5.6 Additional Fees

- (a) The fees payable to the Returning Officer are set by statute for national elections and are paid by central government. Fees are, also, payable to the Council's Returning Officer for local elections. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Council, the role of the Returning Officer is one which involves, and incurs, personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from his/her duties as an employee of the Council. As Returning Officer, he/she is paid a separate allowance for each election for which he/she is responsible.

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6. Pay Structure

- 6.1 The pay structure for all contractual employees, as agreed in 2023, except those staff in the senior posts detailed above, is established using NJC for Local Authorities Services National Pay Spine from spinal column point 2 (£22366 per annum) to spinal column point 54 (£67126 per annum). The lowest paid contractual employee will be paid at spinal point 3 (£11.79 per hour), at a full time equivalent basic pay rate of £22737 per annum.
- 6.2 Our pay bands range from Band 1 to Band 8 and to Service Manager. All posts, other than the senior posts, are evaluated using the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme, which is recognised by employers and trades unions nationally. This Scheme allows for robust measurement against set criteria resulting in fair and objective evaluations and satisfies equal pay requirements.
- 6.3 The national apprentice rate for first year is £5.28 per hour (£10186 p.a.) and thereafter the national minimum wage applies, depending on age. All West Suffolk Council apprentices undertaking apprenticeships are paid £7.49 per hour (£14450 p.a.) for the first year and the national wage depending on age thereafter.
- 6.4 All employees receive the national NJC cost of living award. The value of the scale points in these pay grades are up lifted by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.
- 6.5 Progression within the grade for all staff is subject to performance, which is assessed annually, in accordance with the performance review scheme, and progression payments are effective from 1 October each year.
- 6.6 There is no 'time served' progression.

7. Gender Pay Gap

- 7.1 As of 1 April 2018 public, private and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees were required to report on their gender pay gaps. In 2016 the national gender pay gap for full time employees was 9.4%, meaning that average pay for full time female employees was 9.4% lower than for full time male employees. In 2018 the national gender pay gap fell to 8.6% but has since risen in 2019 to 8.9%.
- 7.2 For the period April 2022-March 2023 our mean gender pay gap was -2.34% (compared with -2.56% for the period April 2021-March 2022) showing that the average hourly rate of females was £2.34% more than the average hourly rate of males. The median gender pay gap is -1.91% (compared with -4.72% for the period April 2021-March 2022).

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8. Pay Protection

- 8.1 Pay protection is applied to employees who are placed in a grade, through restructuring or a re-evaluation of a post, where the maximum salary of that grade is lower than their current earnings, in accordance with the Organisational Change and Redundancy Policies current at the time. Pay is protected for one year. Employees' pay is frozen at this rate, (with no cost of living or incremental increase) for up to one year, or until the maximum of the new grade has caught up or overtaken the current earnings due to annual pay increases.

Note: Pay protection excludes market supplement pay, essential user travel allowance, overtime allowances: it applies to basic pay only. These items are not protected.

9. Allowances and Benefits in Kind

- 9.1 Allowances and benefits typically follow nationally agreed rates. However, there are a number of locally agreed allowances, which are payable following the collective agreement. Some are subject to eligibility criteria, as follows:

- Essential car user allowance at nationally prescribed lump sum and HMRC mileage rates, and
- Access to a lease car or a lease car scheme, both under strict eligibility criteria and where favourable to the Council.
- Casual user mileage allowance at HMRC rates.
- First Aid (an allowance paid to staff to act as First Aiders in the workplace).
- Reimbursement of one professional subscription fee if beneficial to the performance of the role.

10. Payments/Charges and Contributions

- 10.1 The new Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) was implemented with effect from 1 April 2014.
- 10.2 The new LGPS is a 'CARE' (career average revalued earnings) scheme rather than a Final Salary Pension Scheme.

11. Multipliers

- 11.1 The idea of publishing the ratio of the pay of an organisation's top earner to that of its median earner was recommended to support the principles of Fair Pay (The Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector 2011), and transparency.
- 11.2 The Council's ratio in respect of the pay of the median earner compared to the pay of the highest earner as of 1 April 2023 is 5.2:1 i.e. the Chief Executive (top earner) earns 5.2 times as much

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as the Council's median earner (£30296 per annum), compared to April 2022 which was 5.3:1.

