

COU/SE/18/015



Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT



2017-2018

St Edmundsbury Borough Council Annual Scrutiny Report 2017-2018

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
What does Scrutiny do?	4-5
How does Scrutiny work?	5-7
Review of Past Year – Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8-13
Review of Past Year – Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee	14-16
Work Programmes for 2018-2019	17

Introduction



Councillor Diane Hind

**Chairman of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2017-2018**



Councillor Sarah Broughton

**Chairman of the Performance and
Audit Scrutiny Committee
2017-2018**

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 2017-2018. 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.

2017-2018 was another busy year for the committee, with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee carrying out several policy and scrutiny reviews alongside our usual workload.

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

2017-2018 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.

June 2018

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 Framework 2018-2020, 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 2017-2018 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 2017-2018.

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. Targeted training, both internally and externally, has facilitated the development of a successful scrutiny function.

Scrutiny Workshops

In addition to its scheduled meetings, during 2017-2018 the Committee held two scrutiny workshop sessions:

- August 2017: The Role of Scrutiny (Looking at the current role by drawing on member observations on how it currently works; where improvements could be made; and how it might operate in the future); and
- February 2018: Developing potential ideas for future scrutiny during 2018-2019.

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
- Anglia Revenues Partnership
- Suffolk County Council (Deputy Leader) and
- Suffolk Highways (Head of Strategic Services)

- Barley Homes Group Ltd (Directors)
- Barley Homes Shareholder Advisory Group Representatives
- Suffolk County Council Assistant Director (Strategic Finance) and Head of Procurement

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

 <p>Councillor Diane Hind Committee Chairman</p>	<p>Committee Members</p> <p>Cllr Simon Brown Cllr John Burns Cllr Mike Chester Cllr Patrick Chung Cllr Paula Fox Cllr Paul Hopfensperger Cllr Margaret Marks Cllr Richard Rout Cllr Andrew Speed Cllr Clive Springett Cllr Sarah Stamp Cllr Jim Thorndyke Cllr Frank Warby Cllr Anthony Williams</p> <p>Substitute Members</p> <p>Cllr Tony Brown Cllr Wayne Hailstone Cllr Jane Midwood Cllr David Roach Cllr Peter Thompson Cllr Julia Wakelam Cllr Patsy Warby</p>	 <p>Councillor Susan Glossop Committee Vice Chairman</p>
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Scrutiny Reviews completed during 2017-2018

This section describes some of the key scrutiny topics covered during the year (June 2017 to April 2018), and their associated outcomes.

Annual Reviews

Car Parking Update

On 7 March 2018, the Committee received an update on the car parking service across 2017, off-street parking outcomes and work priorities. The report included information on transactions and usage, issue of fines, car park improvements (credit card enabled pay machines and RingGo cashless payments, electric charging points, Park Mark, Disabled Parking Accreditation and Vinery Road car par), planning for future car parking provision, Civic Parking Enforcement and future work streams.

The Committee asked questions to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the drop in transactions made in 2017 compared to 2016 and the reasons behind the drop, what the cost was to the council in using RingGo compared to other parking providers, and the number of discounted weekly tickets sold in Bury St Edmunds.

Member were informed that the council funded the replacement of two existing charging points and made a contribution to the new charging points, with Suffolk Council funding the remainder.

Barley Homes (Group) Limited – Annual Report 2018

On 7 March 2018, the Committee welcomed three of the Directors from Barley Homes, the St Edmundsbury representative on the Shareholder Advisory Group and the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Suffolk County Council, who was accompanied by the Assistant Director (Strategic Finance) and Head of Procurement who supported Suffolk County Council in operating Barley Homes.

The Committee received the Annual Report from Barley Homes, which presented the position from a Barley Homes perspective, and the covering report provided the perspective from both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Borough Council's viewpoint, as joint owners (shareholders) of Barley Homes.

The Committee considered the Annual Report in detail and strongly expressed concerns regarding the deliverability of the Barley Homes five-year plan, given one of the four initial sites had been removed from the business plan (Wamil Court, Mildenhall) because Suffolk County Council (SCC), a shareholder in Barley Homes took a decision to sell the site on the open market, securing a higher price. The Assistant Director from SCC explained in detail the history behind Wamil Court, Mildenhall and the need for SCC to maximise the cash receipt for the site when it was returned back to SCC in 2014.

The Committee was informed that Barley Homes was working hard to progress the three remaining sites set out in the current business plan to ensure they worked and delivered against the timeline set out in the Annual Report. It was reported that conditions in the housing market had changed since the original business plan was prepared, and given the desires to maintain schemes which were policy compliant, a revised business plan would be brought forward that still achieved a profitable outcome for the business.

The Committee noted a revised business plan would be brought back to them in July/September 2018 to enable members to assess further progress being made.

Follow-up reviews

Anglia Revenues Partnership: Debt Recovery Process

On 8 November 2017, the Committee invited back the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) to explain the processes they followed to recover debt. Debt recovery was identified as a matter which the Committee wanted to explore further, as effective collection of revenue due to the Council was essential for the Council's finances, as Cabinet was asked to approve certain debts to be written off.

