

# Cabinet

<b>Title</b>	<b>Agenda</b>																								
<b>Date</b>	<b>Tuesday 9 July 2024</b>																								
<b>Time</b>	<b>6.00 pm</b>																								
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Conference Room Mildenhall Hub</b> Sheldrick Way Mildenhall IP28 7JX																								
<b>Membership</b>	<table> <tr> <td><b>Leader</b></td> <td>Cliff Waterman</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Deputy Leader</b></td> <td>Victor Lukaniuk</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Councillor</b></td> <td><b>Portfolio</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donna Higgins</td> <td>Families and Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diane Hind</td> <td>Resources</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gerald Kelly</td> <td>Governance and Regulatory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richard O'Driscoll</td> <td>Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ian Shipp</td> <td>Leisure</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Taylor</td> <td>Operations</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jim Thorndyke</td> <td>Planning</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cliff Waterman</td> <td>Leader</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indy Wijenayaka</td> <td>Growth</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Leader</b>	Cliff Waterman	<b>Deputy Leader</b>	Victor Lukaniuk	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	Donna Higgins	Families and Communities	Diane Hind	Resources	Gerald Kelly	Governance and Regulatory	Richard O'Driscoll	Housing	Ian Shipp	Leisure	David Taylor	Operations	Jim Thorndyke	Planning	Cliff Waterman	Leader	Indy Wijenayaka	Growth
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<b>Interests – declaration and restriction on participation</b>	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, <b>no later than when that item is reached</b> and, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.																								
<b>Quorum</b>	Four Members																								
<b>Committee administrator</b>	<b>Claire Skoyles</b> Democratic Services Officer <b>Telephone</b> 01284 757176 <b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>																								

## Public information

<b>Venue</b>	Conference Room, Mildenhall Hub, Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall, IP28 7JX
<b>Contact information</b>	Telephone: 01284 757176 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk">www.westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>Access to agenda and reports before the meeting</b>	The agenda and reports will be available to view at least five clear days before the meeting on our website.
<b>Attendance at meetings</b>	<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>
<b>Public participation</b>	<p>Members of the public who live or work in the district are invited to put one question or statement of not more than three minutes duration relating to items to be discussed in Part 1 of the agenda only. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply.</p> <p>The Constitution allows that a person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. <b>We urge anyone who wishes to register to speak to notify Democratic Services by 9am on the day of the meeting so that advice can be given on the arrangements in place.</b></p> <p>There is an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chair's discretion.</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	If you have any difficulties in accessing the meeting, the agenda and accompanying reports, including for reasons of a

	<p>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>
<b>Recording of meetings</b>	<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>
<b>Personal information</b>	<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: <a href="https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm">https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data_and_information/howweuseinformation.cfm</a> or call Customer Services: 01284 763233 and ask to speak to the Information Governance Officer.</p>

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# Agenda

## Procedural matters

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Minutes**

**1 - 4**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2024 (copy attached).

**3. Declarations of interest**

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

**4. Open forum**

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

**5. Public participation**

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

A person who wishes to speak must register at least 15 minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. This can be done online by sending the request to [democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk) or telephoning 01284 757176 or in person by telling the Committee Administrator present at the meeting. **We would urge anyone who wishes to register to speak to notify Democratic Services by 9am on the day of the meeting so that advice can be given on the arrangements in place.**

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

## Non-key decisions

- 6. Cabinet referrals to Council** **5 - 8**
- It has been proposed by the Leader of the Council, that Cabinet be recommended to agree the referral of the following four items, without debate, to Council on 16 July 2024, as set out in Report number: **CAB/WS/24/028**:
- a. Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (AME) Centre Project**
- Portfolio holder: Councillor Indy Wijenayaka  
Lead officer: Julie Baird
- b. Housing Related Support (HRS)**
- Portfolio holder: Councillor Richard O’Driscoll  
Lead officers: Jill Korwin and Jen Eves
- c. Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre**
- Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind  
Lead officers: Jill Korwin and Mark Walsh
- d. Options Appraisal: Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds**
- Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind  
Lead officer: Rachael Mann
- 7. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 30 May 2024** **9 - 18**
- Report number: **CAB/WS/24/029**  
Chair of the Committee: Councillor Peter Armitage  
Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind  
Lead officer: Christine Brain
- 8. Recommendation of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 30 May 2024 - Local Code of Corporate Governance** **19 - 22**
- Report number: **CAB/WS/24/030**  
Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind  
Chair of the Committee: Councillor Peter Armitage  
Lead officer: Rachael Mann

**9. Decisions Plan: 1 July 2024 (updated) to 31 May 2025** **23 - 46**

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

Report number: **CAB/WS/24/031**

Leader of the Council: Councillor Cliff Waterman

Lead officer: Ian Gallin

### **Key decisions**

**10. Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund** **47 - 54**

Report number: **CAB/WS/24/032**

Portfolio holder: Councillor Gerald Kelly

Lead officer: Alex Wilson

**11. Revenues collection performance and write offs** **55 - 58**

Report number: **CAB/WS/24/033**

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

Lead officer: Rachael Mann

**12. Exclusion of press and public**

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

### **Part 2 - exempt**

**13. Exempt appendices: Revenues collection performance and write-offs (paragraphs 1 and 2)** **59 - 66**

Exempt appendices 1, 2 and 3 to Report number:

**CAB/WS/24/033**

Portfolio holder: Councillor Diane Hind

Lead officer: Rachael Mann

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

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

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# Cabinet



**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on **Tuesday 21 May 2024** at **6.00 pm** in the **Conference Room, Mildenhall Hub**, Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall, IP28 7JX

Present

**Councillors**

**Chair** Cliff Waterman (Leader of the Council)

**Vice Chair** Victor Lukaniuk (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Donna Higgins  
Diane Hind  
Gerald Kelly  
Richard O’Driscoll

Ian Shipp  
David Taylor  
Jim Thorndyke  
Indy Wijenayaka

**By invitation**

Sarah Broughton

(Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

569. **Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

570. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

571. **Declarations of interest**

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

572. **Open forum**

No non-Cabinet members in attendance wished to speak under this item.

573. **Public participation**

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

574. **Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 5 March 2024 (Report number CAB/WS/24/023)**

The Cabinet received and noted this report, which informed members of the following substantive items discussed by the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee at their meeting held on 21 May 2024:

1. Performance report
2. ARP forecast financial performance
3. Welfare reform update
4. Forthcoming issues

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

Councillor Hind also expressed her thanks to the staff at the Partnership for their continued support to the residents of West Suffolk.

**575. Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 14 March 2024  
(Report number CAB/WS/24/024)**

The Cabinet received this report, which informed Members of the following substantive items discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting held on 14 March 2024:

1. UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund - Progress Update
2. Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee - 24 January 2024
3. Suffolk County Council: Police and Crime Panel - 26 January 2024
4. Cabinet Decisions Plan: 1 March 2024 to 31 May 2024
5. Work programme update 2024.

Councillor Sarah Broughton, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

In relation to Item 4. above (Cabinet Decisions Plan: 1 March 2024 to 31 May 2024), the Leader confirmed that the Olding Road Options Appraisal would now be considered by Cabinet on 25 June 2024 and by Council on 16 July 2024.

