

# POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANELS

## GUIDANCE MANUAL

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## Introduction

“Suffolk County Council has a vital role to play in improving the quality of people’s lives, by delivering high quality services and by providing vision and leadership for their communities. Effective policy development will help ensure the future successful delivery of the county council’s services to the people of Suffolk.”

Cllr Jeremy Pembroke  
Leader, Suffolk County Council

Since May 2005, Suffolk County Council has taken the view that policy development should be carried out by Policy Development Panels (PDPs). According to the constitution:

“The Cabinet, Leader or Portfolio Holder may commission time-limited working parties, known as Policy Development Panels, for developing policy in specific areas or where a particular policy development comes within the remit of two or more Policy Development Panels.”<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, there are no permanent Policy Development Panels, as there are permanent Scrutiny Committees; instead, Cabinet members identify issues that require the establishment of PDPs, which then carry out their work over an agreed timescale.

### Role of Policy Development Panels

Policy Development Panels have an important role to play in breaking new ground and looking to the future; investing in the continuing improvement of Suffolk County Council. They exist to:

- Develop new policy, focusing on entirely new areas or areas of transformational change
- Make fully-costed and evidence-based recommendations on the above to Cabinet

This will allow the Cabinet to make the best decisions in the interests of the people of Suffolk.

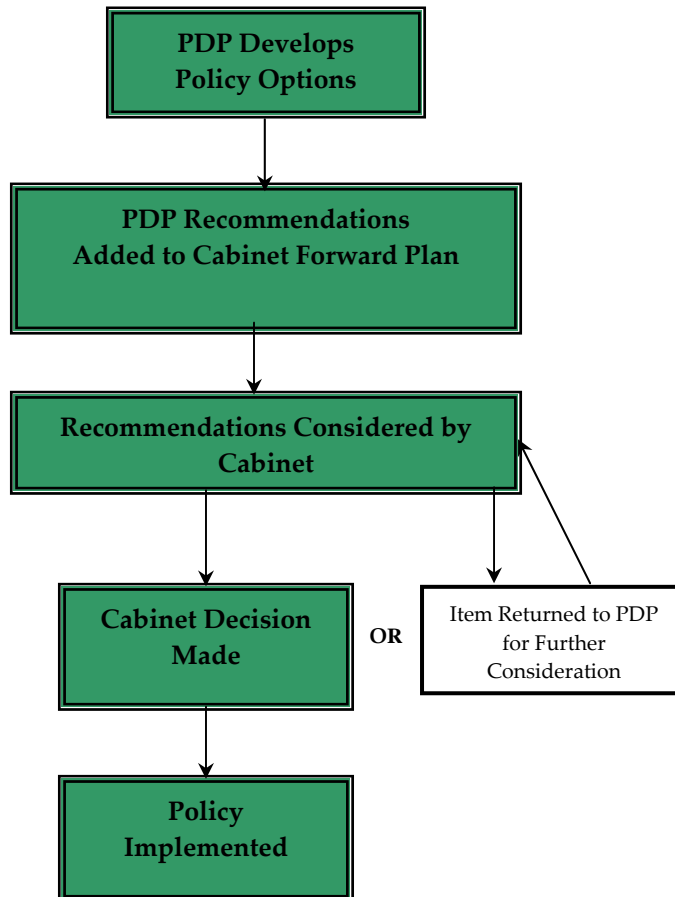
Policy Development Panels do not have a scrutiny role. Scrutiny Committees may consider items within their remit that meets one or more the following criteria:

- Holding Cabinet to account;
- Reviewing policy implementation and development;
- Reviewing improvement planning and performance management activities, including Best Value Reviews or Value for Money studies;
- Meeting County Council priorities;
- Examining local areas;
- Involving partners, the public and the press;
- Scrutinising outside organisations;
- Promoting good practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Suffolk County Council Constitution, Article 8.6 (Part 1, p5)

## Part 1: Policy Development Management Process



## Part 2: Structure and Membership

### Introduction

In accordance with the constitution, the County Council's policy development arrangements consist of time-limited Policy Development Panels. These are established at the request of the Cabinet, Leader or relevant Portfolio Holder(s).

Policy Development Panels will be sponsored by the relevant Portfolio Holder. Normally, the relevant Portfolio Holder will also chair the Panel; where they do not, the Panel should be chaired by the Assistant to the Portfolio Holder.

### Membership

The size and composition of Policy Development Panels is at the Portfolio Holder's discretion. There is no constitutional requirement for PDPs to be politically proportional, or even to be cross-party in any form. However, the convention is that where possible PDPs should be politically proportional, in one or other of the following forms:

- 7 members (inc. chairman): 4 Conservatives; 2 Labour; 1 Liberal Democrat & Independent
- 5 members (inc. chairman): 3 Conservative; 1 Labour; 1 Liberal Democrat & Independent

*See Part 5 for the process of obtaining nominees to PDPs*

Where a PDP is *not* to be politically proportional, the Portfolio Holder may decide on composition thus:

- By a combination of members appointed from within his or her own political group and members invited to join from one or more other political groups
- By appointing members solely from within his or her own party

*See Part 5 for the process of obtaining appointees to non-politically proportional PDPs*

### External Involvement

Consideration should always be given as to who else, beyond the established membership, could be included at PDP meetings in order to add value to relevant debates: Policy Development Panels may invite any other person or persons from outside the county council to join them - for an individual agenda item, for a whole meeting, or for consideration of a particular issue over a number of meetings.

