

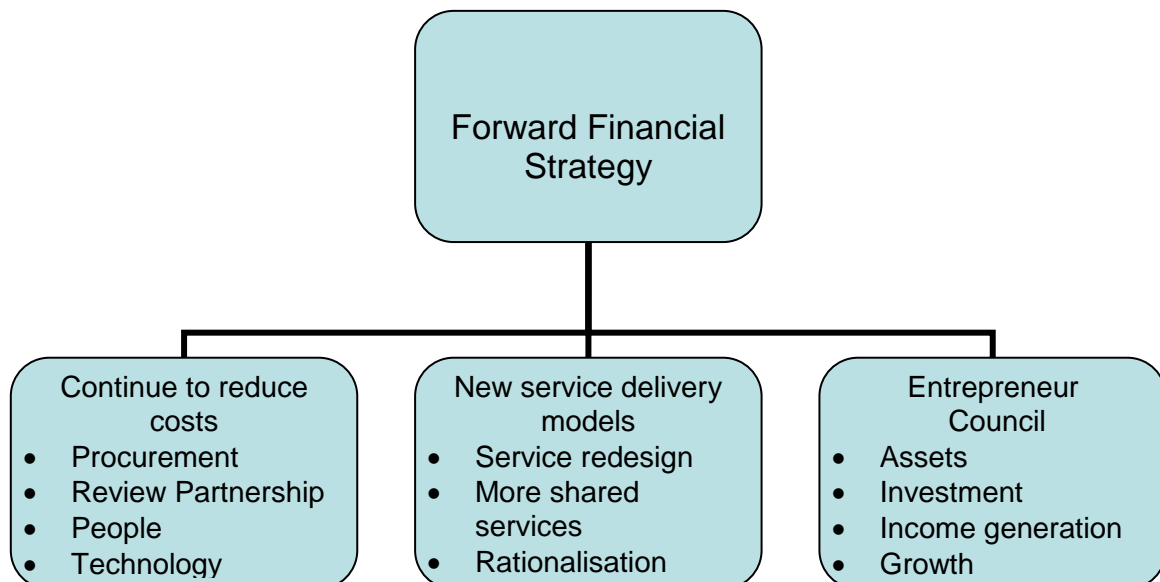
EFFICIENCY PLAN 2019/20 – 2022/23

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council’s Efficiency Plan was originally produced last year in response to the Secretary of State’s offer in March 2016 for a four-year Finance Settlement covering the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. The offer covered guaranteed minimum levels of Revenue Support Grant for this period.
- 1.2 The Efficiency Plan sits between the East Suffolk Business Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) of East Suffolk Council. The Efficiency Plan is effectively a brief overarching document, outlining how the key Business Plan objective of Financial Self Sufficiency will be delivered in the medium-term.
- 1.3 The vision of the East Suffolk Business Plan is to “Maintain and sustainably improve the quality of life for everybody growing up, living in, working in and visiting East Suffolk”.
- 1.4 In order to ensure the effective delivery of the Business Plan and the vision for East Suffolk, the Council adopts a three-pronged strategy of Enabling Communities; promoting Economic Growth; and becoming Financially Self Sufficient. The following sections of this Plan briefly outline the journey of the Council towards this third objective over the next few years.

2 FINANCIAL SELF SUFFICIENCY

- 2.1 The key elements in the Council’s forward financial strategy to move towards Financial Self Sufficiency are illustrated in the chart shown below:



- 2.2 Within this overall strategy, the Council is applying a “**Review; Remodel; Reinvent**” approach to all services, functions, and processes, pursuing a range of projects and programmes which can be broadly categorised as external projects and strategic partnerships; and internal projects.

3 EXTERNAL PROJECTS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- 3.1 The Council always considers the possible benefits of entering into a partnership when assessing the best way of delivering services or projects. The Council has a number of strategic service delivery partnerships, either through third parties, or joint arrangements with local authorities, and is progressing the development of more, including the following:

Third Parties:

Suffolk Coastal & Waveney Norse Limited Norfolk County Council - Norse Commercial Services Limited (NCS) and its subsidiaries: - Provide the Council with a range of environmental services including street sweeping, dog warden and pest control services, abandoned vehicle removal and litter bin provision and emptying. Norse Ltd also manages the District Council's car parks.

Sentinel Leisure Trust and Places for People: - Provision of Leisure services

Joint Arrangements:

Joint Emergency Planning Unit: - Emergency Planning services for Suffolk County Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Bamberg, Forest Heath, Mid-Suffolk and East Suffolk.

Internal Audit partnership: - Internal Audit services for East Suffolk and Ipswich councils.

Anglia Revenues Partnership:- Provision of Revenues and Benefits services for Breckland, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Forest Heath, St. Edmunds bury and East Suffolk.

East Suffolk Partnership: - Provides local strategic junction for East Suffolk region and is a partnership of all public, voluntary and private sector partners.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership: - The New Anglia LEP works with businesses and public sector partners, to help grow jobs in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Coastal Partnership East:- Joint provision of Coastal services along the East Anglia coastline, comprising North Norfolk, Great Yarmouth, and East Suffolk.

