

COU/SE/17/019



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT



2016-2017

St Edmundsbury Borough Council Annual Scrutiny Report 2016-2017

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Introduction



Councillor Diane Hind

**Chairman of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2016-2017**



Councillor Sarah Broughton

**Chairman of the Performance and
Audit Scrutiny Committee
2016-2017**

Welcome to the Annual Report of the overview and scrutiny function at St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Scrutiny is central to the decision-making process of the Council, and this Annual Report sets out the work of the two scrutiny committees during 2016-2017. The report is not intended to cover all the work of the committees in great detail, but to present some examples of where and how scrutiny has contributed to change, challenge and service improvements, and to give you a flavour of the work undertaken.

2016-2017 was another busy year for the committee, with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee carrying out several policy and scrutiny reviews. We also held informal joint scrutiny meetings with members of Forest Heath District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss key issues for West Suffolk.

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee continued to increase the scope of its internal and external audit monitoring role.

2016-2017 was also another strong year for external involvement in our scrutiny reviews, with representatives from partner organisations attending meetings or taking part in consultations to help the committees with their investigations.

We hope you find this Annual Report both informative and interesting, and that you will continue to follow the progress of the scrutiny function at St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

May 2017

What does Scrutiny do?

The scrutiny function of this and other councils was introduced under the Local Government Act 2000, which required councils to set up new structures to replace the previous committee system. The aim of the Government's programme for modernising local government was for local people to know more about how their local council works and get more involved. As part of this, councils were required to establish at least one "overview and scrutiny committee" to monitor decisions made and, where appropriate, to advise the Council on matters of policy or service delivery.

St Edmundsbury has two such committees. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee looks back at how and why decisions were made, how services are functioning and where improvements can be made, but in its role as community leader also looks at wider issues. It also examines new and evolving policies.

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee has particular responsibility for monitoring the performance of services, as well as internal audit, risk management and procurement, and has responsibility for scrutinising the Council's budget, including any proposals for cost reductions and approving the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Responsibilities:

- Community leadership
- Reviews
- Pre-decision scrutiny
- Post implementation review
- Policy development and review
- External and joint scrutiny
- Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action
- Holding the Cabinet to account
- Holding Portfolio Members to account
- Scrutiny improvement

As the Council's critical friend, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee holds the Cabinet to account for its actions by monitoring the decision making process and testing existing practices to check they are working properly. It can also call in Cabinet decisions to scrutinise them before they are put into practice. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is able to stand back from the decision making process, look at the outcomes for the people of St Edmundsbury and West Suffolk and contribute to ensuring improved performance.

The Committee also looks at the impact on the community of key plans and strategies within the Council's policy framework, investigating why things are as they are, researching options, challenging assumptions and suggesting improvements. When looking at a new policy, the Committee ensures it would contribute to the Council's priorities as set out in the West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016, and that any links to other Council policies demonstrate continuity. When reviewing existing policies, the Committee investigates how successful it has been, whether it achieved its objectives within budget and to timescale, and what needs to change. In all its policy development, the Committee aims to enhance services and make life better for people living and working in St Edmundsbury, as well as those visiting us.

The Committee has up to eight scheduled meetings per year.

Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

- Performance management
- Internal and external audit responsibilities
- Strategic risk management
- Revenue and Capital Budget monitoring and budget development
- Scrutiny of annual accounts
- Procurement

Scrutiny also has an important role to play in monitoring the performance of services. The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee looks at how well the Council's services are performing by considering a range of information such as performance indicators and reports from external inspectors, and by monitoring action plans. It does not carry out reviews, but may recommend that a review is carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or another appropriate committee or working group where a need has been identified.

This Committee also leads on improvement planning and risk management, as well as monitoring the Council's budget, and approving the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts in accordance with the powers delegated to it under the Council's Constitution. It also leads on the development of a sustainable forward budget. In 2016-2017 it held five informal joint monitoring meetings with Forest Heath's Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, plus a special individual meeting in September to consider the annual accounts.

How does Scrutiny work?

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a rolling work programme which prioritises the investigations it will carry out over the coming months. The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee sets its work around the quarterly budget and corporate planning cycle. The committee gathers evidence from a variety of sources including the Council's own information, other local authorities, partner organisations, service users, expert witnesses or research carried out by the committees themselves.

Once they have their evidence the committees make their reports, complete with recommendations, usually to the Cabinet. The committees' work programmes include time to check progress on the actions that have been taken following acceptance of scrutiny reports.