- 11.3 The Council's ratio of the highest paid employee (April 2023) to the lowest paid (£22737 per annum) contractual employee is 6.9:1, compared with 7.2:1 in April 2022.

The Hutton Review recommended that the average pay ratio between the chief executive of most public sector organisations and the lowest paid member of staff is below 12:1.

By comparison, the average estimated top-to-bottom pay ratio in FTSE 100 companies (which disclosed data) was 262:1 in 2018 (CIPD Research Report 2019 – most recent data available).

We, therefore, compare very favourably to these statistics, although Hutton warned against the difficulty of making direct comparisons between authorities.

- 11.4 The table below summarises the pay multiples;

Highest Pay	£156760
Median Pay	£30296
Lowest Pay	£22737
Highest to median ratio	5.2:1
Highest to lowest ratio	6.9:1

12. Discretionary Payments

The policy for the award of any discretionary payments is the same for all staff, regardless of their pay level, up to a maximum of 104 weeks the following arrangements apply.

- 12.1 'Redundancy payments under regulation 5 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England & Wales) Regulations 2006.'

As of 1 April 2015, this provides an overall lump sum of 1.5 times the statutory redundancy payment multiplier based on actual weeks pay. This is payable to employees made redundant with two or more years local government service regardless of their age.

- 12.2 **Severance payments under regulation 6.**

Severance payments with a value above £100,000 will be approved by Full Council, in accordance with guidance from the Secretary of State under Section 40 of the Localism Act 2011. Contractual and pension entitlements are not included in this figure as part of a severance payment requiring such approval.

Appendix A

No severance payments are routinely made, but employees aged 55 and over, who are retiring early in the interests of efficiency, receive immediate payment of their pension benefits, with no additional years' service or compensatory payments. This forms part of the rules of the LGPS and in accordance with the Pensions Discretions Policy. The capital cost of the early payment of pension benefits will be met by the Council, but all such early retirements are subject to the costs being met by savings within a three-year period.

- 12.3 Additional membership for revision purposes under regulation 12 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership & Contributions) Regulations 2007.

None awarded.

- 12.4 Additional pension under regulation 13 of same legislation.

None awarded.

13. Decision Making

- 13.1 Decisions on remuneration are made as follows:

- (a) Senior pay bands local level approved by Full Council;
- (b) Pay structure for all other posts approved by Full Council;
- (c) Performance progression, in accordance with the locally agreed scheme, and as approved by officers under existing delegated powers.

14. Disclosure

- 14.1 This Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website. In addition, numbers and details of posts paid above £50,000 are disclosed on the council's website in the annual Statement of Accounts and as part of the requirements of the Transparency Code.

For further information please contact:

Wendy Canham, Service Manager HR & OD
January 2024

Appendix A

Comparison Data

Most recent available information	Ratio to median	Ratio to Lowest paid employee
Ipswich	4.7:1	5.9:1
West Suffolk	5.2:1	6.9:1
East Suffolk	5.6:1	7.6:1
Suffolk County Council	6.0:1	9.2:1
East Cambs	Not disclosed	6:1
Babergh/Mid Suffolk	5.5:1	8.1:1*

*Not yet published for 2024/25

Information derived from Statement of Accounts and/or Pay Policy Statement

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West Suffolk Council Constitution: proposed amendments

Report number:	COU/WS/24/008	
Report to and date:	Council	26 March 2024
Cabinet member:	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Email: gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Teresa Halliday Monitoring Officer Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

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

Wards impacted: **All wards**

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

- 1. Approves the revised role order and wording for the Member Role Descriptions in Part 3; Section 6 of the Constitution.**
- 2. Approves the amendments to the appointment of substitutes in Part 4a and Part 4b of the Constitution.**
- 3. Approves the amendment to Staff Consultative Panel: Terms of Reference in Part 3; Section 2: Responsibility for Council (Non- Executive) Functions of the Constitution.**

- 4. Approves the amendment to Council Procedure Rules regarding the recording of meetings in Part 4 of the Constitution.**
- 5. Approves the amendments to Council Procedure Rules on Motions on Notice in Part 4 of the Constitution.**
- 6. Approves amendments to the granting of dispensations in Part 3; Section 2; Responsibility for Council (Non-Executive Functions) of the Constitution.**
- 7. Approves amendments to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4; Section B. Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee of the Constitution.**
- 8. Agrees to disband the Health and Safety Sub-Committee.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The Constitution Review Group periodically meets to review the effectiveness of the Constitution, identifying any areas that could be developed further to improve the way the Council makes decisions, ensuring that processes are efficient and transparent.

