
Council



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Referral of Recommendations from Cabinet	
Report No:	COU/SE/15/028	
Report to and date:	Council	22 September 2015
Documents attached:	None	

(A) Referrals from Cabinet: 1 September 2015

1. West Suffolk Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2020

Cabinet Members:

Cllrs John Griffiths and Ian Houlder

Report No:

[CAB/SE/15/048](#)

RECOMMENDED:

That subject to updates and amendments by the Leaders, as detailed in paragraphs 13 and 14 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/048, the:

- (1) West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2016-2020; and***
- (2) West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2020, be adopted.***

When developing the draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016-2020, it was considered that there had not been significant changes in the local economic or social context that would warrant a fundamental revisiting of the priorities and themes set out in the two documents. Therefore, the draft West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2016-2020 still centred on the following three priorities:

- Priority 1: Increased opportunities for economic growth
- Priority 2: Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active
- Priority 3: Homes for our communities

The draft West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2020 remains based around the following six themes:

1. Aligning resources to both councils' new strategic plan and essential services;
2. Continuation of the shared service agenda and transformation of service delivery;
3. Behaving more commercially;
4. Considering new funding models (e.g. acting as an investor);
5. Encouraging the use of digital forms for customer access; and
6. Taking advantage of new forms of local government finance (e.g. business rate retention).

These drafts have been developed and updated through a "light touch" review focusing on updating the projects and actions within the existing frameworks and making minor changes to reflect developments in legislation or local government financing arrangements. Councillor engagement on the draft documents was undertaken with Councillors at the Member Finance Briefings in July 2015.

The current 2016/17 budget process will inform the financial summary section within the MTFS and will focus on the numbers and overall budget assumptions, for presentation to both Councils' Cabinets and then full Councils in February 2016.

The draft of the West Suffolk Strategic Plan 2016-2020 ([Appendix A to Report No CAB/SE/15/048](#)) and the West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2020 ([Appendix B to Report No CAB/SE/15/048](#)) have a number of areas which need to be updated or included in order to ensure that it is as up-to-date as possible when it comes into effect from 1 April 2016. Both Councils' Cabinets have recommended that the Leaders be given delegated authority to update these sections of the documents and any significant changes would be brought back to Councillors for approval, as appropriate.

2. West Suffolk Investment Framework

Cabinet Member: Cllr Ian Houlder

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/049](#)

RECOMMENDED:

That the West Suffolk Investment Framework attached at Attachment A to Report No: CAB/SE/15/049, be approved.

The West Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out West Suffolk's response to the financial challenges and opportunities both councils have in common across six key themes; including 'behaving more commercially', 'being an investing authority' and 'taking advantage of new forms of local government finance'. The inclusion of these themes within the MTFS, along with key investment projects within the West Suffolk Strategic Plan demonstrates both councils' commitment to continue with our long tradition of investing in our communities. This

commitment to investment supports the delivery of our shared strategic priorities, in particular to aid economic growth across West Suffolk.

With the emphasis on 'investing' in key strategic projects to support the delivery of the shared priorities, it is important that both Councils set out their approach to considering each project on its own merits alongside a set of desired collective 'investing' programme outcomes. This is particularly important when set against the backdrop of continued financial challenges for local government associated with medium to long term funding uncertainties.

These desired collective 'investing' programme outcomes will act as an 'Investment Framework' (as detailed in [Attachment A to Report No CAB/SE/15/049](#)), to support staff and Members throughout the initial development stages to the decision making stages of our key strategic projects, particularly those that require the Councils to invest. The proposed Investment Framework would also support the Councils' compliance with 'The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Code)'.

A number of West Suffolk's key strategic projects have the potential to commit significant capital sums, as well as officer and Member resources. Many of these projects will be the subject of individual business cases over the coming months. It is important therefore that feasibility funding is made available at the early stages of these business case developments, so as to unlock these projects and their investment potential and to enable the necessary progress to a full business case and the identification of a preferred way forward for Member scrutiny and approval.

The feasibility funding schedule at [Attachment B to Report No: CAB/SE/15/049](#), which was formally noted by both Cabinets, provides a summary of the feasibility funding approved to date across West Suffolk. More importantly, over time the expected capital budget and return columns of Attachment B will detail the likely financial implications and returns for West Suffolk (these are in addition to the non-financial returns). The expected returns from these strategic projects are key to delivering a sustainable medium term financial position for the Councils.