Call-in

Any decision by the Cabinet, or a key decision taken by an officer with delegated authority from the Cabinet, may be "called in" by at least five members of the Council, or the Leader of any political group on the Council which has five or more members (with the support of a further three members of that group).

Call-in is used where Councillors have evidence which suggests that a decision was not taken in accordance with the principles of good decision making set out in the Constitution, or in the context of the Council's policy or budget framework, and is only used in exceptional circumstances.

The Council sees an average of one call-in per year. However, none were considered during 2016-2017.

Councillor Call for Action

Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) came into force on 1 April 2009, which enables any Member of the Council to refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee any local government matter or any crime and disorder matter which affects their ward/division, within certain limitations. These limitations are set out in the Councillor Call for Action Protocol, which is available as part of the Council's Constitution, on our website.

Training and Development

We recognise the importance of training and development for both Councillors and officers who support the scrutiny role at St Edmundsbury. Regular targeted training, both internally and externally, has facilitated the development of a successful scrutiny function

Meetings

Meetings of both scrutiny committees are held in public (except when exempt or confidential material is being discussed), and in order to prevent whole meetings being taken up by a single topic, "Task and Finish" groups are often set up to carry out major reviews and report back to the main committee with their recommendations.

Engaging the Public and Stakeholders

The scrutiny committees work hard to develop and improve the scrutiny process at St Edmundsbury, and continually aim to increase the involvement of stakeholders and public engagement. To this end committees often gather evidence with the involvement of external witnesses, and over the past year, in addition to targeted consultations carried out as part of reviews, the committees have formally invited several people to attend meetings and assist in investigations, including:

- Members from Forest Heath District Council
- Representatives from Ernst and Young (External Audit)

Organisations and individuals contacted as part of a review included:

- Members of the public
- Forest Heath District Council
- Barley Homes Group Ltd (Directors)
- Abbeycroft Leisure Chief Executive and Trustees

For further information or answers to any queries relating to the Council's scrutiny functions or activities, please contact Christine Brain, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) on (01638) 719729 or email christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Review of Past Year Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Councillor Diane Hind
Committee Chairman

Committee Members

Cllr Simon Brown
Cllr Tony Brown
Cllr John Burns
Cllr Patrick Chung
Cllr Paula Fox
Cllr Susan Glossop
Cllr Paul Hopfensperger
Cllr Richard Rout
Cllr Angela Rushen
Cllr Andrew Speed
Cllr Clive Springett
Cllr Sarah Stamp
Cllr Jim Thorndyke
Cllr Frank Warby

Substitute Members

Cllr Wayne Hailstone
Cllr Margaret Marks
Cllr Jane Midwood
Cllr David Roach
Cllr Peter Thompson
Cllr Julia Wakelam
Cllr Patsy Warby
Cllr Anthony Williams



Councillor Jeremy Farthing
Committee Vice Chairman

Scrutiny Reviews completed during 2016-2017

This section describes some of the key scrutiny topics covered during the year (June 2016 to April 2017), and their associated outcomes.

Informal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Meetings

The Committee held one Informal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting during the year with Members of Forest Heath's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable informal joint discussions to take place between the two authorities.

Following the informal joint discussions, the two Overview and Scrutiny Committee's then met separately and voted on the recommendations for consideration for each council's respective Cabinet.

Reviews carried out in Informal Joint Committee

Devolution

On 8 September 2016, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's held a workshop on "What will devolution mean to West Suffolk?" and was open to all members of both councils to attend.

The aim of the workshop was to inform and drive the agenda for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny taking place on 4 October 2016. The key issues identified during the workshop were:

- Running costs of the Combined Authority;
- Statutory bodies and their duties/powers in relation to the role of the Combined Authority and the arrangements proposed for voting;
- The Combined Authority Board and Co-opted persons;
- Governance and exist arrangements; and
- Double devolution and subsidiarity.

On 4 October 2016, the Committee received a report which provided members with additional information on the five key areas identified following the workshop held on 8 September 2016. In response to a number of questions raised, the following responses were provided:

- 1) be provided for the next 30 years to support economic growth; development of local infrastructures and jobs.
- 2) The Government had proposed gateway reviews to be carried out every five years between the Combined Authority and the Government in relation to the £25 million funding per year.
- 3) All Constituent Councils within a Combined Authority would be equal partners and would have one vote, except where the members had a statutory role.
- 4) A Shadow Combined Authority would be created and would be made up of existing staff to carry out the roles of the three statutory posts. Once the Elected Mayor was in place, they would then decide on staffing.

