

Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together

Title of Report:	Recommendations of the St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath Overview and Scrutiny Committees: 7 and 8 November 2018 - West Suffolk Housing Strategy and West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy 2018 - 2023	
Report No:	CAB/JT/18/051	
	Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee	11 December 2018
	St Edmundsbury Council <i>(West Suffolk Housing Strategy only)</i>	18 December 2018
	Forest Heath Council <i>(West Suffolk Housing Strategy only)</i>	19 December 2018
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Purpose of report:	<p>On 7 and 8 November 2018, the SEBC and FHDC Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered Report No: OAS/SE/18/030, OAS/FH/18/029, Appendix 1, Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, Appendix D, Appendix 2.</p> <p>(1) West Suffolk Housing Strategy</p> <p>A review of West Suffolk’s Housing Strategy is due in 2018. By adopting this new Strategy we are aligning our 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.</p> <p>(2) West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy</p> <p>A review of West Suffolk’s Tenancy Strategy 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.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>It is recommended that:-</p> <p>1. Subject to the approval of both St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath Councils, the West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2018-2023, attached as Appendix 1 to Report No: CAB/JT/18/051, be adopted.</p>

	2. The West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy 2018-2023, attached as Appendix 2 to Report No: CAB/JT/18/051 be adopted.		
	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"/>		
<i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. These items are included on the Decisions Plan.</i>			
Consultation:		See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029 and further information contained within this report.	
Alternative option(s):		See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029	
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 Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029			
Ward(s) affected:		All wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		St Edmundsbury Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 7 November 2018 Report No: OAS/SE/18/030 (West Suffolk Housing Strategy) Appendix 1 ; Appendix A ; Appendix B ; Appendix C ; Appendix E	

	<p>(West Suffolk Tenancy Strategy) Appendix 2</p> <p><u>Forest Heath Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 8 November 2018</u> Report No: OAS/FH/18/029 (Appendices as per the St Edmundsbury Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 November 2018)</p>
Documents attached:	<p>Appendix 1: Draft Housing Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix A: Housing tenure - Appendix B: Evidence base - Appendix C: Implementation plan - Appendix D: Equality analysis <p>Appendix 2: Draft Tenancy Strategy</p>

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

(1) Housing Strategy

- 1.1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees received Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029 which informed Members that a review of West Suffolk's Housing Strategy was due in 2018. Through the review the opportunity has been taken to reflect priorities, actions and projects set out in the Strategic Framework 2018-2020. Furthermore, there are a number of additional duties and fundamental changes to housing legislation that have been reflected in the Housing Strategy.
- 1.1.2 It was no longer a legal requirement for a local authority to have a Housing Strategy in place. However, it was recognised that a strategic overview is necessary in order to set out how we plan to address the housing challenges we are facing and to provide a range of housing options for the growing need for a range of quality housing in West Suffolk.
- 1.1.3 Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029 provided an overview of progress against the Housing Strategy that covered the period from 2015 to 2018. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees requested figures for the number of affordable houses delivered in towns and in the rural areas, which has been incorporated in the evidence base at Appendix B.

Consultation

- 1.1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered the Housing Strategy while the consultation was still ongoing, detail about which can be found in Report Nos: OAS/SE/18/030 and OAS/FH/18/029. The Committees requested that further information relating to the consultation be submitted to Cabinet once it had concluded, as set out below:
- 1.1.5 The formal consultation took place for a six week period between 9 October and 20 November 2018. It involved an online survey available on our webpages which was sent directly to Members, parish councils and a number of our partners.
- 1.1.6 There were a total of 31 responses to the online consultation and three responses submitted by letter which were received from: local residents, partner organisations (including community and voluntary groups), registered providers, housing developers, agents, parish councils and neighbouring local authorities. A focus group with young people also took place.
- 1.1.7 There was strong support for the three priorities that we are proposing in the Housing Strategy, together with the actions.
- 1.1.8 A number of themes emerged during the consultation mainly around the following themes:
- The need for infrastructure and services to support growth.

- The need for social and affordable housing in the towns and rural areas which is appropriate for local needs.
- Providing accessible properties to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and those with additional needs.
- Providing sufficient housing in the right places to ensure that local people can find suitable employment.

Implementation Plan

- 1.1.9 The points raised during the consultation have been addressed through our robust implementation plan. However, the actions in the implementation plan have been further developed and refined during the consultation period.
- 1.1.10 An implementation plan that accompanies the Housing Strategy has been developed so that we can deliver against the priorities and actions set out in the strategy.

(2) Tenancy Strategy

- 2.1.1 A review of West Suffolk's Tenancy Strategy was due in 2018. The Localism Act 2011 required all local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy that outlines how councils and Registered Providers (RPs) approach issues which affect tenants living in their area. This Tenancy Strategy updated the previous strategy that ran from 2012-2018 and incorporates all applicable changes from updated legislation.
- 2.1.2 Through the Tenancy Strategy we seek to work with RPs to provide good quality housing where successful tenancies can be sustained. The strategy was intended to promote quality and fairness and to offer a guide to RPs who may manage stock within West Suffolk. While we no longer own our own housing stock, having transferred them to Flagship Housing Group and Havebury Housing Partnership, we still have an interest in how these properties and other properties owned by other RPs are managed for the residents of West Suffolk.

Consultation

- 2.1.3 The formal consultation took place for a six week period between 9 October and 20 November 2018. It involved an online survey available on our webpages and has been sent directly to a number of our partners.
- 2.1.4 There were only three responses received, two from registered providers and one from a resident. There was general support for the principles set out in the strategy, with all respondents agreeing that the maximum affordable rents being charged should be capped at the local housing allowance level. We are still in the process of collecting the necessary monitoring data from some of the registered providers who did not respond to the consultation which will be added to the strategy once received and monitored on an annual basis moving forward.