In relation to the item 5. above (Work programme update 2024), Cllr Indy Wijenayaka confirmed to the Cabinet that he would be attending the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 June 2024 to discuss the West Suffolk Markets.

**576. Proposed Changes to the Council's Community Chest Grant Fund  
(Report number CAB/WS/24/025)**

The Cabinet considered this report which set out proposals to launch the 'Thriving Communities Funding' in July 2024, as a successor to the Community Chest fund.

The proposed changes to the scheme were outlined within Section 3 of Report number CAB/WS/24/025, this being that:

- The funding of Citizens Advice West Suffolk be through a three-year grant agreement (to be agreed) to the total of £200,000 funding per year.
- The remaining £266,733 to be allocated through a 'Thriving Communities' grant scheme, with two levels of funding available for smaller and larger projects.

- To continue to administer £179,220 to West Suffolk communities via Locality budgets.

The report also referred to the role of the Council's Grant Working Party in the consideration of applications and making recommendations to the Cabinet. It provided a useful checking process and ensured wider engagement in the allocation of funding. The Working Party also assisted with the monitoring of outcomes that could include support for monitoring the Citizens Advice Grant Agreement. Therefore, it was also being proposed for the process through the Grant Working Party to be retained for the new Thriving Communities Fund.

**Resolved:**

That:-

1. The proposals, as outlined in Section 3 of Report number CAB/WS/24/025, be agreed.
2. The role of the Grant Working Party be retained for consideration of the Thriving Communities Fund, making recommendations to Cabinet, be agreed.

**577. Annual Review and Appointment of the Cabinet's Joint Committee and Working Groups (Report number CAB/WS/24/026)**

The Cabinet considered this report which was recommending appointments to the Cabinet's Joint Committee and Working Groups for the year 2024 to 2025. Upon doing so, the existing Terms of Reference for each had been reviewed, as set out within the Appendices attached to this report.

**Resolved:**

1. That the Leader of the Council appoints:
  - a. Councillor Diane Hind, Portfolio Holder for Resources, as the full member to represent West Suffolk Council on the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee in 2024 to 2025.
  - b. Councillors Victor Lukaniuk, Deputy Leader and David Taylor, Portfolio Holder for Operations, as the substitute members to represent West Suffolk Council on the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee in 2024 to 2025.
  - c. It be noted that on the nomination of the Leader of the Council, the Monitoring Officer may exercise their delegated authority to appoint appropriate Cabinet membership (full and substitute members) to the above joint committee during 2024 to 2025, as necessary.

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
  - a. Continues to operate the Staff Consultative Panel in 2024 to 2025 in accordance with the Terms of Reference contained in Appendix A to Report number: CAB/WS/24/026.
  - b. Periodical meetings of the above Panel be scheduled as and when required but with regard to the discussion outlined in Section 2.2.2 of Report number: CAB/WS/24/026.
3. The Cabinet continues to operate the West Suffolk Grant Working Party in 2024 to 2025 in accordance with the Terms of Reference contained in Appendix B to Report number: CAB/WS/24/026.
4. The Cabinet continues to operate the West Suffolk Local Plan Working Group in 2024 to 2025 in accordance with the Terms of Reference contained in Appendix C to Report number: CAB/WS/24/026.
5. It be noted that should it become necessary and on the nominations of Group Leaders, the Monitoring Officer may exercise their delegated authority to appoint appropriate membership (full and substitute members) to the above Working Groups during 2024 to 2025 in accordance with their Terms of Reference.
6. It be noted that, subject to resources being available to support them, informal advisory panels be established by the Leader to consider specific issues as required throughout 2024 to 2025.

578. **Decisions Plan: 1 May 2024 to 31 May 2025 (Report number CAB/WS/24/027)**

The Cabinet considered this report which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period 1 May 2024 to 31 May 2025.

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

The meeting concluded at 6.13 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chair**

# Cabinet referrals to Council

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/24/028</b>	
<b>Report to and dates</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	9 July 2024
	<b>Council</b>	16 July 2024
<b>Cabinet members:</b>	Councillor Indy Wijenayaka: Portfolio Holder for Growth Councillor Richard O’Driscoll: Portfolio Holder for Housing Councillor Ian Shipp: Portfolio Holder for Leisure Councillor Diane Hind: Portfolio Holder for Resources	
<b>Lead officers:</b>	Julie Baird: Director Planning and Growth Jen Eves: Director Housing, Communities and Regulatory Jill Korwin: Strategic Director Mark Walsh: Director Operations, Leisure and Culture Rachael Mann: Chief Operating Officer	

**Decisions Plan:** The decision made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours. The four items detailed in this report have been included separately on the Decisions Plan; however, subject to the decision taken by Cabinet as set out in the recommendation below, all four items will be referred to Council for decision and, will therefore, not be subject to call-in.

**Wards impacted:** All wards

**Recommendation:** That Cabinet agrees that full reports for decisions on the delivery of:

1. **Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre Project (AME)**
2. **Housing Related Support**
3. **Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre**
4. **Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds: Options Appraisal**

will be referred directly to Council on 16 July 2024.

## **1. Context and proposal**

- 1.1 Arising from the announcement that a parliamentary election would be taking place on the 4 July 2024, the previously arranged meeting of Cabinet (25 June 2024) fell during the pre-election period. Following advice, it was agreed that the meeting would be moved to a date after the election, 9 July 2024.
- 1.2 A number of items due to be considered by Cabinet at that meeting also require the onward consideration of Council. The Summons for Council on 16 July together with reports must normally be published by no later than 8 July 2024 which is prior to the meeting of Cabinet. This means it will not be possible to reflect the outcome of the Cabinet's debate in the versions of the reports which will already have been published for the Council meeting.
- 1.3 For ease of administration and to avoid any confusion or late information, it has therefore been proposed by the Leader that Cabinet will recommend the referral of the following four items, without debate, to Council on 16 July 2024.
- 1. Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre Project**
  - 2. Housing Related Support**
  - 3. Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre**
  - 4. Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds: Options Appraisal**
- 1.4 This proposed approach does not alter the intended decision date and will ensure full transparency of the recommendations to Council while meeting the statutory deadline for publishing Council papers and avoiding the need for late papers or updates.
- 1.5 The reports to Council in respect of the above four items will contain recommendation(s) from the relevant Portfolio Holder supported by the Leader of the Council having consulted with their Cabinet colleagues.

## **2. Alternative options that have been considered**

- 2.1 In the context of what is being agreed in this report, and the wish of Cabinet to avoid late information and any overlap between publication and meeting dates, an alternative option would be to delay consideration of the updates until later scheduled meetings of Cabinet and/or Council or hold extraordinary meetings. In the case of the former, this could risk delay to the projects and/or additional costs. In the case of the latter, this is felt to be unnecessary by the Leader and Portfolio Holder because they are content that all councillors receiving and considering the reports at the same scheduled meeting in July is the most inclusive and efficient way to progress these particular matters. Councillors are also encouraged to raise any issues or questions before the meeting.

### **3. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

- 3.1 In relation to what is being agreed in this report, consultation has taken place with the members of the Cabinet to ensure they are content to waive their own constitutional right to debate the papers.

### **4. Risks associated with the proposals**

- 4.1 A risk appraisal for the projects will be contained in main report to Council. In relation to what is being agreed in this report, there are not regarded to be any risks since Cabinet itself is content to receive the reports at the same time as all councillors, and there is no change to the ultimate decision-taker or intended decision-date.

