

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 21 September 2023

Report number:	CAB/WS/23/048	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	14 November 2023
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Councillor Sarah Broughton Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Telephone: 07929 305787 Email: sarah.broughton@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/23/048, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

1. Context to this report

1.1 On 21 September 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:

1. Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Monitoring Report (April 2022 to March 2023)
2. Modern Slavery Update
3. CCTV at West Suffolk Council
4. Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee: 12 July 2023
5. Suffolk County Council Police and Crime Panel: 14 July 2023
6. Cabinet Decisions Plan: 1 September 2023 to 31 May 2024
7. Work programme update 2023 and Suggestions for Scrutiny.

2. Proposals within this report

2.1 **Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Monitoring Report (April 2022 to March 2023) (Report number: OAS/WS/23/012)**

2.1.1 It was the duty of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee designated under the Police and Justice Act 2006, to scrutinise the work of the Partnership.

2.1.2 The report was presented to the Committee by Councillor Derek Davis, Chair of the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership at the time of the reporting period. Councillor Donna Higgins, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities was also in attendance.

2.1.3 Over the past year the WSCSP continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by carrying out an assessment of crime and disorder in the area, delivering a three-year plan and action plan to reflect the priorities of the partnership, and undertaking Domestic Homicide Reviews. The WSCSP action plan was reviewed throughout the year and were appropriate was updated to reflect emerging issues and trends.

2.1.4 Based on the outcomes of partnership discussions, the following priorities remained the focus of the WSCSP:

- Criminal exploitation;
- Violence against women and girls;
- Modern slavery;
- Hate Crime;
- Prevent; and
- Anti-social behaviour.

2.1.5 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which comprehensive responses were provided. Discussions were held on the meaning of "Channel;" PREVENT; modern slavery in the

context of how prevalent it was in West Suffolk and in what areas; where the main criminal exploitation hubs were across Suffolk; what was being done to address right-wing radicalisation and gang culture; and the allocation of funding.

2.1.6 The Committee **noted** the contents of the report subject to comments made during the meeting and requests for further information.

2.2 **Modern Slavery Update (Report number: OAS/WS/23/013)**

2.2.1 The Committee received and **noted** the above report, which had been an item in the Committee's forward work programme since November 2020, and had not been considered during that time due to the fact that local authorities were awaiting further guidance from central government relating to the preparation and publication of Modern Slavery Statements.

2.2.2 In September 2020, the Home Office had announced that changes would be made to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act 2015, including new reporting requirements for Modern Slavery statements. As of August 2023, this guidance had not been published. Organisations were therefore being advised by government to continue to report under the current requirements. To support councils to meet their duties, in early 2023 the Local Government Association (LGA) published guidance and a matrix which sets out the ideal standards in local authority modern slavery provision.

2.2.3 Appendix A attached to the report provided an assessment of how the council measured up against these standards. Members were asked to note that the LGA guidance was written to support unitary and upper tier authorities, as well as district councils. Therefore, in some instances Suffolk County Council was the more appropriate lead authority, with support from West Suffolk Council.

2.2.4 The Committee considered the report and asked questions to which responses were provided. At the conclusion of discussions, the Chair of the Committee suggested the working group set up in November 2020 should be disbanded at this point, and if it felt necessary in the future the Committee could establish a working group, which was agreed as a sensible way forward.

2.3 **CCTV at West Suffolk Council (Presentation)**

2.3.1 The Committee received and **noted** a presentation by the Cabinet Member for Operations, which provided an overview of the council's CCTV service, including the services provided, staffing, costs and income, incidents, arrests and equipment, including Hikvision cameras.

