

# Cabinet



Forest Heath  
District Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>CAB/FH/17/064</b>	
<b>Report to and dates:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	12 December 2017
	<b>Council</b>	20 December 2017
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<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To approve the West Suffolk Councils' draft Strategic Framework.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that the draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/FH/17/000, is recommended to Council for adoption.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>  (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b><u>do not</u></b> apply.)	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within <b>48 hours</b> and cannot be actioned until <b>five clear working days of the publication of the decision</b> have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>		
<b>Consultation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft document was discussed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 November 2017.</li> <li>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,</li> </ul>	

	surveys and monitoring of feedback, as well as more informal dialogue.		
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>		
<b>Implications:</b>			
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft strategic framework document is aligned with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget setting process for 2018-19.</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft document will set the framework within which future West Suffolk policies are set.</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? If yes, please give details	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft document includes a number of priorities where a particular emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of different groups.</li> <li>Where appropriate, individual policies and projects referred to in the draft Strategic Framework document have already undergone, or will undergo, an Equality Impact Assessment.</li> </ul>	
<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)
	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	Medium	Ongoing monitoring of local economic conditions. Wider changes in model of service delivery to allow	Low

housing objectives		prioritisation of economic and housing priorities	
Unable to meet public's expectations of what the councils will deliver	Medium	Effective communications to educate residents about new ways of working	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-16 <a href="https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/WestSuffolkStrategicPlan2014-16-full-version.pdf">https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/WestSuffolkStrategicPlan2014-16-full-version.pdf</a>	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		<b>Appendix A:</b> Draft Strategic Framework 2018-2020	

## **1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)**

### **1.1 Development of West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020**

- 1.1.1 The report seeks Cabinet's approval for the 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 Cabinet's approval of 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**

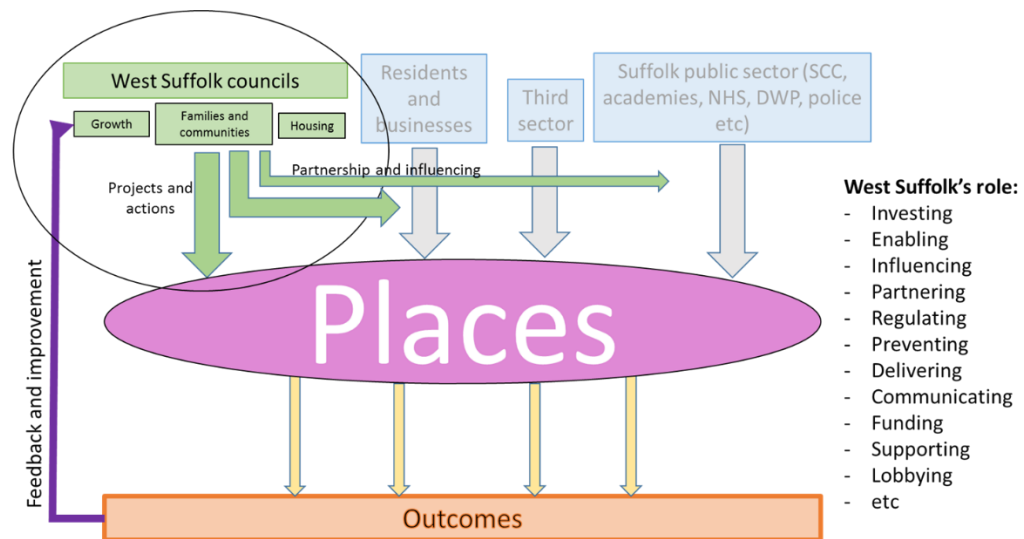
### **3.1 *The document is not comprehensive***

- 3.1.1 The aim of the Strategic Framework document is to provide councillors, staff, partners and residents 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 below shows how the 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 Suffolk County Council (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 Local Economic Partnerships, and feedback from communities through our ongoing engagement work.



Appendix A: Scope of West Suffolk strategic plan 2018-2020

### 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 area 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 three 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.

### 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.

#### **4. Input from Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

- 4.1 A number of issues were raised by members of SEBC and FHDC Overview and Scrutiny Committees at their meetings on 8 and 9 November respectively. These are set out below, alongside the changes that have been made to the draft, or handled in a different way. (Page numbers refer to the pages in the Overview and Scrutiny report version (the bracketed numbers refer to the pages in the agenda pack)).