### **5. Implications arising from the proposals**

- 5.1 None – see sections above.

### **6. Appendices referenced in this report**

- 6.1 None

### **7. Background documents associated with this report**

- 7.1 None

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# Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 30 May 2024

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/24/029</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	9 July 2024
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	Councillor Diane Hind Portfolio Holder for Resources Email: <a href="mailto:diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk">diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee</b>	Councillor Peter Armitage Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:peter.armitage@westsuffolk.gov.uk">peter.armitage@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Telephone: 01638 719729 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	

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

**Wards impacted:** **All wards**

**Recommendation:** **It is recommended that Report number: CAB/WS/24/029, being the report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, be noted.**

## 1. Context to this report

1.1 On 30 May 2024, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:

1. Ernst and Young – update on the external audit of the 2022 to 2023 financial statements and interim value for money report to those charged with governance
2. Ernst and Young – presentation of external audit plan and fees 2023 to 2024
3. 2023 to 2024 performance report (quarter four)
4. Internal audit annual report 2023 to 2024
5. Outline internal audit plan 2024 to 2025
6. Local Code of Corporate Governance
7. Co-opting non-elected independent members
8. Annual report from the Health and Safety Sub-Committee
9. Annual re-appointments to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee
10. Work programme update

A separate report is included on this Cabinet agenda for item 6. above.

## 2. Proposals within this report

2.1 **Ernst and Young – update on the external audit of the 2022 to 2023 financial statements and interim value for money report to those charged with governance (Report number: PAS/WS/24/007)**

2.1.1 The Committee received report number PAS/WS/24/007 presented by David Riglar from Ernst and Young (EY), the Council's external auditors. Members were updated on the audit of the 2022 to 2023 financial statements and through the attached interim report (Appendix A to PAS/WS/24/007), explained the work the external auditor had undertaken to assess the Council's value for money arrangements for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and highlighted any significant weaknesses identified along with recommendations for improvement.

2.1.2 Mr Riglar then drew the Committee's attention to Appendix A and highlighted the following areas:

- Page 21 - Executive summary: There was no change to the purpose of the audit. He explained that auditors no longer provided a conclusion, reporting only by exception, to which there were none for West Suffolk Council.
- Page 22 – Risk procedure: This had been considered and no risks had been identified.
- Page 23 – No significant risks had been identified under the reporting criteria.

2.1.3 The Committee considered the report and did not raise any issues. There being no decision required, the Committee:

1. **Noted** the update on the external audit of the 2022 to 2023 financial statements.
2. **Noted** that at this stage, the audit had concluded that the Council had proper arrangements in place in 2022 to 2023 to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources attached as Appendix A to report number PAS/WS/24/007.

## 2.2 **Ernst and Young – Presentation of external audit plan and fees 2023 to 2024 (Report number: PAS/WS/24/008)**

2.2.1 The Committee received report number PAS/WS/24/008 presented by David Riglar from EY, the Council's external auditors. EY were required to provide an audit plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, which covered the work they planned to perform in order to provide the Council with:

- An audit opinion on whether the financial statements of the Council gave a true and fair view of the financial position at 31 March 2024 and of the income and expenditure for the year ended.
- Commentary on the Council's arrangements to secure value for money on its use of resources.

2.2.2 The report summarised EY's assessment of the key issues which drive the development of an effective audit for the Council. The report also considered the likely impact of Government proposals to clear the backlog in local audit and put the local audit system on a sustainable footing. He then drew the Committee's attention to Appendix A and highlighted the following areas:

- Pages 48 to 49: Set out the three phases to address local audit delays:
  - Phase 1 – Reset
  - Phase 2 – Recovery
  - Phase 3 - Reform
- Pages 50 to 51: Audit risks and areas of focus
- Pages 52 to 53: Council materiality
- Page 56: Value for money – no risk had been identified
- Page 82: Timetable of communication and deliverables
- Pages 92 to 93: Appendix C – set out the new auditing standards

2.2.3 The Committee scrutinised the report and asked questions to which responses were provided.

2.2.4 At the conclusion of the discussions, and there being no decision required, the Committee **noted** EY’s Audit Planning Report for the year ended March 2024.

2.3 **2023 to 2024 performance report (quarter four) (Report number: PAS/WS/24/009)**

2.3.1 The Cabinet Member for Resources presented report number PAS/WS/24/009, which set out the final quarter performance for the year 2023 to 2024 both in financial results and key performance indicators (KPIs). The financial results and performance dashboards included in the report and accompanying information covered the period of April 2023 to March 2024.

2.3.2 The Cabinet Member then highlighted a number of KPIs, being:

Number of residents (per 1,000 head of population aged 65 plus) in receipt of Housing Benefit and / Pension Credit.	Following a request by the Committee the number of residents (per thousand head of population) on Universal Credit, Pension Credit and/or Housing Benefit for the five largest settlements had been included.
Number of residents (per 1,000 head of population aged 18 to 64) in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.	The two new indicators were split between residents aged 65+ and working age (18 to 64).
Social media	Two new KPIs had been included in quarter four, around the number of followers of West Suffolk social media channels (people who choose to follow the Council’s accounts) and the number of social media accounts reached by West Suffolk Council posts.
Number of staff vacancies	Following a request by the Committee a new KPI had been included to measure the number of staff vacancies.
Planning appeals	Following a request by the Committee two new planning appeal KPIs had been including to measure the percentage of major appeals allowed out of all appeals and the percentage of minor/other appeals allowed out of all appeals. Both KPIs were monitored by the Office for Local Government.

2.3.3 Attached to the Quarter three performance and forecast year-end financial position for 2023 to 2024 were a number of appendices as follows:

- Appendix A: Key Performance Indicator Dashboards
- Appendix B: Income and expenditure report
- Appendix C: Capital programme
- Appendix D: Earmarked reserves
- Appendix E: Strategic risk register
- Appendix Ei: West Suffolk Risk Management Toolkit
- Exempt Appendix F: Aged debt over 90 days summary
- Appendix G: List of available Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Appendix H: Environment and Sustainability Reference Group quarterly progress report
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- 2.3.4 The Cabinet Member for Resources then presented the financial perspective of the year-end outturn as at quarter four, which showed an overall balanced position. This result included the release of £315,000 of the planned top-up to the general fund of £800,000. This meant the general fund would increase to £5.5 million by the year end. Without the use of the general fund allowance during the year, the deficit would have been £0.3 million. This was made up of a number of variances to the budget, including the impact of the agreed pay award, improved business rate income expectations, ongoing inflationary pressures and an improved result from car parking and trade waste income.
- 2.3.5 The Council had spent £13.0 million of its total available capital budget of £48.5 million for 2023 to 2024, as a result of project timings, mainly the timing of investment of the 'Investing in Growth' fund projects, for example, the innovation units at Suffolk Business Park and the use of the Barley Homes loan facility. There were also 'carry forward' proposals for the majority of this unspent budget totalling £34.2 million.
- 2.3.6 The Council's reserve position remained strong with a forecast balance of £44.4 million against a budgeted closing balance of £36.7 million. The majority of the variance related to timing of expenditure into the next financial year related to capital programme phasing. The net under-utilisation was primarily due to savings on borrowing costs, high interest receivable and a backdated VAT payment from HMRC.
- 2.3.7 At the most recent assessment of the risk register, two new risks had been included to reflect the upcoming impact of the recycling legislation and the wider governance issues that had been faced by councils that had issued s114 notices. These being:
- WS24: Implementation of 'Simply Recycling' linked to the requirements of the Government's Resource and Waste Strategy (RAWS) and the Environment Act 2021.
  - WS25: Governance