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 The Constitution Review Group met on 8 November 2023, 31 January 2024 and 13 March 2024 to consider areas within the Constitution to recommend for amendment:

2.2 **Proposed amendments to Member Role Descriptions (Part 3; Section 6 of the Constitution)**

- 2.3 That the order of the Member Role Descriptions be reversed (ie: ward councillor; member of the Cabinet; Deputy Leader of the Council; Leader of the Council).

- 2.4 That minor changes be made as identified in Appendix 1 to this report.

2.5 **Proposed amendments to the appointment of substitutes (Part 4a and Part 4b of the Constitution)**

- 2.6 The Group considered whether the requirement for named substitutes should be removed from the Constitution and determined that the requirement be retained but to seek to simplify the process for the use of temporary substitutes as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

2.7 **Proposed amendment to Staff Consultative Panel: Terms of Reference (Part 3; Section 2: Responsibility for Council (Non-Executive) Functions of the Constitution)**

- 2.8 Paragraph 2.6 of the Terms of Reference currently provide:

It shall be the duty of a senior Human Resource Officer to attend and advise the Panel

- 2.9 The Group considered a request to bring clarity to this duty and proposes the following change:

It shall be the duty of a senior Human Resource Officer to attend and advise the Panel on behalf of the Head of Paid Service or their designated nominee

2.10 **Proposed amendments to Council Procedure Rules – recording of meetings (Part 4 of the Constitution)**

- 2.11 Paragraph 7.1 of the Council Procedure Rules currently provide:

The Council usually makes its own recording of Council meetings. All recording should be retained for six months after the day of the meeting.

- 2.12 The Group noted that this is not in line with the Council’s retention scheme which requires that recordings are retained from the date of the first annual meeting a new administration until one year after the first annual meeting of the following administration. The following change to paragraph 7.1 is therefore proposed:

The Council usually makes its own recording of Council meetings. All recordings should be retained for the minimum period of one year.

2.13 **Proposed amendments to Council Procedure Rules on Motions on Notice (Part 4 of the Constitution)**

- 2.14 The Group considered that the current rules on Motions of Notice within the Council Procedure Rules are inconsistent with other parts of the Constitution. The current rules provide:

9.3 Unless there are overriding exceptional circumstances, at least 21 days prior to the Council meeting, Members expecting to submit a motion must notify the Monitoring Officer of their intention to do so. The Monitoring Officer will then engage with other relevant Officers or Members as required by the nature of the motion. The Councillors and Officers may then seek to liaise with each other about the nature of the motion, including discussion with the proposer, on any relevant action the Council is already taking in respect of the issue and clarification on the wording of the motion.

9.4 Overriding exceptional circumstances would be those cases where the Councillor proposing the motion could not have reasonably foreseen the need to notify their intent to submit the motion at least 21 days prior to Council. They may only be included on the Council agenda with the written permission of the Chair.

9.5 The final version of the motion on notice must be delivered in writing or by electronic mail to the Service Manager (Democratic Services) no later than midday ten working days before the day of the meeting. These will be dated, and available for public inspection on request.

- 2.15 The Group proposes the following amendment:

9.3 Unless there are overriding exceptional circumstances the Motion must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer by no later than 12 noon ten working days before the meeting, not counting the day of the meeting. The motion will be dated and available for public inspection upon request.

9.4 Overriding exceptional circumstances would be those cases where the Councillor proposing the motion could not have reasonably foreseen the need to notify their intent to submit the motion at least ten working days prior to Council. They may only be included on the Council agenda with written permission of the Chair.