(B) Referrals from Cabinet: 8 September 2015

1. West Suffolk Operational Hub

Cabinet Member: Cllr Peter Stevens

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/050](#)

RECOMMENDED:

That funding of £220,000 (£112,000 FHDC and £108,000 SEBC), as detailed in Section 3 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/050, be approved, and for this to be allocated from the respective Council's Strategic Priorities and Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve to enable the project to progress.

In addition to the recommendation above, the Cabinet also resolved on 8 September 2015 that:

- (1) *the contents of Report No: CAB/SE/15/050, be noted;*
- (2) *approval is given for a further six-week period of public pre-application consultation that will give an opportunity for suggestions for alternative sites and provide information for public scrutiny including the:*
 - (i) *case for a shared waste hub;*
 - (ii) *site selection criteria;*
 - (iii) *process of site selection; and*
 - (iv) *sustainability appraisal.*

While Cabinet has approved (2) above as an executive matter, this can only proceed with the approval of funding, as detailed in the recommendation to Council above.

To date, all costs during the feasibility and deliverability phases of the West Suffolk Operational Hub project have been shared equally with Suffolk County Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council. St Edmundsbury provided initial funding of £100,000 (Report F51 dated 30 June 2014). A further £20,000 of funding has been made available through the Cabinet Office under the One Public Estate Programme (OPEP) which aims to support projects to co-locate public sector assets.

In order for the project to progress, funding, in line with other equivalent projects, will be required to finalise a business case in the autumn 2015. Estimated elements of further cost required are:

Project Management / Concertus	£40,000
Planning advice	£35,000
BREEAM advisors	£4,000
Images and visual impact studies	£6,000
Planning application and land option	£52,000
Legal advice	£13,000
Direct costs	£30,000
Communications	£30,000
Consulting engineers (surveys / design)	£180,000
Other / contingency	£50,000
Total	£440,000

The share of these costs for West Suffolk is anticipated to be £220,000. Appropriate arrangements need to be made to share these costs between Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council. An accurate basis on which to share these costs between the West Suffolk councils will be made for the business case. Until then it is recommended that they be shared on the standard 35:65 ratio and reconciled at a later date.

In order to reflect a 35:65 cost share between the West Suffolk authorities on both the current and future expenditure for this project, Forest Heath DC will be requested to make budget provision for £112,000 (35% of West Suffolk's £320,000 share – net of £20,000 OPEP funding) and St Edmundsbury will be requested to make a further budget provision of £108,000 (65% of West Suffolk's £320,000 share – net of £20,000 OPEP funding, minus the £100,000 already approved report F51). Both amounts to be funded from each authority's Strategic Priorities and Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve.

For further information on the West Suffolk Operational Hub project, see [Cabinet Report No: CAB/SE/15/050](#) and the background papers listed within that report.

2. The Future of the Organic Waste Service in West Suffolk

Cabinet Member: Cllr Peter Stevens

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/051](#)

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the exclusion of food/kitchen waste from the brown bin scheme - to commence following procurement of the new treatment contract, be agreed;**
- (2) a subscription charge of between £35 and £50 per year for the brown bin service, as detailed in Section 1.4.3 to 1.4.8 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/051, be introduced; and**
- (3) a future report be received outlining the results of the procurement exercise and the Suffolk Waste Partnership's agreed actions to deliver recommendations 1 and 2 above.**

The future of the brown bin scheme in West Suffolk has been assessed following the recent Suffolk Waste Partnership review of organic waste management.

The brown bin service was introduced in response to a number of local and national initiatives to stimulate recycling and waste diversion from landfill. This included statutory recycling targets, government funding incentives and the availability of local waste treatment, for which we have continued to receive an ongoing subsidised gate fee due to government financial investment.

Support for the scheme has progressed and 19,000 tonnes of non-meat kitchen waste and garden waste are collected annually at a net cost of £584,000 (£30 per tonne). This scheme has been effectively subsidised by £1,070,000 per annum through the RPP (Recycling Performance Payments) payments from Suffolk County Council of £54.76 per tonne (£349,000 FHDC and £721,000 SEBC).