Combined Authority Board and Co-opted persons

Members expressed concerns regarding the Mayor and their ability to vote against a majority decision or proposal by right of veto.

Double devolution and subsidiarity

Double devolution and subsidiarity was not about structural change, but wanting to see more engagement and delivery locally; making accountability more local and the need to deliver what was contained with the devolution deal.

The Committee recommended to Cabinet that it wished to express its concerns regarding the veto vote of the Mayor.

Reviews carried out Annually

Car Parking

On 9 November 2016, the Committee received an update on the implementation of the Car Parking Review. The report included information on usage; issue of fines; upgrade of ticket machines; electric charging points; new information boards; new directional signs in Haverhill; Park Mark; planning for future car parking provision; Civic Parking Enforcement; financial and future work streams.

The Committee asked a number of questions to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the development of parking provision at Moreton Hall; the park and ride for Christmas Fayre parking in Bury St Edmunds; cars parking on the cycle route along Beetons Way, Bury St Edmunds; progress towards potential Civil Parking Enforcement in Suffolk: the Bury/Haverhill Master Plans and identifying more parking capacity and pay on exit.

The Committee recommended that the Head of Operations, under his delegated authority, and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Operations, vary the Traffic Road Orders as needed to implement the priority work streams.

Follow-up reviews

Dog fouling in West Suffolk

The Committee received on 20 July 2016 an overview of actions and investigations undertaken to combat dog fouling, including an update on progress with the trial at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to investigate the use of DNA registration to tackle dog fouling. The report included a summary on a trial with Wickhambrook Parish Council on the effective reduction of dog fouling; Public Space Protection Orders; Fix Penalty Notice Reward Scheme; DNA registration; and guidance for staff.

Discussions took place on the affects of Toxocara Canis; Public Space Protection Orders and what would be included; the potential for rolling out the Wickhambrook scheme in Haverhill; and how enforcement would be exercised.

Members endorsed the reward scheme, and suggested that the scheme be widened out even further to include people littering, especially along the A14, and recommended that the Head of Operations progress the trialling of a reward scheme as a means to encourage information to be reported about dog fouling incidents; and proposed conditions for a potential public space protection order in St Edmundsbury.

Large Project Reviews

Housing Development Company - Barley Homes (Group) Ltd - Initial Five Year Business Plan

On 9 November 2016, the Committee received a report which asked Members to scrutinise the content of the Barley Homes initial five year Business Plan, prior to being considered by Cabinet and Full Council in December 2016 to approve the funding mechanism required to deliver the plan. Attached as Exempt Appendix A, was the Barley Homes Group Business Plan.

The Committee was reminded of the primary function of Barley Homes, which was to generate profits through the development of new housing for sale and rent, on land owned by one of the councils initially in west Suffolk. The establishment of the housing company was one of the many ways that the council was looking to become self-sufficient through new income generation activities, as central government grants were reduced and eventually removed.

The Report set out key issues, which included initial sites; investment opportunity and financial returns; monitoring of progress and future development decisions; delivery of the business plan; legal implications and the next steps.

The Committee considered in detail the Exempt Appendix A, and asked questions to which comprehensive responses were provided, and made a number of recommendations to Cabinet.

Single-meeting reviews

Designated Public Place Orders in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill and Change to Public Space Protection Orders

On 11 January 2017, the Committee was updated on legislation relating to Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) and proposed changes prior to public consultation. The report set out the transition arrangements from Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) to PSPOs; existing DPPO for Haverhill which had been in place since 2008; existing DPPO for Bury St Edmunds which had been in place since 2006; transition from Dogs Fouling of Land Act 1996 to PSPO Dog Control Orders; consultation requirements; publication of signage; enforcement; and reviews of PSPOs.

Discussions were held on street begging and distinguishing between “passive” and “aggressive” begging; and the proposed Orders relating to dogs. Members were in support of the dog order, but felt that there needed to be more emphasis on enforcement; dog wardens; the provision of dog bags at strategic locations; and whether anyone had been prosecuted.

Members were informed that the Council had dog bags which could be extended across other areas; five fixed penalty notices had been issued in St Edmundsbury over the last year, which had all resulted from information being reported by the public; signage would be increased as it was a requirement of the new PSPO; and the Council was committed to carrying out pilots with parish councils in order to reduce dog incidences of inconsiderate dog owners who don't pick up after their dog(s). However, the Council and the community needed to work together in partnership to reduce the emotive subject of dog fouling.