2.16 **Proposed amendments to the granting of dispensations (Part 3; Section 2; Responsibility for Council (Non-Executive Functions) of the Constitution)**

2.17 This part of the Constitution sets out the remit of the West Suffolk Standards Committee and provides that the Committee will have the following functions:

(g) Granting dispensations to Councillors and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests set out in Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

2.18 This means that if a member were to approach the Monitoring Officer to seek a dispensation in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 (with the offences for not declaring an interest being set out in Section 34 of that Act) the Monitoring Officer would be required to arrange for a meeting of the West Suffolk Standards Committee, requiring the summons and agenda for that meeting to be posted five clear days before the meeting. This would all need to take place before the meeting for which the dispensation was being sought.

2.19 The Group considered the current arrangements are not helpful as meetings may be left inquorate if members are out of time for seeking a dispensation. The Group therefore proposed that this be further amended to enable dispensations to be granted in a timely manner:

Where there is insufficient time to call a meeting of the West Suffolk Standards Committee, the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the West Suffolk Standards Committee, may grant dispensations to Councillors and Co-opted Members from the requirements relating to interests in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

2.20 **Proposed amendments to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4; Section B. Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee of the Constitution)**

2.21 The Group considered changes proposed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 25 January 2024 for the co-option of two non-voting non-elected independent members to be appointed to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and

Accountancy (CIPFA) (see report PAS/WS/24/004). The Constitution currently states:

1. What will be the arrangements for the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee?

1.1...

1.2 *The Committee will consist of a maximum of 12 Members of the Council. The Council will normally observe the rules governing political balance contained in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 when allocating seats to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee but it may resolve to vary this provision if no Member votes against it.*

2.22 The Group proposes the following amendment:

1. What will be the arrangements for the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee?

1.1...

1.2 *The Committee will consist of a maximum of 10 Members of the Council and 2 non-voting co-opted non-elected independent members. The Council will normally observe the rules governing political balance contained in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 when allocating seats to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee but it may resolve to vary this provision if no Member votes against it.*

1.3 *The 2 non-voting co-opted non-elected independent members will be appointed for a term of four years and may serve for a maximum of two terms.*

2.23 **Proposed disbandment of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee**

2.24 The Group considered a request from the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory to disband the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and for a more streamlined way of working, allowing more efficient democratic governance and oversight of health and safety and reducing duplication that currently exists with the oversight of the service.

2.25 The Group noted that there was much duplication and cross-over with the functions of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and the Staff Consultative Panel. The Group noted that there are no risks to the disbandment of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and therefore propose that it be disbanded.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 No specific other options have been considered other than not to make the changes.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 The recommendations have been developed by the Constitution Review Group.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 There are no specific risks involved with making this decision.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.1 None

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - Proposed amendments to Member Role Descriptions
7.2 Appendix 2 – Proposed amendments to the appointment of temporary substitutes

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/004](#) and [Appendix A](#) - Co-opting non-elected independent members

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APPENDIX 1

The Constitution Review Group has recommended the following amendments to the Member Role Descriptions. Proposed additions are shown as emboldened text with proposed deletions shown with strikethrough text.

West Suffolk Council

Section 6 - Member Role Descriptions

Leader of the Council

1. General

The Leader of the Council will represent the Council and provide ~~political~~ leadership for the Cabinet, the Council and the District.