Building Control: - Developing partnership for the provision of Building Control services for East Suffolk and Ipswich councils.

Lowestoft Rising:- A place based approach to Suffolk's second largest town, which ensures services are delivered in the interest of the town and local people by: East Suffolk, Suffolk County Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk, Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG and Community Action Suffolk.

4 INTERNAL PROJECTS

- 4.1 In addition to external projects and partnerships, the Council has a range of internal projects, plans, and strategies that will drive ongoing performance improvement and efficiencies. The Council's Strategic Management Team (SMT) and Heads of Service oversee and ensure the delivery of these, instilling cultural change and skills, and managing performance.
- 4.2 Key projects, plans, and strategies over the medium term include the following:

East Suffolk People Strategy – This strategy focusses on three key organisational priorities:

- Developing our People – An engaged, diverse, and skilled workforce
- Developing our Leadership – Inspirational leaders and excellent managers
- Developing our Culture – Adaptive, flexible, and innovative teams

The People Strategy gives us a clear direction in regards to the way in which we develop and empower our staff to provide a leaner, modern and affordable service that meets the needs of our customers. Through the careful and effective management and monitoring of staffing establishments, sickness absence levels, and health checks to forecast our future employment needs and challenges, managers are able to make informed decisions about their staffing needs. The People Strategy assists with increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of staffing.

Efficiency Strategy – The Efficiency Strategy was approved in February 2016, and updated in February 2017, and is intended to take advantage of flexibility in the use of capital receipts, whereby capital receipts from asset sales in 2016/17 to 2019/20 could be used to fund the one-off revenue costs of a range of transformational projects.

It should be noted that the Efficiency Strategy concerns the potential funding of the one-off costs of these projects, rather than delivery of the projects themselves.

East Suffolk Digital Strategy – The Digital Strategy aims to maximise the use of technology and enable electronic accessibility. The four Digital principles of the strategy are:

- Electronic – Electronic by default
- Explore – Explore new ways of working using digital and innovative technologies
- Eliminate – Eliminate duplication and processes that do not add value
- Empower – Empower customers, communities, and staff through accessible self-service functionality

Treasury Management Strategy - Continuously reviewing the Treasury Management Strategy to ensure the optimum approach to strategic corporate financing.

Service Plans – Plans sit at Corporate Management Team Level and are directly linked to the delivery of the East Suffolk Business Plan.

Project Register – The Service Plans include details relating to corporate projects which are aligned to key strategic themes and assist with the delivery of the East Suffolk Business Plan. The Corporate Project Register enables automatic reporting of the corporate programme and is under constant review. In conjunction with the Service Plan review process, the comprehensiveness and relevance of the various projects in the Project Register will be tested from an overarching corporate perspective.

Benchmarking - Comparing the Council in Value for Money terms to comparable councils and other bodies.

Income Review – Below Service Plan level, aspects of our work will be identified that are:

- Demand led or universal
- Statutory or discretionary
- Personalised or community wide

- Income generating or not
- Able to make a profit or not
- Providing wider social value or not

This approach should help to determine a mixture of strategic approaches to aspects of services e.g. preventative; divest; minimise; optimise efficiency; invest and grow; etc.

The Council's policy is to review Fees and Charges each year. The Council's key principles of increasing fees and charges are on a market forces basis whilst having regard to the Council's policies and objectives. As a minimum, fees and charges should be increased by price inflation. The council will also review opportunities to introduce new fees as appropriate.

Funding – A comprehensive drive will be made through the Funding Team to identify and bid for targeted grant funds to support our activities. In addition, the Council will investigate renewing ways to encourage business growth, maximising the advantages from the retention of Business Rates mechanism to generate income streams from available assets.

Commercial Investment - Developing a Commercial Investment Strategy with the objectives of increasing the return on investment, diversifying the investment portfolio, and promoting economic development.

4.3 Finally, one project specific to the Council:

Leisure Redevelopment Programme – The Council is undertaking a programme of modernising and redeveloping its main leisure facilities, resulting in modern, cost-effective facilities and service provision. The Deben Leisure Centre was re-opened in June 2018 following a £3.5m redevelopment. Refurbishment work has now commenced on Leiston Leisure Centre.

5 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

5.1 The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** (MTFS) underpins the Efficiency Plan and sets the strategic financial direction for the Council. It is regularly updated as it evolves and develops throughout the year, taking on board latest developments and trends in public finance and the wider economic environment, to form the framework for the Council's financial planning. This ensures Members have a sound basis for planning and decision making, the MTFS is reviewed and updated at key points in the year these are:

- October/November – as a framework for initial detailed budget discussions for the forthcoming financial year
- January – an update to include additional information received at a national level and corporate issues identified through service planning and the detailed budget build
- February – with the final Budget for the new financial year.

5.2 The purpose of the MTFS is to set out the key financial management principles, budget assumptions and service issues. It is then used as the framework for the detailed budget setting process to ensure that resources are managed effectively and are able to deliver the aspirations of the Council as set out in the Business Plan, over the medium term. It consolidates in financial terms all of the plans, strategies, and projects outlined in this Efficiency Plan.