

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 April 2017	
Report No:	CAB/FH/17/020	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	16 May 2017
Chairman of the Committee:	Councillor Simon Cole Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07974 443762 Email: simon.cole@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Lead Officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	On 20 April 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items: (1) Annual Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities; (2) Monitoring Community Safety Activities Including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (3) West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points; (4) Review and Revision of the Constitution (Quarterly Report); (5) Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 4); and (6) Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group	

Recommendation:	The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report CAB/FH/17/020, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.		
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only.		
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 		
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 		
Implications:			
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
See Reports listed under background papers below			
Wards affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		Please see background papers, which are listed at the end of the report.	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 Annual Presentation by the Portfolio Holder Families and Communities (Report No: OAS/FH/17/010 and Verbal)

1.1.1 The Committee was reminded that on 21 April 2016, the Committee received a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, setting out responsibilities covered under the planning and growth portfolio.

1.1.2 At this meeting, the portfolio holder for Families and Communities, Councillor Robin Millar, had been invited back to provide a follow-up presentation on his portfolio. Report No: OAS/FH/17/010, set out the focus for the follow-up presentation, which was to:

- Outline the main challenges faced since during the first year within your portfolio;
- Outline some key successes and any failures during the first year and any lessons learned:
- Set out the vision for the Operations Portfolio through to 2019 and were you on target to meet that vision.

1.1.3 Members discussed the presentation and asked questions of the Cabinet Member, to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on how the portfolio was integrating with outside services such as youth development and safeguarding work; the work of locality officers and recent staff turnover; and the need to evaluate what was being spent under the Families and Community Portfolio to better understand whether it was making a difference to communities and residents.

1.1.4 The Committee was informed that the Families and Communities Portfolio was influencing services beyond its control. It was a massive change in the way that councillors worked as they developed and became leaders in the wards they represented. It was a different way of working for local government.

1.1.5 It was then suggested by the Committee that a future member development session should be held so members could share with others how they were using their locality budgets, which the Cabinet Member agreed to progress.

1.1.6 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the presentation.

1.2 Monitoring Community Safety Activities including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (Report No: OAS/FH/17/011)

1.2.1 It is the duty of the Committee, as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee designated under the Police and Justice Act 2006, to scrutinise the work of the Partnership.

1.2.2 Over the past year the WSCSP continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by carrying out an annual assessment of crime, producing an annual plan and carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews, as required.

- 1.2.3 The Committee received and **noted** the update on the community safety activity in West Suffolk, including the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) from April 2016 to March 2017.
- 1.2.4 In May 2016, the WSCSP completed and published its partnership plan and project plan for identified community priorities for 2016-2017. Attached as Appendix A to the report, was the WSCSP project plan.
- 1.2.5 The report also set out the work of the Strong and Safe Communities Group; the multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Group and Public Space Protection Orders.
- 1.2.6 Members scrutinised the report and asked questions of officers, to which responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on officer time involved in community safety and the cash award received from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and gang violence. Discussions were also held on the numbers involved in anti-social behaviour. In response, officers informed the Committee that figures were referred to the Multi-Agency Group who looked at vulnerable cases of anti-social behaviour.

1.3 **West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points (Report No: OAS/FH/17/012)**

- 1.3.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/17/012, which asked members to review progress against the West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015-2018. Attached at Appendix A to the report was a detailed update on progress as at the end of December 2016, against 40 objectives. The remainder of the report summarised each of the headings, key achievements to date and work underway and highlighted challenges and external factors impacting on delivery.
- 1.3.2 Members considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions of the Lead Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Service Manager (Strategic Housing) who duly responded. In particular discussions were held on building housing to lifetime home standards; standards for space guidance; high density housing in rural areas; local lettings policies; the implications of housing on health, and the impact of universal credit.

The Committee was also informed that Member workshops would be arranged, in particular covering the welfare reform / universal credits.

- 1.3.3 The Committee agreed that it would be useful to continue having a Housing Strategy post 2018 when the current one ends, acknowledging that there was no legal requirement to have one.
- 1.3.4 It was **Resolved** that the Committee:
 - (1) **Noted** the progress made to date against the actions arising from the West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015-2018;
 - (2) **Noted** the challenges facing delivery of the West Suffolk Housing Strategy; and

- (3) **Noted** an update would be presented to the Committee in early 2018 in order to monitor delivery in 2017.

1.4 **Review and Revision of the Constitution – Quarter 4 (Verbal)**

- 1.4.1 The Monitoring Officer provided a verbal update on revisions which had been made to the Constitution during the last quarter. These had mainly been changes made to the officer structure /amendments to job titles.
- 1.4.2 In the past the Committee received a report each quarter on minor changes which had been made. The Monitoring Officer was happy to carry on that process if the Committee found it useful, or it might wish to only receive updates when substantial change were being made to the Constitution.
- 1.4.3 The Committee considered the proposal and agreed that in future that it would only receive updates on substantial changes being made to the Constitution.

1.5 **Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 4) (Verbal)**

- 1.5.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 requires that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis. In June 2010 it was agreed that this requirement should be fulfilled by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.5.2 The Committee was advised that in Quarter 4, no such surveillance had been authorised. The Committee was advised that surveillance powers were mainly used by the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) for carrying out benefits checks. It felt it would be useful to see how ARP was using the surveillance powers.
- 1.5.3 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** that the Monitoring Officer would provide the Committee with an update at its July 2017 meeting on surveillance authorisations carried out by the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP).

1.6 **Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group (Report No: OAS/FH/17/013)**

- 1.6.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/17/013, which provided an update on the current status of the Committee's Work Programme for 2017-2018.
- 1.6.2 The Committee **noted** that due to a General Election being held on 8 June, it's next meeting would be rescheduled to be held on Tuesday 6 June 2017, at 6pm in the Council Chamber.
- 1.6.3 The Committee was also asked to nominate two members with appropriate skills to sit on a "West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group". The purpose of the Information Strategy will be to seek to recognise the strategic value of information to the Council and to promote and facilitate good information management practice.

The Committee considered the requested made by the Service Manager (ICT) and **Resolved** to nominate Councillor Brian Harvey and Councillor Simon Cole to sit on the Joint Task and Finish Group with St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

2. Background Papers

- 2.1.1 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/010](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities
- 2.1.2 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/011](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Monitoring Community Safety Activities including Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership
- 2.1.3 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/012](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: West Suffolk Housing Strategy: Update on Progress Against Action Points
- 2.1.4 Report No: [OAS/FH/17/013](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update and Formation of a West Suffolk Information Strategy Joint Task and Finish Group