

# Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath  
District Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Annual Corporate Environmental Performance 2015-2016</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PAS/FH/16/030</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee</b>	24 November 2016
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<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To report the work undertaken during 2015-2016 to improve the environmental performance in West Suffolk.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee:</b>  <b>The Committee is asked to <u>note</u> the report's contents and support the proposal to review the Council's environmental targets which shall be the subject of a further report.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>  (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b><u>do not</u></b> apply.)	Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition? Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Consultation:</b>	• Not applicable		
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	• Not applicable		
<b>Implications:</b>			
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	•
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	•
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	•
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	•
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	•
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
Complying with environmental responsibilities	Medium	Maintaining a managed approach to environmental compliance	Low
Improving performance	Medium	Maintaining a managed approach to drive improvement	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All Wards	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		Appendix A – West Suffolk Environmental Statement 2015-2016	

## **1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation**

### **1.1 Outline**

1.1.1 Set out in this report and the supporting **Appendix A** is the Annual Environmental Statement covering environmental performance in 2015-2016. The Statement covers the operations both of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council and the leisure trusts in West Suffolk in respect of energy and water consumption and renewable energy generation.

1.1.2 By delivering improved environmental performance across West Suffolk, the Councils continue to fulfil both their statutory and policy responsibilities set out in the West Suffolk Sustainability Strategy, and support for the shared strategic vision "*Working together, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils will support communities to create the best possible future for people in West Suffolk.*"

### **1.2 Summary of key findings**

1.2.1 The Councils continued working to improve environmental performance during the year. Areas of key interest are summarised below:

- Carbon Dioxide emissions, compared to our 2010 baseline, are down by 12.1% for Forest Heath.
- We have reviewed our monitoring, data collection and emissions calculating procedures to provide a firmer footing for comparison in future years.
- Business passenger car mileage has reduced by 6% in 2015 compared to 2014 (the baseline year), with 457,870 miles claimed across both Councils.
- Building energy consumption was slightly high compared to last year, with gas use increasing and electricity use declining.
- Water use across the two councils and associated leisure trusts has increased by 7.3% since last year but still shows a reduction in comparison to our 2010 baseline.
- The two councils solar photovoltaic (PV) schemes continue to deliver around £118,000 of income/energy savings and 166 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> savings annually.
- We installed a further 200kWp of solar capacity on Newmarket and Brandon Leisure Centres delivering around £32,000 of income/savings and saving 30 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> savings annually.

1.2.2 In addition, our community-focused environmental work includes:

- Continued support for the Suffolk Warm Homes Healthy People Fuel Poverty Programme during winter 2015.

- Implementing a long-term energy investment plan alongside our existing support for improved community energy efficiency as part of our West Suffolk Councils' Community Energy Plan. This has led to the Councils investing in over 0.5MW of solar generating capacity hosted by third parties in West Suffolk.
- Providing local businesses with our West Suffolk Greener Business Grant funding for energy efficiency measures. To date, for a grant investment of £62,000 this programme is estimated to be saving local businesses over £75,000 and 315 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.

1.2.3 More detailed performance against our objectives and targets is set out in **Appendix A**.

1.2.4 Officers have started a review of key targets, in particular with respect to Greenhouse Gas emissions, in the light of wider discussion with other public sector partners. Our current target is aligned with the "Suffolk – Creating the Greenest County" CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target and a new county-wide target is being adopted which accords generally with national carbon budgeting required under the Climate Change Act 2008. The outcome of the review and any recommended changes to targets will be the subject of a future report.

1.2.5 There are ongoing resource implications to deliver this work, with environmental improvement generally delivering financial returns through reduced resource use. These continue to be reviewed and considered in the light of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.2.6 Investment in energy and water efficiency and cutting waste is now standard practice across all business sectors and also plays a part in demonstrating a wider corporate social responsibility.