

# Draft West Suffolk Annual Report 2023 to 2024

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>OAS/WS/24/009</b>	
<b>Report to and date(s):</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	18 July 2024
	<b>Cabinet</b>	23 July 2024
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**Decisions Plan:** The decision 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 included on the Decisions Plan.

**Wards impacted:** All wards

**Recommendation:** It is **RECOMMENDED** that, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) considers the draft West Suffolk Annual Report 2023 to 2024; and
- (2) makes any amendments and recommends the draft West Suffolk Annual Report to Cabinet.

## 1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The draft West Suffolk Annual Report (**Appendix A**) highlights the key activities and developments that have been achieved over the financial year 2023 to 2024, with regard to the priorities set out in the [West Suffolk Council's Strategic Priorities 2024 - 2028](#). This includes the council's activities to support local communities and businesses, following the adoption of the new priorities.
- 1.2 As the agenda papers for the Cabinet meeting will be despatched prior to the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 July 2024, any amendments recommended by the Committee, will be provided to the Cabinet following that meeting.
- 1.3 The annual report is presented as bitesize information that is easy to share with residents, parish councils, partners and stakeholders. It can also be used as part of our strategic communications approach and communicated or used in the media and on social platforms.
- 1.4 We are continuing the approach in producing a shorter document using icons and summary text, as opposed to the full written report. Feedback has suggested that these icons and summary text give a strong and easily digestible summary of the council's work over the previous 12 months and can be used in a number of ways, including, for briefing materials and social media.
- 1.5 We will continue to publish these, and other examples, not highlighted in the icons and summary text, throughout the year, as well as updating them as the council makes new achievements. This will be carried out in the media as well as posting where appropriate in community social media groups.
- 1.6 This annual report forms part of a wider suite of documents that report on the performance of the council, including the Annual Statement of Accounts and performance dashboards, all of which are available on our [performance webpage](#). The annual report will be published alongside the Annual Environment Statement, highlights from which are included as an Appendix to the annual report following a recommendation from the Environment and Climate Change Taskforce.

## 2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 It is good practice for local authorities to produce an annual report alongside the Statement of Accounts. 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. It is therefore proposed that West Suffolk Council should publish an annual report covering 2023 to 2024.

- 2.2 The draft report contains examples drawn from a range of service areas and geographical locations, in order to demonstrate the range of activities undertaken by the council.

### **3. Alternative options that have been considered**

- 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 during a challenging period.

### **4. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

- 4.1 The draft report was compiled in conjunction with Service Managers and Leadership Team and will be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **5. Risks associated with the proposals**

- 5.1 Misunderstanding of the role of the report (for example it can only give highlights of West Suffolk council's 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 proposals**

- 6.1 None apply because this is a report reflecting on the achievements of the council.

### **7. Appendices referenced in this report**

- 7.1 **Appendix A** – Draft West Suffolk Annual Report 2023 to 2024.

**Appendix 1** – Highlights from the Environmental Statement 2023 to 2024 (included at the end of Appendix A).

### **8. Background documents associated with this report**

- 8.1 [West Suffolk Council - Strategic Priorities 2024 - 2028](#)