The Committee noted that the Haverhill alcohol-related PSPO remained in place, with no changes to the conditions or the area covered, and made recommendations to Cabinet subject to public consultation.

Review of Abbeycroft Leisure Limited Performance 2005-2016

On 11 January 2017, the Committee received a requesting member's review the performance of Abbeycroft Leisure in Forest Heath, which would then inform the development of a new Partnership Agreement.

The report included information on the establishment of Abbeycroft Leisure; trustees and governance; core business for West Suffolk; attendance levels; continuous improvement and quality management; initiatives and projects; business development and diversification; financial performance; strategic leisure support and advice; approaches and cost of other local authorities; challenges and the future. The Chief Operating Officer for Abbeycroft Leisure gave a short PowerPoint Presentation which showcased the activities of Abbeycroft Leisure over the last 10 years.

Discussions were held on the investment fund created in December 2016; health programmes for the elderly; working with partners in rural areas; new funding opportunities for sports in rural areas; reducing the management fee; Abbeycroft Leisure broadening its remit in all areas of sport, including mainstream sports; and outcomes from the Stand Tall project.

In particular Members discussed:

- The optimum length in developing a partnership agreement, and sought clarification as why this was not a tender process.
- The size and adequacy of the Bury St Edmunds swimming pool; opportunities to open the pool area to the outside; and the opportunity for spectator seating at the athletics track.

Joint Task and Finish Group

On 19 April 2017, the Committee received a request from officers to establish a Joint Task and Finish Group with Forest Heath District Council to help shape the West Suffolk Information Strategy. The purpose of the Information Strategy will be to seek to recognise the strategic value of information to the Council and will promote and facilitate good information management practice, based on:

- a set of underlying data sharing principles;
- seeking to define how we use information currently;
- how we should be using information in the future;
- how this can deliver key outcomes to both our staff, our operations and our customers/consumers; and
- describing where technology can help facilitate this.

The Joint Task and Finish Group would consist of two members from each authority with the Service Manager (ICT) providing technical support.

It was envisaged that a final draft of the Strategy would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in November 2017.

External Joint Scrutiny

In June 2016, a Councillor Paul Hopfensperger was appointed as the representative and Councillor Margaret Marks, Substitute to the **Suffolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**, which is responsible for the scrutiny of health provision across the County. Nominations to other joint county scrutiny committees are made by Annual Council alongside other outside bodies.

Cabinet Liaison

On 8 June 2016, the Committee discussed the **West Suffolk Annual Report (2015-2016)** with the Leader of the Council. The report highlighted the key activities and developments which had been achieved over the financial year 2015-2016, with regard to the priorities set out in the West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016. The draft report contained a number of case studies and examples from West Suffolk to illustrate the achievements described.

The Leader highlighted relevant issues for the attention of the Committee, in particular the start of the Eastern Relief Road build; working with ONE Haverhill to develop a masterplan for Haverhill town centre; the purchase of Abbots House, Bury St Edmunds and the continued success of the locality budget scheme.

The Committee also discussed the **Cabinet's Decisions Plan** at each meeting, and requested further information or involvement as necessary.

Cabinet Members who attended Overview and Scrutiny in 2016-2017

Cabinet Member for Housing

On 20 July 2016, the Cabinet Member for Housing was invited to the meeting to give an account of her portfolio responsibilities and to answer questions from the Committee. The presentation set out the broad areas of responsibility including structure; recent performance; key challenges and priorities for the year. The presentation also included the three service areas which covered development and partnerships; housing options and housing standards.

Members discussed the presentation in detail. In particular discussions were held on the Barley Homes Group Limited and the number of sites they were proposing to develop in Bury; anticipated income from Barley Homes Group Limited; homelessness applications; Home-link's new software operating system; affordable housing figures and starter homes; devolution and how that would help to deliver housing; houses in multiple occupation and the frequency of inspection intervals; what plans the council had for providing more rented properties or building council houses; and how to bring empty properties back into use.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth

On 14 September 2016, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth was invited to the meeting to give an account of his portfolio responsibilities and to answer questions from the Committee. The main focus of the presentation covered what planning and growth did; current success and initiatives; current challenges and how they were overcome and vision for the future to 2019.

The presentation also included information on the areas covered under the portfolio; being Development Management; Planning Policy; Economic Development and Growth; Environmental Health; technical support and local land charges.