The report and supporting PowerPoint presentation provided a review of the processes that ARP followed to recover debt; 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 recover of debt.

The Committee reviewed in detail the processes that ARP followed. Discussions took place 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.

The Committee discussed 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. In response ARP agreed to look at publicising more the option of payments being spread over 12 months.

With regards to write-offs, ARP reassured the Committee that if debtors reappeared in the area, ARP reopened written-off cases and pursued the collection of the outstanding debt with the debtor.

Joint Task and Finish Group(s)

West Suffolk Information Strategy

A Joint Task and Finish Group was set up in April 2017, with Forest Heath District Council to help shape the development of a West Suffolk Information Strategy.

On 7 March 2018, the Committee received a report from the Joint Task and Finish Group on its work. In the early stages of the process the Group agreed that the document should become a Framework, rather than a Strategy, reflecting the focus of Data and Information and the councils Vision and Objectives regarding the usage, and that a subsequent ICT Strategy would focus on the delivery of the Technology Architecture to support the Framework.

The draft Information Framework was a first for West Suffolk Council's and represented a revised approach to data and the way it is used. The framework provided a high level summary of the council's current position and proposed an approach that sought to maximise data assets through aligning data across West Suffolk Councils' and its partners to improve the services provided across the Councils'.

The Committee considered the report and thanked members of the Joint Task and Finish Group and officers on their work in developing the West Suffolk Information Framework, which was recommended to Cabinet for approval.

Review of Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre – Scoping Report

The Committee on 19 April 2018, received a request from officers to establish a West Suffolk Joint Task and Finish Group with Forest Heath District Council to review the Christmas Fayre.

A formal review of the Fayre was last carried out in 2015. St Edmundsbury Overview and Scrutiny Committee had set up a task and finish group which concluded that "St Edmundsbury Borough Council should commit to the Christmas Fayre for the remainder of the current administration" and made a number of recommendations that had been, or were being implemented.

A further review of the Christmas Fayre was now proposed for the following reasons:

- 1) The current commitment to continue with the Fayre only runs until April 2019, so decisions were needed as to what should take place in winter 2019;
- 2) Planning for the Christmas Fayre starts in the preceding year. As such, a decision would need to be made in 2018 for the 2019 Fayre;
- 3) If the event goes ahead as planned, the 2019 Christmas Fayre would be the first to be run by the new West Suffolk Council as opposed to St Edmundsbury Borough Council. For this reason, current members from across West Suffolk needed to be involved in the decisions about the future of the Fayre; and
- 4) The new anti-terrorist requirements for large scale events was not in place in 2015 when the previous review was carried out. These requirements had financial and other implications and it would be helpful to consider these alongside a wider review of the Fayre.

The West Suffolk Joint Task and Finish Group would consist of four members from Forest Heath's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and six from St Edmundsbury's Overview and Scrutiny Committee with various officers providing technical support.

It was envisaged that the West Suffolk Joint Task and Finish Group would make recommendations to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2018 and West Suffolk Shadow Executive in Autumn 2018.

Member Work Programme Suggestion Reviews

Suffolk County Council – Highway Services

In July 2017, the Committee considered and included in its forward work programme a member suggestion relating to "Suffolk County Council – Highway Services" (SCC). The Committee acknowledged that the Borough Council was not the responsible authority for highways, but felt it would be beneficial to invite Suffolk County Council to a future meeting to discuss how communication could be improved between highways and various tiers of local government for the benefit of all residents and Councillors in West Suffolk.

On 25 October 2017, an Extraordinary Committee meeting was held. The Deputy Leader and Interim for Highways and Transport; the Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility for Highways Operational Performance; and the Suffolk Highways Head of Strategic Services attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

Members were given an overview of the work which had been carried out, and the Highways Transformation Programme which was launched in January 2016 and the various workstream priorities. The aim of the Highways Transformation Programme was the refocusing of contracts; relocation of staff; cultural changes; and Kier commercial organisation.

Members of the Committee asked a number of questions of the Deputy Leader and the Suffolk Highways Head of Strategic Services. In particular discussions were held on the new Highways Team; Community Engineers; communication; Bury Town Centre Masterplan/Consultation; Roadside vegetation/damaged road signs; Civil Parking Enforcement and paving surfaces in Bury town centre.

The Deputy Leader acknowledged that communication was key. Communication between SCC, borough, district and parishes was essential and moving forward it recognised that it needed to be honest with all tiers of local government.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in summing up the meeting acknowledged that whilst the new arrangements were clearly more cost effective and had removed some duplication of work, SCC might still not be utilising the expertise and good will of all tiers of local government. The Chairman proposed a strategy and timetable, which was subsequently recommended to SCC to:

- 1) Pursue a service level agreement with buy-in for parish and town councils;
- 2) Make the Bury Town Centre Masterplan an aspiration for highways decisions;
- 3) Ensure that back office staff are clear on individual roles;
- 4) Civil parking enforcement – ensure that all road markings are in place prior to transfer;
- 5) To value Parish/Town Borough councillors more and provide opportunities to build relationships with designated Community Engineers;
- 6) Paving surfaces: to collectively look at uniformed surfaces;
- 7) Make consultations more meaningful and worthwhile; and
- 8) A further meeting be held with SCC Highways and Transport in six months.