- 2.3.2 The CCTV service was responsible for monitoring over 700 cameras across West Suffolk and some in neighbouring areas. West Suffolk Council had 557 fixed cameras in Brandon; Mildenhall; Newmarket; Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds. These were located in parks; car parks; housing accommodation; sports pavilions; bus stations; toilet blocks; leisure centres; depots; town centres; West Suffolk House; Mildenhall Hub and West Suffolk Operational Hub. Three mobile cameras had also been purchased that could be deployed to areas with an identified crime or anti-social behaviour issue.
- 2.3.3 Hikvision was used because it was a technically superior product; HD quality and optical zoom ability; and was much more reliable compared to other manufactures that the council had used. Hikvision also offered their own encoding format which had reduced the council's data storage requirements by up to 50% and were significantly cheaper than their competitors. None of the council's cameras were directly connected to the internet and were all on a closed network behind firewalls and VPNs. The systems had been penetration tested by the council's third-party ethical hackers within the last year and had passed the hacker's test. Central servers storing data were vulnerability scanned on a weekly basis and patched monthly. The council adhered to the Government Surveillance Camera Code of Practice; secure system installation; storage of data and General Data Protection Regulations / Data Protection.
- 2.3.4 The Committee scrutinised the presentation in detail and asked questions to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular detailed discussions were held on whether the coverage of the cameras was adequate; whether there were enough cameras as unable to monitor in real time; whether staffing levels were adequate to operate the system 24/7, 365 days a year; the location of cameras; body worn cameras; and the replacement of cameras.
- 2.3.5 At the conclusion of the debate, the Chair felt when the current Hikvision cameras needed replacing/broken they were replaced by another provider to ensure the council was future proofing itself. In response it was reiterated how reliable the Chinese made cameras were. The council was awaiting further advice from Government and the current cameras were approved by the British Standards and Surveillance Division, the system was set behind an American manufactured firewall and VPNs, and members were reassured the council was doing everything required.
- 2.4 **Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee: 12 July 2023 (Report number: OAS/WS/23/14)**
- 2.4.1 The Committee received and **noted** the above report presented by Councillor Sue Perry, substitute member on the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee, on behalf of Councillor Andrew Martin.

Attached at Appendix 1 and 2 of Councillor Martin's report was a summary of topics discussed at the Health Scrutiny meeting held on 12 July 2023, being:

- Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation NHS Trust Mental Health Services Provision; and
- NHS dentistry provision.

2.42 Councillor Perry also updated the Committee on the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Trust mortality rates over the last five years, focusing on reported deaths, which was more difficult for mental health. A report was published in July 2023, and had been referred to the Health Ombudsman which had now led to a statutory public enquiry taking place.

2.4.3 The Committee considered the report and requested that it be kept up to date on progress with dentistry provision.

2.5 **Suffolk County Council Police and Crime Panel: 14 July 2023 (Report number: OAS/WS/23/015)**

2.5.1 The Committee received and **noted** the above report and Appendix 1, presented by Councillor Mike Chester, one of the council's appointed representatives on the Suffolk County Council Police and Crime Panel. This was the first time the Committee had received such a report from the Police and Crime Panel and was a way for Committee members to make comments, as appropriate for the appointed representative to then present back to the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel for its consideration.

2.5.2 Councillor Chester set out the context and role of the Police and Crime Panel which was there to act as a critical friend to the Police and Crime Commissioner. He went on to explain the Crime Panel on 14 July 2023 scrutinised the effectiveness of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions by review actions he had taken under objective four of the Police and Crime Plan 2022 to 2025, "work in partnership to improve criminal justice outcomes and enhance community safety".

2.5.3 The Committee considered the report and asked questions to which responses were provided. In response to a question raised on the turnover of police officers which was increasing, Councillor Chester advised this issue was discussed at the Panels meeting in July, which it would continue to monitor.

2.6 **Cabinet Decisions Plan: 1 September 2023 to 31 May 2024 (Report number: OAS/WS/23/016)**

2.6.1 The Committee reviewed the latest version of the Cabinet Decisions Plan, covering the period 1 September 2023 to 31 May 2024.

2.6.2 The Committee considered the Decisions Plan and did not request any further information on items contained in the Plan.

2.7 **Work programme update 2023 and Suggestions for Scrutiny (Report number: OAS/WS/23/017)**

2.7.1 The Committee received report number OAS/WS/23/017, which updated Members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items at attached at Appendix 1.

2.7.2 The Committee **noted** the current states of its rolling work programme.

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: [OAS/WS/23/012](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Monitoring Report (April 2022 to March 2023)

8.2 Report number: [OAS/WS/23/013](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Modern Slavery Update

- 8.3 Report number: [OAS/WS/23/014](#) and [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – 12 July 2023
- 8.4 Report number: [OAS/WS/23/015](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council Police and Crime Panel – 14 July 2023
- 8.5 Report number: [OAS/WS/23/016](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Cabinet Decisions Plan 1 September 2023 to 31 May 2024
- 8.6 Report number: [OAS/WS/23/017](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update 2023