

West Suffolk Councils' Annual Report 2018/2019

Report No:	CAB/WS/19/014	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	23 July 2019
Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Griffiths Leader of the Council Tel: 01284 757136 Email: john.griffiths@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Davina Howes Assistant Director (Families and Communities) Tel: 01284 757070 Email: davina.howes@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
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"/>	
<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. This item is not included on the Decisions Plan.</i>		

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: It is **RECOMMENDED** that the West Suffolk Councils' Annual Report 2018/2019, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/WS/19/014, be approved.

1. Background / Context

- 1.1 The West Suffolk Councils' Annual Report highlights the key activities and developments that have been achieved over the financial year 2018-2019, with regard to the priorities set out in the West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020.
- 1.2 This is the last annual report of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council working together as West Suffolk Councils. It reports retrospectively on our achievements over the financial year 2018-19, and therefore refers to the 'councils' throughout. In 2019-20 we look forward to presenting the first annual report for West Suffolk Council.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Annual Report on 13 June 2019 (Report No: OAS/WS/19/002).
- 1.4 The following amendments were recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The amendments have also been reflected in the attached version of the annual report:
 - Page 32, add a section under 'Parks and green spaces' to highlight the work we do to encourage biodiversity in our parks.
 - Page 50, rewording of the section under 'Anglia Revenues Partnership' relating to Universal Credit.
- 1.5 As part of our strategic communications improvements this Annual Report has been designed to help bring some of the examples to life. As may be expected in looking back at what we have done, much of the examples have been communicated or used in the media. We will continue to report on our good work and have communications campaigns around the report. This will include creating films, infographics and animations that all can be used throughout the year on social media as part of a co-ordinated campaign and messaging.
- 1.6 The information will be presented on our web pages. It allows us to tell a range of audiences in a number of ways what we have been and are doing. Opportunities to publicise this good work in public areas such as libraries and health centres will also be used.
- 1.7 We will continue to put this information out in the media as well as posting, where appropriate, in community social media groups. This will be done throughout the year and examples used repeatedly, when appropriate, to highlight our priorities and other initiatives. In this way, the report and its messages will be seen by far more people than we either send it to or come to our website.



2. Proposals

- 2.1 It is good practice for local authorities to produce an annual report. It is a way of keeping our residents informed about our activities and how they contribute to our wider strategic priorities for the West Suffolk area.
- 2.2 The draft report contains a number of case studies and examples from West Suffolk to illustrate the achievements described. These have been carefully drawn from a range of localities, urban and rural locations, and service areas, in order to demonstrate the range of activities undertaken by the council. In some cases, initiatives were only focused on one specific area, however, some examples are necessarily drawn from these localities.

3. Alternative options

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not produce an annual report. However, it is good practice for councils to report on progress against their priorities in this way and ensures transparency on how they spend public money. The report also reflects the excellent work which has been delivered across West Suffolk.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Annual Report summarises progress in achieving the priorities set out in the 2018-2020 Strategic Framework which was informed by feedback from residents, business and stakeholders.

5. Risks

- 5.1 Misunderstanding of the role of the report (for example it can only give highlights of West Suffolk councils' activities, not every action taken). This will be mitigated by developing a communications plan to clearly explain the role of the report.

6. Implications arising from the proposal

- 6.1 Equalities - The Annual Report covers evidence to support the achievement of the equality objectives from the Strategic Framework 2018-2020.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 **Appendix A** – West Suffolk Councils' Annual Report 2018/2019.

8. Background documents

- 8.1 [West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020](#).