Financial pressures and a changing perspective have led to a rethink on the management of organics. Waste reduction has a progressively more prominent focus than recycling, diversion from landfill is no longer a key priority since the introduction of Energy from Waste and direct council recycling targets have been withdrawn. This combined with increasing budget pressures has focused the review of Suffolk's annual £6.6 million budget for the management of organics.

Waste services across Suffolk (collection and disposal) are integrated and are managed and coordinated through the Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP). The options available are limited as the disposal options need to be agreed and operate at this countywide level. However, the implications for West Suffolk as a waste collection authority are significant. Following a review of Recycling Performance Payments received from Suffolk County Council (SCC) and an expected increase in organic waste treatment costs associated with the new contract, there will be an additional cost to West Suffolk of up to £500,000 per year to maintain a brown bin scheme, albeit collecting garden waste only.

There is an increasing national focus on subscription based charging, which supports customer choice and will generate income to offset a greater proportion of service cost than currently. As part of this option, SCC has committed to maintain the current level of RPP if there is SWP agreement to share cost savings equally with SCC moving forward.

For further detailed information on the background to this issue, and the justification for the preferred option, see [Cabinet Report No: CAB/SE/15/051](#).

3. Annual Treasury Management Report 2014/2015

Cabinet Member: Cllr Ian Houlder

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/056](#)
**(Treasury
Management Sub-
Committee Report No:
[TMS/SE/15/004](#))**

RECOMMENDED:

That the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2014-2015, attached as Appendix 1 to Report No: TMS/SE/15/004, be approved.

The Council's Annual Treasury Management Report for 2014-2015 was attached at Appendix 1 to Report No: TMS/SE/15/004. The report included tables which summarised the interest earned during 2014-2015 on the various treasury investments held by the Council; investment activity during the year and the investments held as at 31 March 2015.

The budget income from investments in 2014-2015 was £572,000 (average rate of return 1.5%). Interest actually earned during the year totalled £326,628.53 (average rate of return 0.75%); an underachievement of £245,371.47. This was mainly due to the

continuing low base rate of 0.5%, which affected the rates achieved when re-investing maturing investments.

To help alleviate the impact, the Council in February 2005 established the Interest Equalisation Earmarked Reserves to help smooth out fluctuations in returns. As at 31 March 2015 the remaining balance of the reserve was £187,265.88.

4. Haverhill Town Centre: Masterplan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Alaric Pugh

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/057](#)
**(Sustainable
Development Working
Party Report No:**
[SDW/SE/15/007](#))

RECOMMENDED:

That the Masterplan for Haverhill Town Centre, as contained in Appendix A to Report SDW/SE/15/007, be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy HV19 of the Haverhill Vision 2031 Development Plan Document identifies a requirement for the development of a town centre masterplan to set the context for the regeneration of the central area and provide the framework for individual development proposals to come forward.

One Haverhill was asked by St Edmundsbury Borough Council to lead on the development of a town centre masterplan for Haverhill, and subsequently One Haverhill appointed David Lock Associates (DLA), specialists in town planning and urban design, to develop the Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan.

DLA prepared a Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan Issues and Options Report to provide baseline data for the preparation of the masterplan document. This was subject to extensive consultation and the information received was used to inform the preparation of the draft Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan.

The draft Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan document, as attached as [Appendix A to Report No: SDW/SE/15/007](#), was prepared by DLA and approved for consultation by Cabinet on 28 May 2015. The document identifies an overall strategy based upon four interlinked character areas or quarters. Although each has a different focus based on a mix of uses, the boundaries between them are indicative allowing for flexibility. It also considers development opportunities, including those sites identified by Policy HV7 (Mixed Use Development of Brownfield Sites) of the Haverhill Vision 2031 document, but also other potential opportunities. It provides positive guidance rather than being prescriptive, which should assist in bringing forward sites for development in a positive manner. The guidance is aimed both at private landowners/development interests and public realm opportunities and concludes with a delivery strategy.

The formal consultation process on the draft Masterplan commenced on 8 June 2015 and ran to 17 July 2015 and included a range of community engagement events which involved in excess of 1,000 people. A total of 142 responses were received and these are contained in [Appendix B to Report No; SDW/SE/15/007](#). The responses indicate overwhelming support for the document and its key aims.

