

Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 8 November 2017	
Report No:	CAB/SE/17/065	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	5 December 2017
Chairman of the Committee:	Diane Hind Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 01284 706542 Email: diane.hind@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead Officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>On 8 November 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework;(2) Development of a West Suffolk Growth Investment Strategy;(3) Anglia Revenues Partnership Debt Recovery Process;(4) Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Operations; and(5) Work Programme Update. <p>A separate report is included on this Cabinet agenda for Item (1) above.</p> <p>Recommendations from item (2) above were considered and approved by Cabinet on 14 November 2017 during a joint meeting with Forest Heath District Council's Cabinet.</p>	

Recommendation:	The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report CAB/SE/17/065, 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 Anglia Revenues Partnership Debt Recover Process (Report No: OAS/SE/17/028)

- 1.1.1 Following a request from the Committee, Report No: OAS/SE/17/028 was produced by the management team at Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) explaining the processes they follow to recover debt. Debt recovery was identified as a matter the Committee wanted to explore further as effective collection of revenue due to the Council was essential for the Council's finances, as Councillors were asked to approve certain debts to be written off.
- 1.1.2 The report and supporting PowerPoint presentation provided a review of the processes ARP followed to recover debts; which included a summary of performance in this area; the collection process; enforcement; housing benefits overpayments; support provided and a case study illustrating the sometimes lengthy and time consuming recovery of a debt. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a flowchart showing the debt recovery process.
- 1.1.3 Members considered the contents of the report and presentation and reviewed the process that ARP followed to recover debt. Discussions were held on fraud overpayments and how this would be collected when Universal Credit was introduced; the reminder process from first reminder to court summons; and whether ARP held a definitive list of property owners / landlords.
- 1.1.4 In particular, discussions were held on the Council Tax instalment process and suggested that ARP could be more proactive in advertising that payments could be made over 12 months, rather than the statutory 10 months.
- 1.1.5 The Committee **RECOMMENDS to the Anglia Revenues Partnership:** That the Anglia Revenues Partnership be asked to make the option of being able to pay Council Tax over a twelve month period more prominent when sending out Council Tax bills.

1.2 Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Operations (Report No: OAS/SE/17/029)

- 1.2.1 The Cabinet Member for Operations, Councillor Peter Stevens, was invited back to give an annual update on his portfolio. Report No: OAS/SE/17/029 set out the focus for the annual update.
- 1.2.2 Prior to the meeting taking place, the Cabinet Member was provided with some key questions from Scrutiny Members on what they would like included in the update, and responses were set out the report.
- 1.2.3 The Cabinet Member thanked the Committee for the invitation and welcomed the new format in providing questions in advance of the meeting.
- 1.2.4 The Committee asked follow-up questions relating to brown bin subscriptions; recycling; fleet management and the Christmas Fayre, to which comprehensive responses were provided.

1.2.5 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the annual update.

1.3 **Work Programme Update (Report No: OAS/SE/17/030)**

1.3.1 The Committee received and **noted** Report No: OAS/SE/17/030, which updated Members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items for scrutiny during 2018 (Appendix 1).

1.3.2 The Committee noted that the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture would be attending its meeting on 10 January 2018, and identified in advance a number of questions they would like the Portfolio Holder to cover in his annual update.

2. Background Papers

2.1.1 Report No: [OAS/SE/17/028](#), [Appendix 1](#), and [Supporting Presentation](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Anglia Revenues Partnership Debt Recovery Process

2.1.2 Report No: [OAS/SE/17/029](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Operations

2.1.3 Report No: [OAS/SE/17/030](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update