

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 12 March 2020

Report No:	CAB/WS/20/029	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	24 March 2020
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor David Nettleton Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 01284 702212 Email: david.nettleton@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
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Decisions Plan: This item is not included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: **It is recommended that Report No: CAB/WS/20/029, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.**

1. Background / Context

1.1 On 12 March 2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:

1. Registered Provider of Social Housing (Havebury Partnership);
2. West Suffolk Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2018-2023: Year 1 Review;
3. Suffolk Cross-Authority Task and Finish Group - Citizens Advice (Final Report);
4. Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee – 21 January 2020;
5. Decisions Plan: 1 March 2020 to 31 May 2020; and
6. Work Programme Update 2020.

1.2 Registered Provider of Social Housing (Havebury Partnership) (Report No: OAS/WS/20/004) and Presentation

1.2.1 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Executive; Anita Jones, Director of Operations and Scott Bailey, Director of Development from Havebury Housing Partnership had been invited to the meeting as a significant stockholder in this area to give an overview on the following topics:

- development pipelines for the West Suffolk area including rural sites;
- single/shared accommodation for under 25s;
- housing tenure, particularly the provision of social rent;
- affordability checks and supporting people to maintain tenancies;
- joint working with West Suffolk Council; and
- provision of housing for older people and policy to support people who would like to move.

1.2.2 The presentation covered the above topics as well as setting out the background to Havebury Housing and its journey; its Corporate Plan 2018-2022 which was currently being refreshed; its objectives; current and future developments; strategic opportunities (new older person strategy; new homelessness strategy and new community investment strategy).

1.2.3 Following the presentation, discussions and responses were provided on the following:

- property refurbishments and community spaces;
- climate change and renewables;
- new builds for older people and issues around homes for life;
- homes which are more dementia friendly;
- fly-tipping on housing estates;
- rangers working in the community;
- the affordability of housing for younger people;
- the need for suitable accommodation for people moving on;
- electric vehicles and the provision of charging points on housing estates in the future;
- service charges and how they are decided;
- social challenges over the next 20 years; and
- the percentage of houses with solid/cavity walls.

- 1.2.4 In response to a question raised regarding estate walk-arounds which used to include ward members, Havebury confirmed these still took place with its tenants and these could be opened up and extended to other organisations, including ward members.
- 1.2.5 The Committee thanked Mr Andrew Smith and his colleagues for attending the meeting, and **resolved** that:
1. Havebury Housing Partnership be invited back to a future meeting of the Committee, once the following three Strategies had been progressed:
 - i. Older Persons Strategy;
 - ii. Homelessness Strategy; and
 - iii. Community Investment Strategy
 2. Flagship Housing be invited to a future meeting of the Committee.

1.3 West Suffolk Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2018-2023: Year 1 Review (Report No: OAS/WS/20/005)

- 1.3.1 The Committee scrutinised the West Suffolk Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2018-2023. The West Suffolk Housing Strategy was adopted in 2018 and the implementation plan had been regularly monitored since it was adopted to ensure that progress was being made and tasks remained relevant.
- 1.3.2 The Committee considered the implementation plan attached as Appendix A to the report, which contained detailed information on progress made since its adoption, along with some challenges which were being addressed.
- 1.3.3 Discussions were held on Homes for Life and what was being built for older people; the development of an affordable housing guide for parish/town councils; the transference of the Home-Link housing register system to another provider; houses in multiple occupation and emergency/temporary accommodation; 30% affordable housing; s106 agreements; and homelessness prevention and reduction to which comprehensive responses were provided.
- 1.3.4 The Committee commended officers in the number of empty homes which had been brought back into use in 2019-2020 and suggested this should be publicised as a positive news story.
- 1.3.4 The Committee **noted** the progress made against the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan, and further **resolved** that a future report be presented to the Committee on Homes for Life on what was being built for older people.

1.4 Suffolk Cross-Authority Task and Finish Group - Citizens Advice (Final Report) (Report No: OAS/WS/20/006)

- 1.4.1 The Committee received the above report setting out the findings and recommendations from the Suffolk Cross-Authority Task and Finish Group (Citizens Advice) (the Group).
- 1.4.2 In December 2019 the Group held three sessions. At the first session the Group received an extensive presentation by Citizens Advice Chief Officers which dealt with value; impacts and funding. The second session involved interested parties and representatives from authorities, primarily concerned with impacts and involvement in funding. The final session was a discussion period with members of the Group on all aspects.
- 1.4.3 The Group established three points as crucial from the start: The Service Value; the Impacts on Other Authorities; and the Future Funding of Citizens Advice in Suffolk.
- 1.4.4 The Committee considered the report and recommendations (primarily for Suffolk County Council's consideration) and asked questions to which responses were provided by the Chair of the Committee. In particular, discussions were held on the CAB's consumer phone service.
- 1.4.5 There being no decision required to be made by the West Suffolk Council, the Committee **noted** the contents of the report.

1.5 Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee – 21 January 2020 (Report No: OAS/WS/20/007)

- 1.5.1 The Committee received a report prepared by Councillor Margaret Marks setting out what was considered at its meeting held on 21 January 2020. The focus of the meeting was to scrutinise:
- Progress made to transform the arrangements for the commissioning and delivery of sexual and reproductive health services in Suffolk; and
 - Receive an update on non-emergency patient transport in Suffolk.
- 1.5.2 The Committee considered the report and asked questions on the above topics, to which Councillor Margaret Marks provided comprehensive responses.
- 1.5.3 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the contents of the report.

1.6 Decisions Plan: 1 March to 31 May 2020 (Report No: OAS/WS/20/008)

- 1.6.1 The Committee considered the latest version of the Cabinet Decisions Plan, covering the period 1 March 2020 to 31 May 2020. Members reviewed the Decisions Plan and did not raise any issues.

1.6.2 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the contents of the latest Decisions Plan.

1.7 Work Programme Update 2020 (Report No: OAS/WS/20/009)

1.7.1 The Committee received Report No: OAS/WS/20/009, which provided information on the current status of its forward work programme for 2020.

1.7.2 The Committee **noted** the contents of its forward work programme for June 2020.

3. Alternative Options

3.1 Please see background papers.

4. Consultation and engagement

4.1 Please see background papers.

5. Risks

5.1 Please see background papers.

6. Implications arising from the proposal

6.1 Financial

Please see background papers.

6.2 Equalities

Please see background papers.

7. Appendices

7.1 Please see background papers.

8. Background documents

8.1 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/004](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Registered Provider of Social Housing (Havebury Partnership)

8.2 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/005](#) and [Appendix A](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: West Suffolk Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2018-2023: Year 1 Review

8.3 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/006](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk Cross-Authority Task and Finish Group - Citizens Advice (Final Report)

8.4 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/007](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council: Health Scrutiny Committee – 21 January 2020

- 8.5 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/008](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Decisions Plan 1 March 2020 to 31 May 2020
- 8.6 Report No: [OAS/WS/20/009](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update 2020