

# Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Report of St Edmundsbury Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 31 October 2018</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>CAB/JT/18/047</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee</b>	11 December 2018
<b>Chairman of the Committee:</b>	Councillor Diane Hind Chairman of SEBC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee <b>Tel:</b> 01284 706542 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:diane.hind@stedsbcc.gov.uk">diane.hind@stedsbcc.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) <b>Tel:</b> 01638 719729 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk">christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	On 31 October 2018, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held an Extraordinary meeting, and considered the following item:  (1) Suffolk County Council Highways Services – Progress Report.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>The Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report CAB/JT/18/047, being the report of St Edmundsbury's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>  (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b><u>do not</u></b> apply.)	Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition? Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report for information only.	

<b>Consultation:</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
<b>Implications:</b>			
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</li> </ul>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Reports listed under background papers below</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)
See Reports listed under background papers below			
<b>Wards affected:</b>		All Wards	
<b>Background papers:</b>		Please see background papers, which are listed at the end of the report.	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		None	

## **1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation**

### **1.1 Suffolk County Council Highways Services – Progress Report (Report No: OAS/SE/18/029)**

- 1.1.1 On 25 October 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held an Extraordinary meeting to consider Highways Services. Councillor Jane Storey, the then (Substantive Cabinet Member for Highways), Councillor Louis Busuttil (Member with Special Responsibility for Highways Operational Performance) from Suffolk County Council and Jenny Wilson (Suffolk Highways - Head of Strategic Services), were in attendance 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. As an outcome from that meeting, the Committee made a number of recommendations to the Substantive Cabinet Member for Highways.
- 1.1.2 At this meeting, Councillor Mary Evans, the newly appointed Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs has been invited to update the Committee on progress made in relation to the previous recommendations, her achievements to date and aspirations for the future as the new Cabinet Member for Highways. Also in attendance was Kerry Allen (Principal Transport Planner) and John Clements (Head of Infrastructure Management) from Suffolk County Council (SCC).
- 1.1.3 The Cabinet Member acknowledged there had been some disconnection in the past in how highways had operated. However, since taking over the Cabinet post in late May 2018 with enthusiasm, a new Highways Improvement and Innovations Board had been established. Its first task was to look at the long standing issue of potholes. As part of that work the Board had identified a sample road with potholes and it was reviewing the process of reporting issues; the amount of time road gangs spent travelling to sites; and the number of pothole categories. It had been identified that the only way to gain efficiencies was to reduce the length of time spent on site by road gangs. Also the number of categories in repairing potholes had now been reduced down to three. The Board was also looking at:
- How to manage road closures more efficiently as over the summer months there had been more emergency road closures requested by Anglian Water than normal. Where road closures were in place, a notice should be displayed explaining who was doing the work.
  - Permits for road closures which would mean utility companies would have to apply to SCC for a permit. (Essex County Council was being used as an example).
  - Whether the public was receiving adequate advance notice of road closures and whether road diversions made sense; and
  - The whole grass cutting process.

- 1.1.4 Committee members then had an opportunity to ask questions and comment on what they had heard. Members discussed the new funding from central government; street lights; uneven roads; size of potholes; yellow boxes on roads; service level agreements with parish/town councils; the highways budget/how it was broken down; and a Chapter 8 initiative for working with parish/councils, communications, road gangs and poor workmanship, verge/grass cutting, Bury Town Centre Master Plan and Parkway Roundabout to which comprehensive responses were provided.
- 1.1.5 The Chairman stated there had been a definite improvement in the operation of Highways, and this was down to more direction, control, enthusiasm, and a more hands on approach by the Cabinet Member for Highways.
- 1.1.6 The Committee **Recommended** that the Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs be asked to give consideration to the following in that:
- 1) Highways officers follow the protocol for the reporting tool to ensure that replies reach the appropriate person;
  - 2) Highways officers actively monitors the poor workmanship of some road gangs;
  - 3) Suffolk County Council Highways seeks more combined working with District; Borough; Town and Parish councils.
  - 4) Suffolk County Council Highways feeds back to the West Suffolk Councils the results of their monitoring of the new roundabout at Parkway, Bury St Edmunds;
  - 5) The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs to be specifically included as an attendee to all future Bury Town Centre Master Plan meetings.

## **2. Background Papers**

- 2.1.1 Report No: [OAS/SE/18/029](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council Highways Services – Progress Report