

Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee



Title of Report:	Report of Forest Heath Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 8 November 2018	
Report No:	CAB/JT/18/049	
Report to and date:	Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee	11 December 2018
Chairman of the Committee:	Councillor Simon Cole Chairman of FHDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07974 443762 Email: simon.cole@forest-heath.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 2018, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) West Suffolk Housing Strategy and West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy; (2) Garden Waste Collection Service Review – Final Report; (3) Christmas Fayre Review – Final Report; (4) Universal Credit – Roll out in Forest Heath; (5) Annual Portfolio Holder Report – Operations; and (6) Work Programme. <p>A separate report is included on this agenda for Item (1) above.</p> <p>Items (2) and (3) above were considered by the</p>	

	Shadow Executive (Cabinet), at its meeting on 27 November 2018.		
Recommendation:	The Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report No: CAB/JT/18/049, being the report of Forest Heath's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.		
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <u>do not</u> 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 West Suffolk Housing Strategy and West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy (Report No: OAS/FH/18/029)

- 1.1.1 The Committee received the draft West Suffolk Housing Strategy and the draft West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy, which were attached as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to Report No: OAS/FH/18/029.
- 1.1.2 A review of the West Suffolk Housing Strategy (Appendix 1), is due in 2018. By adopting the new Strategy, the Council is aligning its priorities for housing with the Strategic Framework 2018-2020 and responding to new legislation and additional duties such as the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the revised National Planning Policy Framework 2018. The Housing Strategy has been the subject of public and stakeholder consultations through a workshop and online survey.
- 1.1.3 A review of the West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy (Appendix 2) is due in 2018. The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy that outlines how councils and registered providers approach issues which affect tenants living in their area. The Tenancy Strategy has been the subject of public and stakeholder consultation through an online survey.
- 1.1.4 The Committee examined the documents in detail and asked a number of questions, to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on rough sleepers/homelessness and bring empty homes back into use (privately owned and registered providers).
- 1.1.5 The Committee did not suggest any amendments to the draft West Suffolk Housing Strategy or the draft West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy.

1.2 Introduction of Universal Credit Full Service in the Forest Heath Area (Report No: OAS/FH/18/030)

- 1.2.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/18/030, to update and inform members of the Council's preparation for the implementation of the Universal Credit (UC) Full Service in the Forest Heath Area.
- 1.2.2 Forest Heath will go live with UC Full Service on 12 December 2018. With the learning from the St Edmundsbury roll out, the plan is to replicate the arrangements in place with the wider partners (through the existing monthly forum) and to accept the support on offer via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) own 26 week pre-launch programme (through liaison with the DWP Relationship Manager).
- 1.2.3 The report also included information on learning from the St Edmundsbury implementation; observations from the Anglia Revenues Partnership, the Housing Options Team, Havebury Housing and the Citizens Advice; considerations and plans for the Forest Heath roll out and what's been done so far to prepare.
- 1.2.4 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which comprehensive responses were provided.

In particular the Committee raised concerns regarding the Government announcement to change the way that funding was being awarded to local authorities, and suggested the council makes representation to the Government because of the following:

- 1) The way the decision was communicated (unexpected with no early warnings/consultation with any of the key agencies, including the DWP.
- 2) The impact the removal of the funding from the council would have on capacity and our ongoing ability to support UC customers.
- 3) In West Suffolk the council already had in place arrangements with the CAB which worked well, and the recent decision could potentially pose a risk to that working relationship.

In response, officers confirmed they could write to the minister, but would continue to monitor the support it provided to UC claimants and potential claimants.

- 1.2.5 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the contents of the report, in particular the learning from the St Edmundsbury roll-out and **noted** the support and advice available to residents and councillors.

1.3 **Annual Report by the Cabinet Member for Operations (Report No: OAS/FH/18/033)**

- 1.3.1 The Cabinet Member for Operations, Councillor David Bowman was invited back to give an annual update on his portfolio. Report No: OAS/FH/18/033 set out the focus for the annual update.
- 1.3.2 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.
- 1.3.3 The Cabinet Member thanked the Committee for the invitation to address the Committee.
- 1.3.4 The Committee asked a number of follow-up questions relating to markets, to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the make-over and relocation of Newmarket's market to the high street, which had been an overwhelming success.
- 1.3.5 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the annual update.

1.4 **Work Programme Update (Report No: OAS/FH/18/034)**

- 1.4.1 The Committee received and **noted** Report No: OAS/FH/18/034, which provided an update on the current status of the Committee's Work Programme for 2019.
- 1.4.2 The report also requested that Members identify questions they would like the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture to cover in their annual report to the Committee on 10 January 2019.

2. Background Papers

- 2.2.1 Report No: [OAS/FH/18/030](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Introduction of Universal Credit Full Service in the Forest Heath Area
- 2.2.2 Report No: [OAS/FH/18/033](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report by the Cabinet Member for Operations
- 2.2.3 Report No: [OAS/FH/18/034](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update