Members discussed the presentation in detail. In particular discussions were held and responses provided on the Vision 2031 document and whether housing figures would need to be amended; whether there were plans in place to provide affordable homes for lower paid workers; the shortage of commercial land; taxi licensing and how they system worked; Houses in Multiple Occupation and enforcement; conservation and the deterioration of listed buildings across the Borough, for example the Corn Exchange building in Haverhill; the new pre-application advise service; growth in rural areas with regards to identifying where industrial sites could be located across the Borough; IT issues with the Planning Portal and devolution.

Cabinet Members Progress Presentations

Following on from the first round of presentations from Cabinet Members during 2015-2016, Cabinet Members for Operations; Leisure and Culture; Resources and Performance and Families and Communities were invited back during 2016-2017 to update the Committee on progress by:

- Outlining the main challenges faced during the first year within their portfolio;
- Outlining some key successes and any failures during the first year, and any lessons learnt; and
- Setting out the vision for their portfolio through to 2019 and whether on target to meet that vision.

Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action



This year no Councillor Call for Actions (CCfAs) were submitted, and there were also no call-ins.

Other

From June 2010, the Committee was given responsibility for scrutinising the Authority's use of its **surveillance powers** under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010, and received quarterly reports on the use of these powers. During 2015-2016, no such surveillance had been authorised.

From April 2016, the Committee was given responsibility for receiving quarterly reports on changes made to the Constitution by the Monitoring Officer under his delegated authority. The Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service and relevant Portfolio Holder, has delegated authority to make minor amendments to the constitution arising from changes to legislation; changes to staffing structures or job descriptions or changes in terminology.

Review of Past Year Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

 <p>Councillor Sarah Broughton Committee Chairman</p>	<p>Committee Members Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger Cllr Betty McLatchy Cllr Jane Midwood Cllr David Nettleton Cllr Karen Richardson Cllr David Roach Cllr Barry Robbins Cllr Peter Thompson</p> <p>Substitute Members Cllr John Burns Cllr Jeremy Farthing Cllr Susan Glossop Cllr Diane Hind Cllr Ivor McLatchy</p>	 <p>Councillor Patricia Warby Committee Vice-Chairman</p>
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This section describes some of the key scrutiny topics covered during the year (25 May 2016 to 25 May 2017) by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, and their associated outcomes.

Joint working with Forest Heath District Council's Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

During 2016-2017 the Committee held five informal joint meetings, at alternate venues with Forest Heath District Council's Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. In September, the Committee meet separately to scrutinise and approve the Council's 2015-2016 Annual Statement of Accounts.

Scrutiny of Budget Savings

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee plays an integral role in delivering a sustainable budget for the Council. There were again significant levels of savings to be achieved, and the Committee scrutinised all proposals for growth and savings in the 2017-2018 budget before making recommendations to Cabinet.

This work commenced on 24 November 2016, with a report setting out progress made towards delivering a balanced budget for 2017-2018 and a sustainable budget in the medium term. The report included proposed budget saving for 2017 to 2020.

The key strategy to deliver savings over the coming years is to expand the work on shared services with Forest Heath District Council to streamline supplies, services and income, together with a range of other local savings initiatives.

Over several meetings, the Committee scrutinised a number of proposals for savings both through shared services and local savings, all of which were incorporated into the Budget and Council Tax Setting report considered by Cabinet on 7 February 2017.

Performance Management

The Committee received on a quarterly basis the **West Suffolk Balanced Scorecards** being used to measure the Council's performance for the six Head of Service areas for 2016-2017 and an overview of performance against those indicators as well as the **West Suffolk Strategic Risk Register**.

Additionally, at its 27 July 2016 meeting, the Committee received the **Annual Performance Report for The Apex**.

Audit Responsibilities

The Committee scrutinised the work of the **Internal Audit Team** towards achieving the 2016-2017 audit plan, with updates during the year at which the results of completed audits were discussed. At its 25 May 2016 meeting, the Committee approved an **Outline Internal Audit Plan for 2016-2017**.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require a **review of the effectiveness of internal audit** once a year. The review forms part of the review of the overall system of internal control required for the **Annual Governance Statement**. The Committee noted the report's conclusion, that internal audit was operating effectively and could be relied upon as a key source of evidence in the Annual Governance Statement.

The Council is required to produce and publish an **Annual Governance Statement (AGS)**, which covers six core governance principles, and is approved by the Committee, and signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive Officer. The Annual Governance Statement had been prepared by the Officer Governance Group as a joint statement for St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council to reflect both councils working together and sharing services across West Suffolk. The Committee approved the AGS for signing by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council.

