

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework	
Report No:	OAs/SE/17/023	
Report to and date/s:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9 November 2017
	Cabinet	12 December 2017
	Council	20 December 2017
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Purpose of report:	To provide input into the development of the draft Strategic Framework.	
Recommendation:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Subject to the approval of Cabinet and Council the Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020 be adopted.	
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"/>	

Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion by Overview and Scrutiny Committee provides an important input into the draft document as a whole. The more detailed proposals contained in the document have arisen as a result of ongoing engagement by councillors and officers with a wide range of stakeholders, for example, business, residents, communities and voluntary groups. This engagement includes formal consultations, surveys and monitoring of feedback, as well as more informal dialogue.
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not compulsory for councils to have strategic planning documents in place. However, this can result in a lack of strategic direction and agreement on the vision and purpose of the organisation, or the outcomes that councillors and staff are working towards.
Implications:	
<p>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft strategic framework document is aligned with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget setting process for 2018-19.
<p>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft document will set the framework within which future West Suffolk policies are set.
<p>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft document includes a number of priorities where a particular emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of different groups (p7 of draft document). Where appropriate, individual policies and projects referred to in the draft Strategic Framework document have already undergone, or will undergo, an Equality Impact Assessment.

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)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
Lack of funding to support full set of projects listed in appendix A	Medium	Finance team involvement in business planning to fully assess value for money of detailed proposals	Low
Future changes in the wider economic environment affect the delivery of economic development and housing objectives	Medium	Ongoing monitoring of local economic conditions. Wider changes in model of service delivery to allow prioritisation of economic and housing priorities	Low
Unable to meet public's expectations of what the councils will deliver	Medium	Effective communications to educate residents about new ways of working	Low
Ward(s) affected:		All	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016	
Documents attached:		Appendix A: Diagram showing the scope of the Strategic Framework Appendix B: Draft Strategic Framework 2018-2020	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 Development of West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020

- 1.1.1 The report seeks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's input into the development of a draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020. The strategic framework represents a revision of the existing West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016.
- 1.1.2 The report summarises the work that has been carried out so far on the development of a draft West Suffolk strategic framework and seeks the committee's views on the draft document.

2. Draft Strategic Framework – progress so far

- 2.1 Work has been underway by Portfolio Holders from both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils since summer 2017 on the development of a revised Strategic Framework for 2018-2020.
- 2.2 The most recent strategic plan for West Suffolk covered the period 2014-2016. It was then agreed to extend the vision and priorities in that plan until the outcome of the devolution process in Norfolk and Suffolk was clear. It is now considered timely for a new strategic framework document to be agreed, especially given that the both councils have now agreed to proceed with proposals for creating a single council for West Suffolk
- 2.3 The development work so far has involved the formulation of a draft **vision and strategic priorities**, based on a review of West Suffolk's existing priorities, and set against a background of evidence about West Suffolk and the issues we are facing. The three priorities that emerged from this work continue to be **growth; resilient families and communities; and housing**.
- 2.4 Each of the three strategic priorities is supported by a draft set of **projects and actions**. These cover the projects and actions already underway as well as those that have been agreed but not yet started.
- 2.5 The final element of the strategic framework is the '**ways of working**' section which outlines *how* the councils will work together in taking forward the ambitious set of projects and activities, in order to support improvements in quality of life in West Suffolk

3. Key points to note

3.1 *The document is not comprehensive*

- 3.1.1 The aim of the Strategic Framework document is to provide councillors, staff, partners and interested members of the public with an overview of the councils' strategic direction and its distinctive ways of working, as opposed to a complete description of the activities the councils will be carrying out. The content is therefore necessarily high-level and focused on areas that are changing, with the detail and business as usual activities being fleshed out in individual plans, strategies and service-specific business plans.

3.2 ***West Suffolk's contribution is only part of the picture***

3.2.1 The diagram at Appendix A shows how West Suffolk Councils are contributing to outcomes in West Suffolk alongside others, including residents, families and communities, businesses, the voluntary sector and other public sector partners, including SCC and town and parish councils.

3.2.2 For this reason, the draft document takes account of the plans and strategies of others, including SCC, the LEPs, and feedback from communities through our ongoing engagement work.

3.3 ***There is a new emphasis on place***

3.3.1 The draft document has a greater emphasis on place than the previous strategic plan, in recognition of the distinctive character of the difference towns, villages and more sparsely populated rural areas across West Suffolk.

3.3.2 A number of examples of places where projects and actions are already planned are included within the draft document. These are necessarily selective as it is not possible to refer to all places within West Suffolk, but efforts have been made to ensure a variety of examples are given within the text.

3.4 ***The document is evidence-based***

3.4.1 As set out in section 3 of the document, the priorities, projects and actions have been developed based on analysis and insight around the challenges and opportunities facing residents, communities and businesses in West Suffolk. Infographics summarising some of these issues will be included in the document in advance of consideration by Cabinet.

3.5 ***The document sets the framework for a new single council***

3.5.1 As the draft framework document covers the period 2018-2020, it will set the strategic direction for the new single council for West Suffolk, if this is created as a result of the current Government process. As such, the framework is aligned with the councils' business case that was submitted to the Secretary of State this autumn.

3.6 ***The document will be designed and formatted before publication***

3.6.1 The document will be proof-read, formatted and designed, including the addition of photographs, in advance of publication.

4. **Next steps**

4.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee's input into the development of the draft document is welcomed.

4.2 The draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework is then due to be considered by both councils' Cabinets and then full Councils in December 2017. Subject to agreement being reached, the plan would then be published. A communications plan for the final stages of the process is also being finalised

to ensure all Members, staff and partners are updated on how the final plan has developed.