- 2.3.8 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which responses were provided. In particular, discussions were held on the KPIs at the financial year-end and the risk register.
- 2.3.9 A discussion took place on the KPI relating to the 'number of residents (per 1,000 head of populations aged 65 plus' in receipt of Housing Benefits and/or Pension Credit and it was highlighted that Clare had not been included in the data presented. In response, officers explained that the data for the KPI were provided by the DWP and were only available by ward. The towns that had been included were all comprised of multiple wards, whereas the ward in which Clare was located also covered Hundon and Kedington so the data could not be isolated for the town of Clare. However, officers agreed to look into the data further to produce a heat map for the whole of West Suffolk showing the proportions of local populations in receipt of benefits.
- 2.3.10 In response to a question raised relating to Haverhill, a member asked to what extent people who were entitled to benefits were not claiming them, as the KPI data only covered those in receipt of benefits. Officers advised that a Suffolk-wide project was underway to explore the potential of a data tool called LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) which looked at this issue and would include a note on the LIFT tool at its next meeting.
- 2.3.11 In response to a question raised on what constituted low income for Council Tax relief, officers agreed to provide a written response.
- In response to a suggestion relating to understanding the location of fly-tipping incidents, officers agreed to include a note on fly-tipping hot spots at its next meeting.
- In response to a question raised in relation to Appendix B, income and expenditure on the £18,000 Gypsy and Travellers Study on 'what was it for' and 'what did the study say', officers agreed to provide a written response.
- 2.3.12 At the conclusion of the discussions the Committee **noted** the year end 2023 to 2024 revenue and capital position as detailed in the report and appendices and did not raise any issues for Cabinet's consideration.

2.4 **Internal audit annual report 2023 to 2024 (Report number: PAS/WS/24/010)**

- 2.4.1 The Committee received and **noted** report number PAS/WS/24/010 which provided members with an overview of the work carried out by Internal Audit for the year ending 31 March 2024.
- 2.4.2 Appendix A provided a brief update on the new Global Internal Audit Standards which were the professional standards which would apply to all internal audit teams from next year. The Council's internal audit team

would be working towards complying with the new standards over the coming months.

2.4.3 Attached at Appendix B was the Annual Fraud Report which summarised the work which had taken place during 2023 to 2024 to prevent and detect fraud, theft and corruption. The report confirmed that further internal audit work had recently been carried out to check that controls relating to bank account changes were working as expected so that the risk of any future bank mandate fraud was minimised.

2.4.4 The Committee then considered the report and asked questions on what types of attempted frauds the Council had successfully stopped, to which comprehensive responses were provided.

2.5 **Outline internal audit plan 2024 to 2025 (Report number: PAS/WS/24/011)**

2.5.1 Report PAS/WS/24/011, provided members with a proposed 2024 to 2025 audit plan, attached at Appendix B to the report. Attached at Appendix A was the covering Internal Audit Plan Report. The proposed audit plan was a risk-based plan which provided a framework for ensuring that audit resources were focused on activities that would help support the Council's priorities, and also enable the internal audit team to provide a robust annual internal audit opinion at the end of the year. It was important that the audit plan was flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances and changing risks, therefore there might be changes to the planned work during the year.

2.5.2 The Committee considered the report and **approved** the outline internal audit plan for 2024 to 2025.

2.6 **Co-opting non-elected independent members (Report number: PAS/WS/24/013)**

2.6.1 The Chair presented report number PAS/WS/24/013, which followed on from that presented to the Committee on 25 January 2024 setting out proposals regarding the co-opting of non-elected independent members to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. At that meeting the Committee:

- Agreed the principle of co-opting two non-elected members to the Committee; and
- Approved the approach, including the next steps to co-opting independent members.

- 2.6.2 Report number PAS/WS/24/013 set out progress made and sought the Committee’s approval for the recruitment process; recruitment pack; and appointment of an interview panel. The recruitment pack comprised a person specification attached as Appendix A and a timeline for the recruitment process at Appendix B to the report.
- 2.6.3 The Committee considered the report and asked questions to which responses were provided. In response to a question raised, officers advised that they would not be asking candidates their political preferences, however checks would be carried out as per CIPFA guidance.
- 2.6.4 At the conclusion of the discussions the Committee **voted** to:
1. **Approve** the Person Specification attached as Appendix A and the timeline at Appendix B to report number PAS/WS/24/013.
  2. **Approve** the recruitment approach as set in Section 2.4 of report number PAS/WS/24/013.
- 2.7. **Annual report from the Health and Safety Sub-Committee (Report number: PAS/WS/24/014)**
- 2.7.1 The Committee received and **noted** the above report which summarised the work carried out by the Health and Safety Sub-Committee during 2023 to 2024.
- 2.7.2 The Health and Safety summary report attached at Appendix A was produced to identify and document West Suffolk Council’s health and safety performance and work carried out during the year to ensure legal compliance.
- 2.7.3 The Committee considered the report and did not raise any issues.
- 2.8 **Annual re-appointments to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee (Report number: PAS/WS/24/015)**
- 2.8.1 The Committee received the above report, which sought appointments to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee. The Committee was asked to:
- Appoint three members and one substitute member from the members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to sit on the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee for 2024 to 2025.
  - The Committee was advised that the substitute place on the Sub-Committee had not been allocated to a group. The Committee may appoint a member to the group. If it was deemed not practical to do so then in the event that a member of the Sub-Committee could not



attend a temporary substitute may be nominated by the relevant group leader to the Monitoring officer.

2.8.2 The Committee considered the appointments, and at the conclusion of the discussions the following nominations were put forward and **resolved** as follows:

That:

1. Councillors Ian Houlder (Conservative Group), Frank Stennett (Independents) and Peter Armitage (Progressive Alliance Group), be appointed as full members to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee for 2024 to 2025.
2. The appointment of a substitute to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee be nominated by the group leader to the Monitoring officer, as required.

2.9 **Work programme update (Report number: PAS/WS/24/016)**

2.9.1 The Committee received and **noted** report number PAS/WS/24/016 and Appendix 1, which provided information on the current status of its forward work programme for 2024.