2. Specific Responsibilities will be to:-

- (a) Appoint Members of the Cabinet and determine portfolios, **chair meetings of the Cabinet, agree the schedule and venue for Cabinet meetings and make arrangements for special meetings; and Co-ordinate and manage Cabinet Members.**
- ~~(b) Chair the meetings of the Cabinet.~~
- ~~(c) Agree the schedule and venue for Cabinet meetings and make arrangements for special meetings.~~
- (d) Enable preparation of the Decisions Plan.
- (e) Have an overview of, and advise on, the policy making of the District, **act as lead Member on overall strategy and monitor the overall performance of the Council in delivering the agreed policies of the Council.**
- ~~(f) Act as lead Member on overall strategy.~~
- ~~(g) Monitor the overall performance of the Council in delivering the agreed policies of the Council.~~
- ~~(h) Co-ordinate and manage Cabinet Members.~~
- (i) Represent Council policy to the community and partners.
- (j) Work closely with the Chief Executive on strategic matters to ensure the co-ordination, consistency and delivery of Council services **and consult with the Chief Executive on strategic or policy matters where an urgent decision or action must be taken.**
- (k) Represent the Council on local, regional and national bodies.
- ~~(l) Consult with the Chief Executive on strategic or policy matters where an urgent decision or action must be taken.~~
- (m) Promote and develop partnership working with other agencies, ensuring that the Council's priorities are met.
- (n) Where necessary consult with Group Leaders of other political groups to expedite the efficient and effective delivery of Council business.

- ~~(o) Carry out the duties identified in the job description for Ward Councillors.~~
- (p) Liaise with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Audit Committee to ensure that work programmes are properly co-ordinated.

Deputy Leader of the Council

1. General

1.1 The Deputy Leader of the Council is responsible for supporting the Leader in providing political leadership for the Cabinet, the Council and the District.

1.2 In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader is authorised to act on their behalf in accordance with the Council's Constitution, in particular:-

- (a) Chairing Cabinet meetings, **conduct the Cabinet's business and present reports to Council.**
- (b) Enabling the preparation of the Decisions Plan.
- (c) Consulting with the Chief Executive on strategic or policy matters where an urgent decision or action must be taken; and
- (d) Where necessary, consulting with Group Leaders of other political groups, the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to expedite the efficient and effective delivery of Council business; **and**
- (e) to perform any other duties of the Leader, as set out in the Constitution and the Job Description for the Leader**

2. Specific duties include:

~~2.1 In the absence of the Leader, to chair Cabinet meetings, conduct the Cabinet's business and present reports to Council.~~

~~2.2 In the absence of the Leader, to perform any other duties of the Leader, as set out in the Constitution and the Job Description for the Leader.~~

2.3 On behalf of the Leader, to represent the Council on local, regional and national bodies.

2.4 On behalf of the Leader, to represent Council policy to the community, partners and the media.

2.5 With the Leader, to attend quarterly meetings with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and to ensure the work of these Committees is properly co-ordinated.

2.6 To carry out the duties identified in the role descriptions for Cabinet Members, their own Cabinet portfolio **(if they hold one)**. ~~and Ward Councillors.~~

General Roles and Responsibilities of all ~~Portfolio Holders~~ Cabinet Members

1. Accountability and Leadership
 - 1.1 Each Portfolio Holder will be accountable, and provide the ~~political~~ leadership, for their specific areas of responsibility.
2. Shared Responsibility as a Member of the Cabinet

Responsibility for:-

- 2.1 The co-ordination, promotion and implementation of the Council's statutory plans and strategies and for the setting of the Council's objectives.
 - 2.2 The oversight, development, monitoring and promotion of all services provided by the Council within the appropriate performance management framework.
 - 2.3 Suitable and proper arrangements being made for the procurement, development, monitoring and promotion of all services relating to Cabinet functions which are provided under contract to the Council.
 - 2.4 The promotion of the interests of the District and the whole of West Suffolk and of all the residents, businesses, other organisations and stakeholders within West Suffolk.
 - 2.5 A community leadership role being taken by the Council across the public, voluntary and business sectors involving the development of good and effective working links and partnerships with all sectors.
 - 2.6 The promotion and implementation of an effective equal opportunity policy in relation both to the employment of staff by the Council and the delivery of services by the Council and other agencies.
 - 2.7 The promotion of services which contribute to the Council's Corporate Priorities.
 - 2.8 Improving arrangements for communicating, consulting and maintaining a dialogue with residents and service users; and
 - 2.9 ~~Members of the Cabinet also carry out the duties identified in the role description for Ward Councillors.~~
3. Specific Responsibilities

Portfolio Holders will:-

- 3.1 Take the leading role in the development and implementation of the policies and covered by their Portfolio.
- 3.2 Be responsible for ensuring the effective management and delivery of the services or functions covered by their Portfolio within the following framework:-

- (a) The Council's overall strategic, corporate and policy objectives.
- (b) All statutory and other plans and strategies approved by the Council.
- (c) The statutory and local obligation to ensure best value.
- (d) The approved revenue and capital budgets.
- (e) The law and the Council's Constitution; and
- (f) The decisions made at meetings of the Cabinet.