### Substitutions

As part of the process for obtaining nominees/appointees to Policy Development Panels (*see Part 5*) political groups may each nominate a named substitute, able to take the place of a member from their group, should that person not be available. It should be the responsibility of the named substitute to ensure they are fully conversant with the subject matter and proceedings of the relevant panel.

Given the above, the normal process of substitutions - for example, to cover for the absence of a colleague - should not apply to Policy Development Panels, because these are not formal meetings, and for practical reasons, as an individual attending for only one meeting may not be fully conversant with the issues being discussed and may feel unable to make a meaningful contribution to proceedings.

## Part 3: Principles of Policy Development

### Introduction

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The effectiveness of Policy Development Panels rests on:

- A clear rationale and properly developed terms of reference
- Full discussion of all options in order to identify the optimum course of action
- Identification of clear evidence-based actions and associated resource implications
- Ensuring that all options are identified, appraised and presented to the Cabinet
- Adherence to the principles of the council's strategic framework and to the values that the council has identified as fundamental to the delivery of improved services to the people of Suffolk.

### Governance

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Issues that require the establishment of Policy Development Panels will be identified and agreed by the Cabinet. The relevant Portfolio Holder(s) will then sponsor and normally chair the PDPs. As such, they will be able to determine the *nature* of the Panel's composition and will work closely with officers to formulate the Panel's terms of reference.

Policy Development Panels will receive officer support throughout the process. Once it has been agreed to establish a PDP a Lead Director will oversee the allocation of appropriate officer support to assist the Panel in its work.

Normally, the Lead Director will be an Assistant Director for the relevant Directorate. However, where the work of a PDP cuts across more than one Directorate the identification of a Lead Director will be a matter for consultation between the Portfolio Holder and those Directors concerned.

### Methodology

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There is no legal definition of 'Policy Development' but the process should contribute to the shape and formulation of key plans and policies (including via consultation). Examining whether intended policy outcomes have been achieved is a matter for scrutiny.

Equally, there is no prescription as to how policy development should be carried out. Therefore, Policy Development Panels should be encouraged to adopt whatever approach they deem best in relation to the policy under development. Examples include:

- Formal meetings
- Video Conferencing
- Workshops and seminars
- Discussion groups
- Presentations
- Site visits
- Public consultation
- Mystery shopping
- Interviews and calling of witnesses and experts to give evidence
- Comparisons with other local authorities
- Commissioned research

As well as receiving reports from officers, Policy Development Panels are encouraged to gather information from a wide variety of sources, and in any form they wish, including local communities and people who are

actually doing a particular job or are in receipt of a particular service. Commissioned research and comparative data from other local authorities, bodies or organisations can provide useful information to support Policy Development Panels in their work.

Consultation is becoming increasingly important to Suffolk County Council. The council has undertaken to consult its current and potential customers and ensure their needs and wishes underpin the development of its policies and the nature and quality of service provision. Policy Development Panels should bear in mind the scope they possess to carry out consultation and gather the views and opinions of members of local communities and other stakeholders. This may be in the form of inviting people to take part in the PDP process or it may be in the form of a purpose-designed consultation exercise.

### **Operation**

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Policy Development Panels should:

- Be action-orientated
- Be transparent
- Be linked, where appropriate, to relevant strategic planning cycles
- Provide clear evidence for all proposals
- Be clearly-defined and operate to agreed timescales

### **Timescale**

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All Policy Development Panels should operate to an agreed timescale. Panels may operate most effectively with an initial research phase prior to convening the Panel for the first time. This would allow for relevant information to be brought together and used to focus discussion

The key stages of a typical Policy Development Panel are:

1. Portfolio Holder proposes the establishment of a PDP, in consultation with the Leader/Cabinet
2. Terms of Reference are agreed, including a provisional timescale
3. Initial research commences
4. PDP initial meeting
5. PDP interim meeting(s)
6. PDP final meeting
7. PDP report to cabinet

### **Resources**

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Any costs associated with the operation of a PDP should be met by existing budgets within the relevant directorate(s).

### **Strategic Principles and Values**

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Policy Development Panels should not consider themselves bound to any particular existing strategic framework. However, should they be focused on any existing priorities of the council, PDPs should undertake their work in the context of the council's medium to long term strategic framework, 'A Better Way for Suffolk.' This sets out five themes, which are briefly outlined in Appendix 1.