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

3.1 Please see background papers.

### **4. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

4.1 Please see background papers.

### **5. Risks associated with the proposals**

5.1 Please see background papers.

### **6. Implications arising from the proposals**

6.1 Financial – Please see background papers.

6.2 Equalities – Please see background papers.

### **7. Appendices referenced in this report**

7.1 Please see background papers.

## **8. Background documents associated with this report**

- 8.1 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/007](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Ernst and Young – Update on the External Audit of the 2022 to 2023 Financial Statements and Interim Value for Money Report to those Charged with Governance
- 8.2 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/008](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Ernst and Young – Presentation of External Audit Plan and Fees 2023 to 2024
- 8.3 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/009](#) and [Appendix A](#), [Appendix B](#), [Appendix C](#), [Appendix D](#), [Appendix E](#), [Appendix Ei](#), [Appendix G](#) and [Appendix H](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 2023 to 2024 Performance Report (Quarter 4)
- 8.4 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/010](#) and [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Internal Audit Annual Report 2023 to 2024
- 8.5 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/011](#) and [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Outline Internal Audit Plan 2024 to 2025
- 8.6 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/013](#) and [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Co-opting Non-elected Independent Members
- 8.7 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/014](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report from the Health and Safety Sub-Committee.
- 8.8 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/015](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Annual Re-Appointments to the Financial Resilience Sub-Committee
- 8.9 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/016](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update

# Recommendation of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 30 May 2024: Local Code of Corporate Governance

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/24/030</b>	
<b>Report to and dates</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	9 July 2024
	<b>Council</b>	16 July 2024
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	Councillor Diane Hind Portfolio Holder for Resources Email: <a href="mailto:diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk">diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee</b>	Councillor Peter Armitage Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:peter.armitage@westsuffolk.gov.uk">peter.armitage@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Rachael Mann Chief Operating Officer Telephone: 01638 719245 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	

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

**Wards impacted:** All wards

**Recommendation:** That, subject to the approval of Council, the Local Code of Corporate Governance, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report number: PAS/WS/24/012, be approved.

## **1. Context to this report**

- 1.1 The Local Code of Corporate Governance was last produced jointly by Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils in 2017 and readopted by West Suffolk Council in 2019. Following the updating of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) guidance, it is now time for West Suffolk Council to review that Code, making sure it is effective, transparent and relevant.
- 1.2 Each year, the Council produces an Annual Governance Statement. This is a statutory requirement and is a reflection of how we have complied with our own Code and worked to strengthen our governance arrangements over the previous year.
- 1.3 In order to produce the proposed draft Code of Corporate Governance, attached at Appendix 1, an officer group, including representatives from key services (audit, legal, policy, finance and performance) has reviewed the Council's existing governance arrangements at a detailed level, and then evaluated how the arrangements should be demonstrated within the local code. The Code has also been assessed by Leadership Team.
- 1.4 The Council's previous Code closely adhered to the principles, and sub-principles contained within the CIPFA framework. Recognising the emphasis within the framework on local arrangements, the revised Local Code has a greater emphasis on how West Suffolk Council applies the principles and comply with good practice. The Code reiterates our firm commitment to continually review our compliance with good practice, and openly report the outcomes of this work.
- 1.5 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee was requested to review the Code, and, where necessary, identify those areas where it believes that the document can be strengthened, prior to adoption by Council.
- 1.6 **Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee**
- 1.7 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 30 May 2024, considered the Local Code of Corporate Governance and did not raise any specific issues.
- 1.8 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee has put forward recommendations as set out on page one of this report.

## **2. Alternative options that have been considered**

- 2.1 Not applicable.

**3. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

3.1 Not applicable.

**4. Risks associated with the proposals**

4.1 Not applicable.

**5. Implications arising from the proposals**

5.1 Not applicable

**6. Appendices referenced in this report**

6.1 [PAS/WS/24/012 - Appendix 1 - Local Code of Corporate Governance](#)

**7. Background documents associated with this report**

7.1 Report number: [PAS/WS/24/012](#)

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## Decisions Plan

**Report number CAB/WS/24/031**

### **Key decisions and other executive decisions to be considered**

**Date: 1 July 2024 (updated) to 31 May 2025**

**Publication date: 21 June 2024**

The following plan shows both the key decisions and other decisions/matters taken in private, that the Cabinet, portfolio holders, joint committees or officers under delegated authority, are intending to take up to 31 May 2025. This table is updated on a monthly rolling basis and provides at least 28 clear days' notice of the consideration of any key decisions and of the taking of any items in private.

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

Members of the public may wish to:

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

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

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Deferred from 12/03/24 to 09/07/24 Page 24	<b>Olding Road Options Appraisal</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider an options appraisal for the site at Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds and to agree and recommend to Council a preferred option with which to proceed.	Exempt appendices: paragraph 3	(R) Council 16/07/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council and appendices, including exempt appendices attached.
Deferred from 25/06/24 to 09/07/24	<b>Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.



Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	appendices.						
09/07/24  Page 25	<b>Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund</b> Cabinet will receive an update on the use of the £1 million Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund approved by Council in September 2023 and proposals for allocating the remainder of the Fund.	Not applicable	(KD) (e)	Cabinet	Gerald Kelly Governance and Regulatory	Alex Wilson Strategic Director 01284 757695	Report to Cabinet.
09/07/24	<b>Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre Gateway 4</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider and	Exempt appendices: paragraph 3	KD (a)  The Cabinet may wish to refer this item to	Cabinet  The Cabinet may wish to refer	Indy Wijenayaka Growth	Julie Baird Director (Planning and Growth) 01284 757613	Report to Cabinet with possible recommendations to Council and appendices, including exempt

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 26	give approval to restart the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre Project in Bury St Edmunds and fund the next gateway of the project from income received from the retained business rates derived from Suffolk Park Enterprise Zone.		Council for a final decision on 16 July 2024.	this item to Council for a final decision on 16 July 2024.		Andrea Mayley Service Manager (Economic Development and Growth) 01284 757343	appendices attached.
09/07/24	<b>Housing Related Support Service</b> Following Suffolk County Council's decision to reduce its previously delivered Housing Related Support (HRS)	Exempt appendices: Paragraph 3	(R) – Council 16/07/24	Cabinet/ Council	Richard O'Driscoll Housing	Jill Korwin Strategic Director 01284 757252  Sara Lomax Service Manager (Housing)	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council and appendices, including exempt appendices attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 27	services, the Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, a preferred option for supporting the future delivery of the HRS service in West Suffolk.					Options) 01284 757151	
09/07/24	<p><b>Local Code of Corporate Governance</b></p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and recommend to Council, approval of an updated version of the Local</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 16/07/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	Code of Corporate Governance.						
09/07/24 Page 28	<b>Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider an outline business case to address essential maintenance and deliver additional refurbishments and service improvements at Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre.	Exempt appendices: Paragraph 3	(R) – Council 16/07/24	Cabinet/ Council	Ian Shipp Leisure	Jill Korwin Strategic Director 01284 757252	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council and appendices, including exempt appendices attached.
23/07/24 (new)	<b>West Suffolk Annual Report 2023 to 2024</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider and approve the West	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Cliff Waterman Leader of the Council	Ian Gallin Chief Executive 01284 757001	Report to Cabinet, with draft Annual Report attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page No	Suffolk Annual Report 2023 to 2024, a draft of which will previously have been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.						
23/07/24 (new)	<b>West Suffolk Environment and Climate Change Action Plan</b> The Cabinet will be asked to review and approve the Environment and Climate Change Action Plan. Consideration has previously been given by the Environment and Sustainability Reference Group regarding potential	Not applicable	(D)	Cabinet	Gerald Kelly Governance and Regulatory	Jill Korwin Strategic Director 01284 757252	Report to Cabinet, with Action Plan attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	new opportunities for inclusion in the draft plan.						
23/07/24 page 30 (new)	<b>Markets Development Plan</b> The Cabinet will be asked to adopt a markets development plan and support an investment of £300,000 over three years to deliver this. This item will previously have been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Not applicable	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Indy Wijenayaka Growth	Julie Baird Director (Planning and Growth) 01284 757613	Report to Cabinet.
23/07/24	<b>Acquisition of</b>	Not applicable	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Diane Hind	Rachael Mann	Report to

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
(new)  Page 31	<b>Property for Temporary Accommodation</b> The Cabinet will be asked to make a decision on establishing a capital budget of up to £321,000 utilising available funding streams, for the purchase of one unit of temporary accommodation within the district.				Resources  Richard O'Driscoll Housing	Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245  Jill Korwin Strategic Director 01284 757252	Cabinet.
17/09/24	<b>Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.						
17/09/24	<p><b>Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report (2023 to 2024)</b></p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the Annual Treasury Management and Financial Resilience Report for 2023 to</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 24/09/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.



Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	2024.						
17/09/24  Page 33	<b>Treasury Management Report – June 2024</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2024 and 30 June 2024.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 24/09/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
10/12/24	<b>Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
	writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.						
16/12/24	<p><b>Council Tax Base for Tax Setting Purposes 2025 to 2026</b></p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council the basis of the formal calculation for the Council Tax Base for West Suffolk Council for the financial year 2025 to 2026.</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council.
10/12/24	<b>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director	Report to Cabinet with recommend-

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 35	<p><b>2025 to 2026</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider proposals for potential revisions to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme prior to seeking its approval by Council.</p>					(Resources and Property) 01638 719245	ations to Council.
10/12/24	<p><b>Delivering a Sustainable Medium-Term Budget</b> The Cabinet may be asked to consider at this stage, recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to</p>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
10/12/24 Page 36	Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2025 to 2026 and in the medium term.						
	<b>Treasury Management Report – September 2024</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2024 and 30 September 2024.	Not applicable	(R) – Council 17/12/24	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
04/02/25  Page 37	<p><b>Delivering a Sustainable Medium-Term Budget</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Council on proposals for achieving a sustainable budget in 2025 to 2026 and in the medium term.</p>	Not applicable	<p>(R) – Council 25/02/25</p> <p>Unless separate proposals are recommended by Cabinet, consideration by Council will take place as part of the budget setting paper on 25/02/25</p>	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
04/02/25  Page 38	<p><b>Budget and Council Tax Setting 2025 to 2026 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025 to 2029</b></p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to consider the proposals for the 2025 to 2026 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025 to 2029 for West Suffolk Council, prior to its approval by Council. This report includes the Minimum Revenues Provision (MRP) Policy and Prudential Indicators, and also the outcomes of the Council's review of its</p>	Exempt appendices: paragraph 3	<p>(KD) (e)– in relation to fees and charges element where proposed increases will be more than five percent</p> <p>(R) – Council 25/02/25</p> <p>Unless separate proposals are recommended by Cabinet,</p>	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with recommendations to Council and exempt appendices attached.

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 39	<p>fees and charges.</p> <p>The fees and charges have been reviewed in accordance with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy, which has resulted in proposed increases to some. Where the proposed increase is greater than five percent, this constitutes a Key Decision. The Cabinet will consider the proposals as part of its consideration of this report.</p>		consideration by Council will take place as part of the separate budget setting paper on 25/02/25				
04/02/25	<b>Financial Resilience</b>	Not applicable	(R) – Council	Cabinet/	Diane Hind	Rachael Mann	Recommend-

Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 40	<p><b>- Strategy Statement 2025 to 2026 and Treasury Management Code of Practice</b></p> <p>The Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council, approval of the Strategy Statement 2025 to 2026 and Treasury Management Code of Practice for West Suffolk Council, which must be undertaken before the start of each financial year.</p>		25/02/25	Council	Resources	Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	ations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
04/02/25	<b>Treasury Management Report – December 2024</b>	Not applicable	(R) – Council 25/02/25	Cabinet/ Council	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and	Recommendations of the Performance and



Expected decision date	Subject and purpose of decision	Reason for taking item in private (see Note 1 for relevant exempt paragraphs)	Decision (D), Key Decision (KD) or Rec (R) to Council on date  (see Note 2 for Key Decision definitions)	Decision taker (see Note 3 for membership)	Portfolio holder contact details	Lead officer contact details	Documents to be submitted
Page 41	The Cabinet will be asked to consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee regarding seeking approval for the financial resilience activities between 1 April 2024 and 31 December 2024.					Property) 01638 719245	Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.
11/03/25	<b>Revenues Collection Performance and Write Offs</b> The Cabinet will be asked to consider writing-off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.	Exempt appendices: paragraphs 1 and 2	(KD) (a)	Cabinet	Diane Hind Resources	Rachael Mann Director (Resources and Property) 01638 719245	Report to Cabinet with exempt appendices attached.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Note 2: Key decision definition**

A key decision is an executive decision that either:

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

**Note 3: Membership of bodies making key decisions**

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

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
Cliff Waterman	Leader of the Council
Victor Lukaniuk	Deputy Leader of the Council
Donna Higgins	Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities
Diane Hind	Portfolio Holder for Resources
Gerald Kelly	Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory
Richard O’Driscoll	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Ian Shipp	Portfolio Holder for Leisure
David Taylor	Portfolio Holder for Operations
Jim Thorndyke	Portfolio Holder for Planning
Indy Wijenayaka	Portfolio Holder for Growth

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

<b>Member Council</b>	<b>Full representative</b>	<b>Substitute representatives</b>
Breckland	Philip Cowen	Sam Chapman-Allen Sarah Suggitt
East Cambridgeshire	James Lay	Anna Bailey Alan Sharp
East Suffolk	Paul Ashton	Peter Byatt Vacancy
Fenland	Jan French	Chris Boden Vacancy
West Suffolk	Diane Hind	Victor Lukaniuk David Taylor

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Jennifer Eves  
Director (Human Resources, Governance and Regulatory)  
Date: 21 June 2024

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# Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/24/032</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	9 July 2024
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	Councillor Gerald Kelly Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory Tel: 07968 396389 Email: <a href="mailto:gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk">gerald.kelly@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Alex Wilson Deputy Chief Executive Tel: 01284 757695 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	

**Decisions Plan:**                    **The decision made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.**

**Wards impacted:**                    **All wards**

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

- 1. the update contained in this report on the use to date of the Council’s £1 million Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund be noted; and**
- 2. the balance of the Fund be allocated to a one-off grants scheme to decarbonise community assets on the basis set out in section 2.3 of this report.**

## **1. Context to this report and progress to date**

### **1.1 Context to the report**

1.1.1 In September 2023, Council approved a £1 million Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund (DIF) to support third parties in West Suffolk reduce their use of carbon and address the climate emergency. The first call on this Fund was the conversion of streetlights owned by town and parish councils to light-emitting diode (LED) lanterns. The balance of the Fund was then to be allocated by Cabinet when more certainty existed around the cost of the streetlight conversions.

1.1.2 This report provides an update on the streetlight conversions and an interim proposal for allocating the remainder of the funding.

### **1.2 Update on use of Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund to date**

1.2.1 The first phase of the DIF was a scheme to meet the full cost of upgrading streetlights owned by town or parish councils in West Suffolk with the aspiration that all streetlights owned by councils in West Suffolk (i.e. county, district or parish) would be LED by March 2025. The DIF scheme covered the cost of any future upgrades (including essential repairs) and also reimbursed town and parish councils for any upgrades completed since April 2022.