4. Specific roles of **Portfolio Holders Cabinet Members**

Will include:-

- (a) Advising the Council, Cabinet or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on matters concerning the implementation, monitoring and performance of services, groups of services, initiatives and projects.
- (b) Monitoring the performance of portfolio functions and activities to ensure corporate objectives and targets are achieved.
- (c) Advising and consulting with Officers on matters of significance for Council policy and its implementation.
- (d) Representing the Council's views to other agencies, community interests and local media.
- (e) Formally representing the Cabinet at meetings and Working Groups of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Audit Committee.
- (f) Liaising with other lead Members and Officers on strategic matters to ensure proper co-ordination, consistency and seamless delivery of services within Council policy.
- (g) Chairing, from time to time, meetings of members and officers and with Council partners.
- (h) Assisting in the development of work programmes, Decisions Plans and the setting of agendas.
- (i) Presenting and reporting issues to the Council, its Committees and Members' seminars.
- (j) Being consulted as part of any decision-making processes within their Portfolio (**if held**) which have been delegated to Officers; and
- (k) Being consulted on any matters of urgency which an Officer needs to act upon prior to a Member decision.

Ward Councillor

1. Overview

1.2 First and foremost, you will represent your Ward, engaging with residents and groups on a wide range of different issues and taking on an important community leadership role. At the Council, you will contribute to the development of policies and strategies, including budget-setting. You may also be involved in taking decisions on planning or licensing applications.

1.1 As a Councillor, you will be expected to balance the needs and interests of the Council, your local area, your residents and voters, community groups, local businesses and your political party (if you belong to one).

- 1.3 In balancing the varying needs and interests of your residents, it is important that you are able to pro-actively engage with the work of the Council, and input the views of your communities to relevant committees.
- 2 Representing the local area
- 2.1 Represent effectively the interests of the Ward for which you were elected and deal with residents' enquiries and representations, fairly and without prejudice.
- 2.2 Champion the causes which best relate to the interests of the community and campaign for improvements in the quality of life of the community in terms of diversity, safety, well-being, economy and environment.
- 2.3 Use local knowledge in the development of Council policies, including listening to the needs of local people and taking their views into account when considering policy proposals and decision-making.
- 2.4 Ensure that local people are informed about:
- Services in their area;
 - Decisions that affect them;
 - The reasons why decisions were taken by the Council;
 - Their rights as residents.
- 2.5 Represent the Authority to the community and the community to the Authority, through the various forums available.
- 2.6 When appropriate, respond to any Council consultation regarding matters within your Ward.
- 2.7 Know your Ward, and be aware of its particular qualities, advantages and challenges.
- 2.8 Develop effective working relationships with other local representatives, including other local Ward Members and the County Councillors, and representatives of local organisations, associations, interest groups and businesses
- 2.9 Encourage people in your Ward to participate in the democratic decision making process by engaging with consultations etc.
- 2.10 Above all, you are a leader in your community. You act as an important link between the Council and your community, and you need to ensure you keep both your Council, and your community, informed of the work that each other is doing. That ~~may~~ **will** mean **regularly communicating with and** reporting to Parish/Town Councils, Community Groups and Residents Associations, and reporting back from their meetings to appropriate forums.

- 3 Participating in the work of the Council
- 3.1 Participate effectively at all meetings of Council and at Committees, Groups or other Forums to which you are appointed.
- 3.2 Contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Council's priorities, budget, strategies and service delivery.
- 3.3 Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, powers/duties and constraints and develop good working relationships with the Council's Officers.
- 3.4 Fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected Member, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct and protocols.
- 3.5 Represent the Council on outside bodies to which it appoints you, ensuring that relevant Officers and Members in the Council are made aware of the work of the outside body and any matters arising from their meetings.
- 3.6 Support the Chair in promoting the civic life of the Council.
- 3.7 Participate in the scrutiny of the services and policies of the Council and their effectiveness in meeting the strategic objectives of the Council and the needs of its residents.
- 3.8 **Actively** engage with the Member Development Programme, ensuring you have the skills you need to discharge your role effectively. Comply with all compulsory training requirements **and recommended training**. Ensure you have sufficient IT skills to enable you to make use of the relevant Council systems.