Various reports from **Ernst and Young (EY)** were considered over the year. In May 2016 the **External Audit Plan and Fees 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 Indicative Fees** was received from EY which covered the work they planned to perform in order to provide the Council with an audit opinion on the Council's financial statements, and a statutory conclusion on its arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The report summarised EY's proposed audit approach and scope for the 2015-2016 audit along with the planned fees to complete the work for 2015-2016, and also included indicative fees for 2016-2017. At the same meeting the **Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2014-2015** was considered, which summarised the results of the certification work which had been undertaken as part of the annual audit of grant claims to government departments.

In September 2016 EY presented the **2015-2016 ISA 260 Annual Governance Report** to the Committee, which set out the key messages arising from the audit of the Council's financial statements, and included an assessment of the Council's arrangements for securing value for money in its use of resources.

At the meeting held on 24 November 2016, EY presented the **2015-2016 Annual Audit Letter**, which confirmed the completion of the audit of the 2015-2016 financial statements.

Budget Monitoring

Budget Monitoring reports were brought to the Committee quarterly, in order for it to flag up any areas of concern to the Cabinet. The Committee received the **Financial Outturn Report (Revenue and Capital) 2015-2016** at its meeting on 25 May 2016, following the 30 June deadline for production of the draft accounts for audit. The report included a financial commentary on the year, details of revenue and expenditure including budgeted and actual expenditure and an explanation of the main variances, and details of how services were paid for. Capital income and expenditure was also discussed, as well as reserves and treasury management.

On 25 May 2017, the Committee received the **Financial Outturn Report (Revenue and Capital) 2016-2017**, which included a financial commentary for the year.

The Committee scrutinised and approved the Council's **2015-2016 Annual Statement of Accounts** at its meeting on 21 September 2016. At the same meeting it scrutinised the External Auditors **Draft 2015-2016 ISA 260 Annual Governance Report** to those charged with governance and resolved the sign-off of this report, including the approval of the letter of representation on behalf of the Council.

Treasury Management

The **Treasury Management Sub-Committee** of three Members, who fulfil the enhanced monitoring and scrutiny requirements of treasury management, held three meetings during the financial year (July, November 2016 and January 2017), at which scrutiny of the **Investment Activity and Performance and Monitoring Reports (2016/2017)** the **Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statements 2017-2018** and **Treasury Management Code of Practice** took place.

Officers continue to find this specialised scrutiny of the Council's treasury management activity extremely useful, and value being able to obtain Members' views on this important area of work.

Work Programmes for 2017-2018

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee carries out some of its work in "Task and Finish" groups, which undertake investigations and reviews and report back to the main Committee. This enables a greater number of Councillors to engage in scrutiny, as well as ensuring a Councillor lead on issues from the beginning of their review. The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee works differently in that the bulk of its work is set around its quarterly budget and performance monitoring responsibilities.

The Committee has access to resources, to assist it in carrying out its work programme, which can be used, for example, in engaging specialist assistance, obtaining evidence, carrying out site visits, and paying for meeting accommodation, training and development.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a rolling work programme, set a few meetings ahead, to enable it to be more reactive to changing priorities. In addition to any call-ins or Councillor Calls for Action which may arise, and additions to the rolling work programme through submitted work programme suggestions, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the following issues during the year:

- Cabinet Decisions Plan
- Barley Homes (Group) Limited
- Monitoring the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership
- West Suffolk Annual Report
- West Suffolk Housing Strategy

In addition to the above items, Extraordinary Informal Joint Scrutiny Sessions will be called, as necessary, with members of Forest Heath District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable common issues to be scrutinised jointly.

Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will have the following responsibilities and will consider quarterly monitoring reports along these lines, jointly with Forest Heath District Council's Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, as well as scrutinising the Council's annual accounts, and making recommendations on delivering a sustainable budget for 2018-2019.

- Performance Management
(including West Suffolk Strategic Risk Management/Corporate Compliments and Complaints)
- Budget Monitoring and Budget Development
- Internal and external audit
- Financial Performance (Revenue and Capital) monitoring and review
- 2016-2017 Statement of Accounts
- Procurement
- Treasury Management

For more information about how scrutiny works at St Edmundsbury Borough Council, please contact the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) on (01638) 719729.



St Edmundsbury
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Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils
West Suffolk
working together

Approved by Council: XX July 2017

**For more information please contact the Democratic Services Officer
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