1.2.2 Fifteen town and parish councils were eligible to take part in the scheme. The remainder either didn't own streetlights or had upgraded them all prior to 2022. Retrospective grants have all now been paid in relation to works carried out since 2022, and the remaining conversions are being commissioned to take place during the remainder of 2024 to 2025 using the contractors selected by the town and parish councils. Some have already begun.

1.2.3 Some final invoices are yet to be received but, at the time of writing this report, the latest statistics for take-up are:

- Over 1,600 streetlight conversions in total have been or will be funded by the DIF.
- Over 500 of these lights have already been converted by the town and parish councils since 2022.
- Leaving over 1,000 lights to be converted during 2024 to 2025 using DIF.
- Over £700,000 of the £1 million in the DIF has already been committed to the conversions and repairs, with just a few grants left to be finalised.

1.2.4 It is hard to estimate carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) savings precisely given the variety of lights involved before and after conversion and the different operating regimes. However, we are now able to refine the very conservative estimates of CO<sub>2</sub> reductions made at the time the



scheme was approved in 2023. We would now expect that over 120 tonnes of CO2 will be saved annually from the 1,000 or so lights to be converted in 2024 to 2025 as a direct result of the scheme. If we add to those the more than 500 lights already converted and covered by a retrospective grant, the total CO2 savings funded from West Suffolk's DIF could be in the region of **200 tonnes** a year.

- 1.2.5 In addition to the environmental benefits, taxpayers will benefit from considerable energy cost savings. Typically in the region of 70 per cent. Using the current high energy prices as a baseline these could easily be in the region of £100,000 a year across the fifteen local councils.

## **2. Proposals within this report for use of remainder of Fund**

### **2.1 Balance of funding and agreed criteria**

- 2.1.1 Although the final sum may change as works are completed, there will hopefully be more than £200,000 remaining in the DIF after all grants to town and parish councils to convert their streetlights have been paid to them or their chosen contractor. Cabinet therefore needs to take a formal decision on how any balance of the Fund is spent, but this will not need referral back to Council under the terms of the original 2023 Council decision.

- 2.1.2 The only restrictions on its use at present (without getting Council's consent to change the original scope of the Fund) are that it must: relate to decarbonisation initiatives; and benefit third parties. The latter because the Council has already identified separate funding routes for decarbonising its own assets.

### **2.2 Considerations for spending the remainder of the DIF**

- 2.2.1 In terms of deciding next steps, there are four general considerations which the portfolio holder has taken into account in making the proposals in this report, and Cabinet will be asked to take into account in making any future decisions. Namely a need to:
- a. ensure that whatever the money is spent on is demonstrably impactful in terms of reducing carbon;
  - b. complement existing funding schemes for decarbonisation rather than duplicate them;
  - c. minimise the administration/governance time and resources involved in distributing the funds;

- d. devise a process which is transparent, equitable and easy to understand in terms of eligibility and processes.

2.2.2 Furthermore, the intention is that the DIF will be a catalyst for wider conversations about improving the efficient use of carbon. So that what is a small sum of money relative to the cost of decarbonising West Suffolk has a return on investment beyond just the actual carbon saved. In that context, as with streetlight conversions, it is likely it would be spent on schemes which benefit (and are perceived to benefit) communities and taxpayers collectively.

2.2.3 In terms of timings, as the Council has declared a climate emergency, the intention is to allocate all of the remaining DIF in one tranche so that the decarbonisation occurs as quickly as possible.

### 2.3 **Proposal for spending the remainder of the Fund**

2.3.1 It is proposed to Cabinet that the remaining balance of the Fund be allocated to bids from councillors to decarbonise community assets. Just a few examples might be:

- Converting floodlights on sports fields to LED along the same lines as the streetlight conversion scheme.
- Solar and battery arrangements for community halls. Many community groups have considered solar panels, but discounted them on the grounds that they produce most power when the building is not in use; adding battery storage – although expensive – addresses this.
- Air source heat pumps which provide a very economical way to mitigate against very cold venues, along with schemes to improve insulation.
- Community transport schemes requiring capital investment to reduce the number of private car journeys.

2.3.2 The nature of bids is intentionally open, but certain criteria will have to be met. These are that any proposal must:

- Show a reduction in reliance on fossil fuels which will benefit the community.
- Be clear in terms of the project, timing and the requirement on the fund.
- Be for capital funding only.
- Be simple to administer.
- Be part-funded from other sources so that the Fund's contribution is not 100 per cent.
- Be submitted by the West Suffolk ward councillor(s) for the community affected.
- Relate to assets which are owned by either a town or parish council or by a not-for-profit local community or voluntary group

i.e. the funding cannot be used to replace statutory obligations or other public funding, for instance upgrading schools.

- 2.3.3 There is no upper or lower limit on applications subject to the total sum being awarded not exceeding the balance of the DIF. However, for larger project proposals, the Council has received agreement that its DIF can be used in conjunction with the Suffolk Climate Action Community Match-Funder scheme. The grant scheme will also be 'as well as' not 'instead of' any locality budget that a local ward member might wish to contribute, meaning this can be another source of part-funding in addition to other external grants or funding the community has of its own. Depending on demand, a limited amount of retrospective funding may also be available, as it was with streetlight conversions (subject to a cut-off of any spending having occurred since 1 April 2023).
- 2.3.4 As an additional benefit, it is hoped that, by allocating one-off ring-fenced funding to decarbonisation in this way, some extra headroom in the capital element of the 2024 to 2025 Thriving Communities grant scheme (formerly known as 'Community Chest') will be created. For that reason, projects funded by the DIF would not be regarded by Cabinet to be eligible for a Thriving Communities grant in 2024 to 2025.
- 2.3.5 To keep the process as fair and simple as possible, councillors will be asked to submit a very brief outline of a project which they would support. This should be as soon as possible but definitely by no later than **Friday 6 September 2024** which will be the cut-off date for proposals. As bids are received, the portfolio holder and officers will then deal directly with whichever group is involved to work up and cost the project before a final decision/allocation of funds is made. For transparency, these final funding decisions will be ratified through a report or reports back to Cabinet at the appropriate time.
- 2.3.6 If the initiative is oversubscribed or capacity requires, the Council has the option to use a small amount of the DIF to commission an independent panel of external experts through the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership to assess proposals and make recommendations on the most appropriate projects to support, and how. They will also be able to advise those who don't make it past this point on how to improve their bid for other funding sources (including 2024 to 2025 Thriving Communities grants).

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

- 3.1 The reasons for proposing an immediate and full use of the DIF is because the Council has declared a climate emergency. Adding the

balance of the DIF to existing internal or external grant schemes was considered as a mechanism for distributing it. However, it was felt that this might unnecessarily constrain ideas and options ahead of local councillors engaging with the communities. It is preferred instead to keep as much flexibility and scope as possible. If this councillor-led engagement identifies that the proposed approach needs refinement or clarification before adoption then Cabinet will be able to take that account in making any later decisions.