APPENDIX 2

The Constitution Review Group has recommended the following amendments to the Substitution Rules. Proposed additions are shown as emboldened text with proposed deletions shown with strikethrough text.

Committee Procedure Rules

9. Substitutes
Powers and Duties
- 9.1 Once a substitute has been declared, they will have the ordinary status of a Member present in their own right and will not be the delegate of the original Member. They will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person for whom they are substituting. Any disqualification of the original Member to speak or vote, however, is not transferred to the substitute. Conversely, if a substitute Member is disqualified to speak or vote on a particular item, they must declare it.
- 9.2 If an original Member arrives at a meeting at which a substitute has already been declared, the substitute will remain the Member entitled to speak and vote. Once a substitution has been declared, the original Member will not be entitled to attend the meeting, either as a Member of the Committee or Sub-Committee or 'by invitation' (this is because if a substitution is declared it is on the pre-supposition that the original Member has declared themselves unable to attend the meeting).
- 9.3 The procedure for the appointment of temporary substitutes will be in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

Substitution Rules

- 9.4 At the commencement of each meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee (or upon arrival, if arriving late) each Member substituting for another Member will declare the said substitution.
- 9.5 Once a substitute has been declared as present in place of a Member for a meeting of that Committee or Sub-Committee, that substitute will take the place of the Member and will be able to speak and vote (subject to the declaration of any interests, as is usual practice).
- 9.6 Once a substitute has declared that they are substituting for another Member, the original Member will not be able to replace the substitute Member during the course of the meeting. If the substitute Member leaves the meeting during the course of the meeting, the original Member will not be allowed to attend and vote in place of the substitute.
- 9.7 If, at the commencement of the meeting, the original Member is present, then a substitution cannot take place.

- 9.8 Any original Member of a Committee may seek a substitute ~~from any of those on the appointed list of substitutes~~ for that Committee or Sub-Committee, provided that they are from the same political group to maintain political balance **and the substitute has received training to sit on that Committee or Sub-Committee (if required) within the preceding six months.**
- 9.9 No substitute Member has the automatic right to substitute for another Member who is not present. It is for the original Member to select a substitute in accordance with paragraph 9.8 above. However, where the original Member is incapacitated, due to sickness or hospitalisation and is, therefore, unable to appoint a substitute Member themselves, then their Group Leader will be asked to nominate a Member from the same political group to substitute for the original Member.
- 9.10 Substitute Members cannot be appointed to attend meetings for a Member who ceases to be a member of the Council (ie by way of resignation, disqualification or death in service). Instead, the relevant seat shall be carried as a vacancy on the Committee until an alternative appointment is made.

Council Procedure Rules

4. Appointment of substitute members of committees and sub-committees
- 4.1 As well as allocating seats on Committees, the Council may allocate seats in the same manner for substitute Members. In the case of Sub-Committees, the appointing Committees will determine the number of substitutes ~~and appoint them~~. Substitute Members must be from the same political group as the absent Member. ~~If a substitute Member cannot be found from the list of prescribed substitutes, a temporary substitute may be appointed by the Monitoring Officer on receipt of the prescribed form authorised by the relevant Group Leader. In the case of the full Member not being in a group, the full Member seeking a substitute will authorise the form.~~ Substitutes cannot be appointed for the Cabinet.
- 4.2 When the Council (or a Committee) wishes to appoint substitutes to a Committee (or Sub-Committee) it will adhere to the rules of political proportionality, subject to the total number of substitutes being no more than half of the total number of Members of the Committee (or Sub-Committee).
- 4.3 The powers and duties of substitutes are set out in the Committee Procedure Rules.
- 4.4 Any substitute, ~~whether standing or temporary,~~ must comply with any applicable training requirements for the committee prior to sitting on the Committee meeting.