#### **FHDC**

<b>Issue raised by committee</b>	<b>Response</b>
How will the document be made use of?	The document will provide the overarching framework for staff and Members, to set out the direction for the councils. It aligns with how financial resources have been and will be allocated for 2018-2020, and sets the framework for business planning and performance management.
How will the councils know if they are making any difference in local places?	The performance framework described on p19 of the draft document outlines how we will measure progress against the priorities in the document. Performance against the framework will be reported through the performance management framework, including to Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
Add reference to growth sites in Forest Heath in the second bullet point in the Growth section	Add "Plus, depending on the outcome of the Forest Heath Local Plan examination North Lakenheath, North Red Lodge and West Mildenhall."
Amend "self sufficient" to "financially self sufficient" on p29	Amend as suggested
Add reference to the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau and Registered Providers as well as Anglia Revenues Partnership	Amend as suggested
Data and intelligence need to be made available to Parish Councils through online mechanisms.	This will be included in the work programme for data and intelligence.
Add reference to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Reference is included in section "Resourcing our priorities"

#### **SEBC**

<b>Issue raised by committee</b>	<b>Response</b>
Work on the Haverhill Epicentre (Research Park) began in 2014 when planning permission was received. Should it therefore still be included in the document?	Keep reference in to demonstrate the councils' continuing commitment
Would like to see a reference to St Edmundsbury's support for a rail link between Haverhill and Cambridge	Include reference on p 11 (25) under point 4.
The Haverhill Masterplan has been in place for a while. What is happening on it?	Update given in meeting - no changes to document proposed.
Need to clarify that the timetable for the closure of RAF Mildenhall not definite.	Amend wording to read "in anticipation of the United States Air Force leaving the site in 2024 "at the earliest". p11 (25)
Change wording of A1307 to "A1307 corridor"	Change wording as suggested
Duplicate text on p21 and p24	This is intentional to show the totality of the priorities on p21 and then the amplification of each in turn in each of the sections on Growth, Families and Communities and Housing
Apparent contradiction between saying West Suffolk is 'well-connected' on p 6 (20) and then saying that infrastructure improvements are needed on p11 (25)	Add phrase 'to enable West Suffolk to continue to flourish' on p11 (25)
Document needs tidying up	Proof read, design and typeset the document before publication
How will we evaluate what we will achieve or hope to achieve?	This is covered on p18 (32) of the document.
The issue of homelessness needs to be prioritised at the current time	The councils' actions on homelessness are covered on p16 (30)
What data will be included in the document (infographics) and will it all be 2011 data and at ward level?	Add infographics covering economy, housing, demographics etc, at lowest possible geographical level and for most recent years available
The framework refers to a number of areas where the councils are behaving more commercially. If these initiatives fail, what is the 'plan B'?	Each of the income generating initiatives that will be brought forward in the context of the strategic framework will be appraised individually through business cases, including an analysis of risks.
What guarantees can be given around investment in rural areas?	The framework covers all of West Suffolk's places, whether towns, villages or isolated hamlets. The strategies and plans that sit 'underneath' the framework will

	address where funding will be targeted, according the particular needs of each of the places and recognising the specific challenges and opportunities facing rural areas. Add stronger references to rural communities in document.
Add reference to the role of the voluntary and community sector in dealing with problems in Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) on p16 (30), point 8	Add reference as suggested.

## **5. Publication and launch**

- 5.1 Following Cabinet consideration, the draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework is due to be considered by both councils' full Councils later in December 2017. Subject to agreement being reached, the framework would then be published. A full communications plan has been developed to share the framework and the priorities that guide the work of the authorities and new single council. This includes communicating internally with staff and members as well as externally with residents, businesses and partners, including parish councils, and the wider voluntary and public sector.
- 5.2 Communications will continue throughout the framework period to help embed the vision and priorities in the culture of the organisation as well as explain the strategic aims of the councils. Priority areas will also be highlighted with practical examples of case studies and successes during this time to bring emphasis on aspects of the councils' ambitions, services and projects being delivered. Where appropriate this will involve Leaders and Portfolio Holders.
- 5.3 The priorities and vision set out in the framework will also be an integral part of communications work of the council and its messaging.