

Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Report of Forest Heath Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 10 January 2019	
Report No:	CAB/JT/19/002	
Report to and dates:	Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee	22 January 2019
Chairman of 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 10 January 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Annual Report by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture. (2) Customer Access Strategy 2019-2022. (3) Car Parking Update. (4) Work Programme Update. <p>A separate report and recommendations in relation to Item (2) above will be considered by the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) at its meeting on 5 February 2019.</p>	
Recommendation:	<p>The Joint Executive Cabinet Committee is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the content of Report No: CAB/JT/19/002, being the report of Forest Heath's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and in particular, the request for Cabinet to closely monitor the financial sustainability and delivery of the action plan for Brandon Country Park</p>	

		following the transfer of the freehold from Suffolk County Council.	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not 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			
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		Please see list of background papers provided at the end of this report	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Annual report by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture (Report No: OAS/FH/19/001)

1.1.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/19/001, being the annual report by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture.

1.1.2 Prior to the meeting, the Cabinet Member had been asked by the Committee to provide answers to key questions, related to Brandon Country Park. In consequence, the Cabinet Member had provided the Committee with the 10 year action plan for the Park, which had been developed following the transfer of the freehold from Suffolk County Council to Forest Heath Council during the year.

1.1.3 The Committee asked a range of questions to the Cabinet Member relating to the risk assessments undertaken on the Park; staff health and safety training; provision of car parking; and work undertaken to market and attract visitors to the park, which is critical to working towards a financially break-even position on the site.

1.1.4 In conclusion, the Committee welcomed the Action Plan and were supportive of the work undertaken at the Country Park since the transfer of the freehold. Recognising the importance of developing financial sustainability at the site, the Committee specifically requested that Cabinet continue to closely monitor the performance against the action plan and achieving increased income in future.

1.2 **Customer Access Strategy (Report No: OAS/FH/19/002)**
(This item will be subject to a separate report and recommendations for consideration by the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) on 5 February 2019. However, a summary of the discussions by the Committee are set out below for information).

1.2.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/19/002 which set out the Customer Access Strategy for 2019-2022.

1.2.2 The Committee welcomed the success achieved in encouraging customers to channel-shift towards contacting the Council digitally, which had achieved savings of over £125,000 per annum. Members of the Committee were reassured to hear that the Council recognised the importance of ensuring that a full range of options for customers to access the Council is maintained, to support those who could not access digital services or had more complex needs.

1.2.3 The Committee also noted that there had been a decrease in the overall number of people seeking to access the Council. Officers reassured members that this had not led to an increase in contact for other service providers in Suffolk, and is likely due to customers being able to find answers on the Council's website.

1.3 **Car Parking Update (Report No: OAS/FH/19/003)**

- 1.3.1 The Committee considered Report No: OAS/FH/19/003. Councillor David Bowman was in attendance to present the report and highlighted that it was pleasing to note that use of the car parks in Newmarket had increased, even though income had fallen, mainly as a result of shorter stays in car parks. Usage of the Ringo service has increased by 41% year-on-year.
- 1.3.2 The Committee raised concern regarding the Grosvenor Yard Car Park. There has been considerable development work undertaken in close proximity work to the site which has meant that it has not been feasible to undertake much needed resurfacing work on the site. It was confirmed that work is being undertaken with Suffolk County Council to consider access through the site and that it was hoped the necessary action would be undertaken on the Car Park once Anglian Water had undertaken their work, which was hoped to be completed at the end of the next quarter.
- 1.3.3 The Committee raised further concern about illegal parking throughout the District, particularly in Newmarket and Brandon. Frustration at the delay in implementing Criminal Parking Enforcement (CPE) was expressed, which may resolve this. The Committee requested further information relating to the costs associated with enforcement action in the Council's Car Parks.
- 1.3.4 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the report.

1.4 **Work Programme Update (Report No: OAS/FH/19/004)**

- 1.4.1 The Committee received the Work Programme as set out in Report No: OAS/FH/19/004. At their final meeting, it was noted that the Committee will consider a close-out report on the Home of Horseracing and receive a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources.
- 1.4.2 The Committee specifically requested that the new West Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee, once formed, gives consideration to scrutinising the future business plan for Barley Homes.

2. Background Papers

- 2.1 [Report No: OAS/FH/19/001](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture
- 2.2 [Report No: OAS/FH/19/002](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Customer Access Strategy 2019-2022
- 2.3 [Report No: OAS/FH/19/003](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Car Parking Update
- 2.4 [Report No: OAS/FH/19/004](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update