

Shadow Council



Title:	Leader's Statement	
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West Suffolk Future

1. There are fewer than 150 days to go to the creation of the new West Suffolk Council, and already we are seeing opportunities coming forward as well as Government and partners working with us in a new way. For instance, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Mayor has included links to Mildenhall and Haverhill in his aspirations for the new Metro. This reinforces what we have been arguing for some time, that West Suffolk is an important part of the Cambridge Sub-Region and Cambridge to Norwich tech corridor. I also reported at the last St Edmundsbury Council meeting how tourism is booming in the area bringing in millions of pounds of investment and jobs to West Suffolk. This is one of the main reasons we formed the new Council, to drive prosperity and investment in our economy. It was a pleasure to be at the Business Awards and Festival which showcased the amazing number of companies that call our area home as well as the innovation, skills and jobs they bring. Another great example of the way we support business and investment was the Get Ready for Growth event in Newmarket that we led on. Cllr Waters, who was a key speaker at the event, urged a packed house of businesses to seize the opportunity of than £1billion investment over the next five years at RAF Lakenheath, as well as the surrounding area. The future for West Suffolk Council, our communities and businesses is bright, and I am pleased to see the progress we have made and our vision becoming a reality.

Orders

2. We have some secondary legislation in parliament which sets out how everything transfers from Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury to the West Suffolk Council. This order has been drafted by Government lawyers and is referred to as a consequential order. It is expected to come into force this month (November) and will be useful for issuing formal notifications that West Suffolk Council is taking on responsibility from Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils.

Civic Leadership

3. Tonight we will be looking at the civic leadership of the new Council. I would like to thank everyone who has taken part in this. I know from our research no other council has looked at this in the detail we have, and the report in front of us has been a robust process looked at by councillors from across both councils and across parties. This is an in-depth and large report that has many views but what is clear is that our communities see civic leadership as vital in the new Council, in whatever form that takes. I look forward to the debate tonight to help shape the future of our new Council and how civic leadership may be delivered.

Councillor John Griffiths
Leader of the West Suffolk Shadow Council