External Joint Scrutiny

In June 2017, 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 7 June 2017, the Committee discussed the **West Suffolk Annual Report (2016-2017)** with the Leader of the Council. The report highlighted the key activities and developments which had been achieved over the financial year 2016-2017, with regard to the priorities set out in the West Suffolk Strategic Plan.

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.

Development of a New West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020

On 8 November 2017, the Committee received a report which sought its input into the development of a draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020. The strategic framework represented a revision of the existing West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2014-2016.

The report summarised the work which had been carried out so far on the development of a draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework for 2018-2020, which set out the aspirations and ambitious agenda for growth, housing and families and communities. The framework document included the councils' vision, priorities and key actions over the next two years, as well as ways of working.

Following recommendations made by the Committee, the draft West Suffolk Strategic Framework for 2018-2020 was approved by St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Councils Cabinet's and Council's in December 2017.

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

Cabinet Members who attended Overview and Scrutiny in 2017-2018

Following on from the first round of presentations from Cabinet Members during 2016-2017, Cabinet Members were invited back during 2017-2018 to update the Committee on progress made within their portfolio since they last attended Overview and Scrutiny. This year, prior to attending Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet members were provided with specific questions identified by committee members to be covered in their annual update.

Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action

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

Review of Past Year Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

	<p>Committee Members Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger Cllr Jane Midwood Cllr Karen Richardson Cllr David Roach Cllr Barry Robbins Cllr Andrew Smith Cllr Peter Thompson Vacancy</p> <p>Substitute Members Cllr Mary Evans Cllr Susan Glossop Vacancy Vacancy</p> <p>Councillor Sarah Broughton Committee Chairman</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 2017 to 31 May 2018) 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 2017-2018 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 2016-2017 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 2018-2019 budget before making recommendations to Cabinet.

This work commenced on 29 November 2017, with a report setting out progress made towards delivering a balanced budget for 2018-2019 and a sustainable budget in the medium term, and recommended to Cabinet inclusion of the proposals to progress securing a balanced budget for 2018-2019 and sustainable budget in the medium term to 2021.

A further report was scrutinised by the Committee on 31 January 2018 on a number of proposals/changes over and above those considered by Members in November 2017, all of which were incorporated into the Budget and Council Tax Setting report considered by Cabinet on 6 February 2018.

Performance Management

The Committee received on a quarterly basis the **West Suffolk Balanced Scorecards** being used to measure the Council's performance for the five Assistant Director's Service areas for 2017-2018 and an overview of performance against those indicators as well as the **West Suffolk Strategic Risk Register**.

Additionally, at its 27 July 2017 meeting, the Committee received the **Annual Performance Report for The Apex**.

Audit Responsibilities

Internal Audit

The Committee scrutinised the work of the **Internal Audit Team** towards achieving the 2017-2018 audit plan, with updates during the year at which the results of completed audits were discussed. At its 27 July 2017 meeting, the Committee approved an **Outline Internal Audit Plan for 2017-2018**.

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.

External Audit

Various reports from **Ernst and Young (EY)**, the Council's external auditors were considered over the year. On 25 May 2017 the **External Audit Plan and Fees 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 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 2016-2017 audit along with the planned fees to complete the work for 2016-2017, and also included indicative fees for 2017-2018. At the same meeting the **Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015-2016**, which set out the results of the certification work which had been undertaken as part of the annual audit of grant claims to government departments.

In September 2017 EY presented the **2016-2017 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 29 November 2017, EY presented the **2016-2017 Annual Audit Letter**, which confirmed the completion of the audit of the 2016-2017 financial statements.

At its meeting held on 31 January 2018, EY presented the **Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2016-2017**, and the **External Audit Plan and Fees for 2017-2018**.

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) 2016-2017** at its meeting on 25 May 2017, 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 31 May 2018, the Committee received the **Financial Outturn Report (Revenue and Capital) 2017-2018**, which included a financial commentary for the year.

The Committee scrutinised and approved the Council's **2016-2017 Annual Statement of Accounts** at its meeting on 20 September 2017. At the same meeting it scrutinised the External Auditors **2016-2017 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 2017 and January 2018), at which scrutiny of the **Investment Activity and Performance and Monitoring Reports (2017/2018)** the **Treasury Management Policy Statement and Investment Strategy Statements 2018-2019** 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 2018-2019

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
- Implementation of a Single Council for West Suffolk

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 2019-2020.

- Performance Management (*including West Suffolk Strategic Risk Management/Budget Monitoring/ Corporate Compliments and Complaints*)
- Development of a Sustainable Budget
- Internal and external audit
- Financial Performance Outturn - (Revenue and Capital)
- 2017-2018 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
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together

Approved by Council: XX July 2018

**For more information please contact the Democratic Services Officer
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