

Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 26 January 2023

Report number:	CAB/WS/23/004	
Report to and date(s):	Cabinet	7 February 2023
Cabinet member:	Councillor Sarah Broughton Portfolio Holder for Resources and Property Telephone: 07929 305787 Email: sarah.broughton@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Ian Houlder Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee Telephone: 07597 961069 Email: ian.houlder@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
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Decisions Plan: This item is not required to be included in the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All Wards.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Report number: CAB/WS/23/004, being the report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

1. Context to this report

1.1 On 26 January 2023, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:

1. Delivering a sustainable medium-term budget
2. 2022 to 2023 performance report (quarter 3)
3. Treasury management report (December 2022)
4. Annual financial resilience management and investment strategy statements 2023 to 2024
5. Work programme update

Separate reports are included on the Cabinet agenda for Items 1, 3 and 4 above.

2. Proposals within this report

2.1 **2022 to 2023 performance report (Quarter 3) (Report number: PAS/WS/23/002)**

2.1.1 The Committee received report number PAS/WS/23/002, which set out income recovery, Quarter 3 performance and the forecast 2022 to 2023 revenue and capital positions.

2.1.2 The COVID-19 outbreak had had a significant impact on the Council's financial position. Whilst the Council was now in the process of recovering from the pandemic, the effects were likely to be felt for years to come. In addition, the cost-of-living crisis, which the Ukraine War had exacerbated, was not only impacting on communities and businesses, but also adversely putting pressure on the Council's budgets. All of these elements, as well as national public behavioural changes in travel, shopping and working created by these issues, had had an adverse impact on businesses, retail and public services nationally.

2.1.3 For 2022 to 2023 the central government funding which had helped to partly mitigate the effects of the pandemic, such as the Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation and the COVID-19 Support Grant were no longer available, meaning the council had to make provision to fully cover any reduced income and increased costs from within its own budgets.

2.1.4 Attached to the Quarter 3 performance and year-end-financial outturn position for 2022 to 2023 were a number of appendices as follows:

- Appendix A: Key Performance Indicator Dashboards
- Appendix B: Income and expenditure report
- Appendix C: Capital programme
- Appendix D: Earmarked reserves
- Appendix E: Strategic risk register

- Exempt Appendix F: Aged debt over 90 days
- Appendix G: Performance monitoring mechanisms for grass cutting
- Appendix H: Oversight of registered providers of housing
- Appendix I: The role of the council with regard to Houses in Multiple Occupation, and issues such as hot-bedding
- Appendix J: Performance monitoring of housing options and homelessness

2.1.5 The Chief Executive drew the Committee's attention to a number of KPIs as follows:

- Fuel and gas use:
- Car parking:
- Universal Credit claimants:
- Housing and homelessness:
- Houses in Multiple Occupation:
- Governance:
- Toggam farm:
- Recycling:
- Grass cutting.

The Chief Executive explained that in response to a request at its previous meeting, officers had reviewed the colours used in the dashboard to increase the contrast, and these were set out on page 9 of the dashboard.

Update notes were also requested on a number of topics, and these were attached at appendices G to J.

2.1.6 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on strategic health and dentistry; fly-tipping incidence and vacant shops.

2.1.7 Detailed discussions were also held on Voter ID for elections. The Committee was informed the Council had received funding from the New Burdens fund to help with Voter ID. Information had been sent to all councillors to promote Voter ID. An article would be published in members news on the engagement plan for Voter ID; for example, providing a leaflet on the requirement for Voter ID to be included with Council Tax billing. Material was also available from the Electoral Commission.

2.1.8 At the conclusion of the discussions, the Committee **noted** the forecast 2022 to 2023 revenue and capital positions as detailed in Report number PAS/WS/23/002 and attached appendices.

2.2 **Work programme update (Report number: PAS/WS/23/003)**

2.2.1 The Committee received Report number PAS/WS/23/003, which provided information on the current status of its forward work programme for 2023.

2.2.3 The Director (Resources and Property) informed the Committee that its meeting on 8 March 2023 to consider the Statement of Accounts would need to be rescheduled. The Director would liaise with the Chair of Performance and Audit Scrutiny to identify a suitable date in April 2023. Ernst and Young had started some of its audit work on the Accounts but would not be able to complete all the work by the 8 March 2023 meeting.

2.2.2 The Committee **noted** the work programme update and the meeting on 8 March 2023 would be rescheduled to be held sometime in April 2023.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

3.1 Please see background papers.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

4.1 Please see background papers.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

5.1 Please see background papers.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

6.1 Financial – Please see background papers.

6.2 Equalities – Please see background papers.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

7.1 Please see background papers.

8. Background documents associated with this report

8.1 Report number: [PAS/WS/23/002](#) and , Appendices [A](#), [B](#), [C](#), [D](#), [E](#), [G](#), [H](#), [H-A](#), [I](#) and [J](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 2022 to 2023 Performance Report – Quarter 3

8.2 Report number: [PAS/WS/23/003](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update