#### **4. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

- 4.1 Cabinet invited suggestions for using any balance of the DIF from other councillors and town and parish councils as part of the process to establish eligibility for streetlight conversion grants. This resulted in several ideas for the kinds of small community schemes that could be supported by the DIF. Hence the proposal.
- 4.2 The portfolio holder has consulted Cabinet and the Environment and Sustainability Reference Group on the proposals in this report and has also given advance notice to all councillors of what was intended in this report.
- 4.3 In engagement terms, the proposed approach is intended to harness existing democratic processes and empower local councillors to work directly with the local communities they represent on developing ideas for decarbonisation.
- 4.4 There will also be continued engagement with the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership on the scheme.

#### **5. Risks associated with the proposals**

- 5.1 The main risk associated with the DIF is that it does not result in an effective investment in decarbonisation. The bulk of the funding is already allocated as explained in section 1 of this report. This includes an estimate of the carbon reductions achieved.
  - 5.2 In terms of the remainder of the DIF, the Portfolio Holder will assess and report on the risks associated with any future proposals when referring recommendations back to Cabinet.
  - 5.3 The top level risks associated with the grant scheme proposed in this report are as follows:
-

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation proposed</b>
The scheme is under-subscribed	Promote the scheme directly to councillors, and via media, social media and relevant websites.
The scheme is over-subscribed	Enlist the support of an independent panel of external experts to assess and prioritise bids using fair and objective criteria, and advise Cabinet accordingly before a final decision is made.
Objectives of the DIF are not met/maximum return on investment not achieved.	As per previous risk. Final proposals to Cabinet should identify the benefits of the supported schemes, thereby enabling later scrutiny if needed.
Local communities are not engaged in the process and/or bids received do not reflect community's own priorities	Manage the scheme via ward councillors in terms of seeking ideas and making bids.
Decisions are not open and transparent	Refer final decisions back to Cabinet which will be subject to normal call-in rules.
The budget is exceeded	Cabinet will assess and prioritise proposals to ensure that allocations stay within the remaining sum in the DIF. If additional funds were required a new Cabinet and/or Council decision would be required.

## **6. Implications arising from the proposals**

- 6.1 Financial. None. The funding is already included in the Council's budget.
- 6.2 Legal compliance. None – see sections 2.3 and 5 for safeguards proposed.
- 6.3 Environment or sustainability. As explained in the report.
- 6.4 External organisations affected (such as businesses, community groups). If approved, community organisations and local councillors will be able to work with local councillors to invest in decarbonisation initiatives in their area.

## **7. Appendices referenced in this report**

7.1 None.

## **8. Background documents associated with this report**

8.1 [Cabinet and Council report](#) to set up Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund – September 2023 (CAB/WS/23/040)

# Revenues collection performance and write-offs

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/24/033</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	9 July 2024
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	Councillor Diane Hind Portfolio Holder for Resources Email: <a href="mailto:diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk">diane.hind@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Rachael Mann Chief Operating Officer Tel: 01638 719245 Email: <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk">democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	

**Decisions Plan:** The decision made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.

**Wards impacted:** All wards

**Recommendation:** The write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report number: CAB/WS/24/033, be approved, as follows:

1. Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax totalling £28,339.39
2. Exempt Appendix 2: National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) totalling £737,398.65
3. Exempt Appendix 3: Sundry debt totalling £53,996.18

## 1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The revenues section collects outstanding debts in accordance with either statutory guidelines or council agreed procedures.
- 1.2 When all these procedures have been exhausted the outstanding debt is written off using the delegated authority of the Chief Operating Officer for debts up to £4,999.99 or by Cabinet for debts over £5,000.00.
- 1.3 It is best practice to monitor the recovery procedures for outstanding debts regularly and, when appropriate, write off irrecoverable debts.
- 1.4 Provision for irrecoverable debts is included both in the Collection Fund and the General Fund and writing off debts that are known to be irrecoverable ensures that staff are focussed on achieving good collection levels in respect of the recoverable debt.
- 1.5 As at 1 June 2024 the Council Tax percentage of debt written off during 2024 to 2025 for all previous years is 0.00 percent.
- 1.6 As at 1 June 2024 the business rates percentage of debt written off during 2024 to 2025 for all previous years is 0.00 percent.
- 1.7 The sundry debt relates to prior years written off. This is 0.1 percent of our annual invoicing value and 1.2 percent of our current debt.

## 2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 To review the current revenue collection performance and to consider writing off outstanding debts, as detailed in the exempt appendices.
- 2.2 Provision is made in the accounts for non-recovery but the total amounts to be written off are as follows with full details shown in  
**Exempt Appendix 1 Council Tax totalling £28,339.39**  
**Exempt Appendix 2 NNDR totalling £737,398.65**  
**Exempt Appendix 3 Sundry debt totalling £53,996.18**
- 2.3 As at 1 April 2024 the total National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of West Suffolk Council (as the billing authority) is £84.9 million per annum. The collection rate as at 1 June 2024 was 21.78 percent against a profiled target of 22.45 percent.
- 2.4 As at 1 April 2024 the total Council Tax billed by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of West Suffolk Council (includes the County,



Police and Parish precept elements) is £126 million per annum. The collection rate as at 1 June 2024 was 19.91 percent against a profiled target of 20.10 percent.

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

- 3.1 There is an extensive and supportive recovery process prior to the engagement of an enforcement agency. The council currently uses the services of the ARP Enforcement Agency to assist in the collection of business rates and Council Tax and also has on-line tracing facilities. Although this service was suspended during the lockdown and up to more recently, enforcement is now reinstated in line with Government guidance. It is not considered appropriate to pass the debts on to another agency.
- 3.2 It should be noted that in the event that a written-off debt becomes recoverable, the amount is written back on, and enforcement procedures are re-established. This might happen, for example, if someone has gone away with no trace, and then they are unexpectedly 'found' again, through whatever route.

### **4. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

- 4.1 Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Resources have been consulted with on the proposed write-offs.

### **5. Risks associated with the proposals**

- 5.1 Low Risk - Debts are written off which could have been collected  
Control - Extensive recovery procedures are in place to ensure that all possible mechanisms are exhausted before a debt is written off.

Medium Risk – Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on recovery of debts and the increase in bankruptcies, IVA, CVA's are likely to impact this years' collection rates. Close monitoring is taking place and support provided where possible.

### **6. Implications arising from the proposals**

- 6.1 Financial as above
- 6.2 Legal compliance  
- the recovery procedures followed have been previously agreed;  
writing off uncollectable debt allows staff to focus recovery action on debt which is recoverable.
- 6.3 Personal data processing  
- no changes to the way we process personal data.

- 6.4 Equalities
- the application of predetermined recovery procedures ensures that everybody is treated consistently.
  - failure to collect any debt impacts on either the levels of service provision or the levels of charges.
  - all available remedies are used to recover the debt before write-off is considered.
  - the provision of services by the Council applies to everyone in the area.
- 6.5 Crime and disorder
- 6.6 Environment or sustainability
- 6.7 HR or staffing
- 6.8 Changes to existing policies
- 6.9 External organisations (such as businesses, community groups)
- No significant implications on 6.1 – 6.8 as a result of this report

## **7. Appendices referenced in this report**

- 7.1 Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax  
Exempt Appendix 2: NNDR  
Exempt Appendix 3: Sundry debt

## **8. Background documents associated with this report**

- 8.1 None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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