5. North East Haverhill: Masterplan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Alaric Pugh

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/057](#)
**(Sustainable
Development Working
Party Report No:**
[SDW/SE/15/008](#))

RECOMMENDED:

That the Masterplan for North East Haverhill, as contained in Appendix A to Report SDW/SE/15/008, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance.

Land at North East Haverhill between Haverhill Road (A143) and Coupals Road B1061, is allocated in Policy CS12 of the adopted St Edmundsbury Core Strategy to accommodate long term strategic growth for Haverhill which would deliver around 2,500 homes, education, community, employment and leisure facilities together with strategic public open space. The allocation is developed further by Policy HV4 of the Haverhill Vision 2031 Development Plan Document.

Policy HV4 states that applications for planning permission will only be determined once a masterplan has been adopted by the local planning authority. A Concept Statement adopted by the Council, which provides the parameters and framework for the development of the site is included as Appendix 6 to the Vision Document.

A draft masterplan has been prepared by consultants acting on behalf of the landowner. Public consultation was carried out in May and June 2015. Following consultation, the masterplan was amended in light of some of the comments received. The draft masterplan is attached at [Appendix A to Report SDW/SE/15/008](#).

The resulting masterplan is one which has been formulated taking account of a range of opportunities and constraints, as detailed in the report to the Sustainable Development Working Party. The report also provides an annotated post consultation text only version of the draft masterplan, the Statement of Community Involvement, and addresses concerns of a group of residents from Kedington that had been raised during the course of the consultation.

Concern had also been expressed at the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party that the town's current infrastructure would be unable to cope with the proposed development, Officers referred to the adopted infrastructure Delivery Plan which had the intention of

ensuring that infrastructure would be provided progressively as development took place. The provision of North-West Relief Road had been guaranteed through a Section 106 Agreement and Bond.

6. South East Bury St Edmunds Strategic Development Site: Masterplan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Alaric Pugh

Report No:
[CAB/SE/15/057](#)
**(Sustainable
Development Working
Party Report No:
[SDW/SE/15/009](#))**

RECOMMENDED:

That the Masterplan for the South East strategic land allocation, as contained in Appendix A to Report SDW/SE/15/009, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance, subject to the reinstatement of the site of the proposed Gypsy and Traveller accommodation as originally proposed in the earlier draft Masterplan.

Land at South-East, Bury St Edmunds between Rougham Hill and Sicklesmere Road is allocated in Policy BV7 of the Vision 2031 Development Plan Document for the town for a residential development site (with ancillary uses including a primary school and community hub/s). The land allocation responds to the more strategic policy CS11 of the Core Strategy.

Policy BV7 states that applications for planning permission will only be determined once the masterplan for the whole site has been adopted by the local planning authority. The masterplan should be prepared in accordance with the content of the adopted Concept Statement unless a material change in circumstances indicates otherwise.

A draft masterplan has been prepared by consultants acting on behalf of the site landowners. Public consultation was carried out in May/June 2015 and the masterplan has been amended in light of some of the comments received.

The document is attached as [Appendix A to Report SDW/SE/15/009](#) and incorporates post-public consultation amendments. The document is comprised of the draft document, [illustrative Masterplan](#), [junction improvements Masterplan](#) (illustrative to inform (but not commit) improvements to the local highway network) and a [Sustainability Appraisal](#). Report SDW/SE/15/009 also contains reference to the Statement of Community Involvement.

At the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party, officers reported receipt of a letter from the developers which sought changes to Section 9 (Implementation) of the Masterplan. The Working Party agreed that the Words in parenthesis in the reference to Phase 1, i.e. '50 in the northern and southern neighbourhoods', should be deleted. In relation to

the reference to Phase 3, threshold of houses to be provided before completion of the relief road and primary school, the Working Party did not accept the proposed change.

Officers had also reported receipt of letters requesting that the proposed site for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation be reinstated in the Masterplan and this was supported by the Working Party and Cabinet.

Receipt of a draft Transport Plan for Bury St Edmunds produced by Suffolk County Council was also reported. This contained proposed junction improvements which would be required in connection with the NE Bury St Edmunds Strategic Site. These corresponded with the reference to Illustrative Junction Improvements included within the Masterplan.