## Part 4: Operational Procedures

### Introduction

According to the constitution:

“Policy Development Panels will, as far as practicable, observe the rules which apply to formal committee meetings with regard to publication of meetings, agenda and access by the public.”<sup>2</sup>

Interpretation of what is and is not practicable is a matter for the Chairman of the PDP. Given that PDPs are encouraged to take a variety of different approaches to their work and to adopt the way of working that best suits the matter under discussion, it may not always be practicable to observe the rules of formal committee meetings.

### Methods of Operation

Policy Development Panels are encouraged to adopt whatever approach they deem best in relation to the matter under discussion. They should not consider themselves restricted to formal committee meetings, nor to the confines of Endeavour House.

Policy Development Panels should also:

- Be action-orientated
- Be transparent
- Be linked, where appropriate, to relevant strategic planning cycles
- Arrive at and provide clear evidence for policy proposals
- Be clearly-defined and operate to agreed timescales

### Notification of Meetings

As they are working parties, there is no requirement for PDPs to give advance notification of their meetings. However, for those discussions that would normally be open to the public, in which the public may be interested, or at which attendance by the public may be useful, the Chairman may decide to invite the public to attend. In such circumstances, reasonable notice (i.e. 5 working days) of the meeting should be given, by publicising the date and venue on the county council’s website.

This relates only to committee-style meetings of the Panel. Where other events are planned at which attendance of the public is considered useful or participation by the public is an integral part, these should be promoted in an appropriate manner.

*See Part 5 for further details on the publication of dates etc.*

### Scope and Nature of Information

Policy Development Panels are encouraged to collect information relevant to their remit from as wide a range of sources as possible and in whatever form they see fit. They should not consider themselves restricted to reports from council officers, nor to information received only in written form.

### Presentation of Reports

Where written reports are to be presented, the chairman should invite the author to introduce the report, whereby he or she will highlight the key issues it contains. Where written reports have been received from individuals or organisations outside the council they may be presented in the same way as above. Alternatively, oral presentations may be given, which may include the use of visual material and/or

<sup>2</sup> Suffolk County Council Constitution, Article 8.7 (Part 1, p5)

handouts. It is the convention that these are limited to 5 minutes for oral presentations and 10 minutes for visual presentations.

As they are working parties, there is no requirement for written reports to Policy Development Panels to use a standard template. Neither is there a requirement for reports to be published; unless they are covered by Part 2 legislation, the deliberations and recommendations of Panels will enter the public domain in the form of a formal report to the Cabinet.

### **Venues of Meetings**

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As already made clear, Policy Development Panels should not consider themselves restricted to formal committee meetings, nor to the bounds of Endeavour House.

Where Panels meet in public it is important that councillors treat this as an opportunity to demonstrate the transparency of the policy development process. As part of this approach, opportunities should be taken to hold meetings in public places away from Endeavour House, particularly where a venue may relate to an item on the agenda. Examples of such venues include libraries, village halls, schools and colleges, sports centres and visitor centres.

In all cases, venues should be chosen with due regard to health and safety, and accessibility.

### **Meeting the Terms of Reference**

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If at any stage during the work of a Policy Development Panel it becomes apparent that any part of the terms of reference cannot be met, the Chairman must be advised of this at the earliest opportunity. The Chairman must then decide, in consultation with the Leader and other Portfolio Holders, whether to amend the terms of reference or to direct the Panel to continue. In the interim, the Panel may cancel or postpone any meetings if it agrees that it would be improper or would serve no useful purpose to continue with its work before the Chairman has made his or her decision.

## Part 5: Establishing a Policy Development Panel

Policy Development Panels should be created using the following model. A Terms of Reference Proforma for completion throughout this process is attached at Appendix 2:

### 1. Subject and Title of PDP

- a. The need for a PDP will be identified by the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) and/or the Leader in consultation with other Portfolio Holder(s). Guidance and advice may be sought from Assistant Directors;
- b. The subject should be as well defined as possible. Care should be taken to avoid a remit which is too wide for the PDP to fulfil effectively;
- c. At this stage, the Policy Unit ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) should be notified by email of the intention to establish a PDP on a particular subject. The Policy Unit is responsible for co-ordinating PDPs and will, by return:
  - i. Advise of any other PDP that may duplicate or have an impact on the work of the proposed Panel, and;
  - ii. Issue the Terms of Reference Proforma, the completion of which will constitute the establishment of the PDP.

### 2. Sponsoring Portfolio Holder and Chairman

- a. The sponsoring Portfolio Holder(s) will normally be the Portfolio Holder(s) requesting the establishment of the PDP. However, an alternative may be identified by the Leader in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s);
- b. Normally a sponsoring Portfolio Holder will also be the Chairman of the PDP. If this is not the case the Chairman should be an Assistant to a sponsoring Portfolio Holder;
- c. To avoid a possible conflict of interest, chairmen of Scrutiny Committees should not chair Policy Development Panels.

### 3. Lead Director

- a. The Lead Director will be identified by the sponsoring Portfolio Holder in consultation with appropriate Director(s).

### 4. Identification of Supporting Officer Group

- a. The Lead Director will ensure that other officers to support the PDP are identified;
- b. A named officer should be assigned to lead the officer group and:
  - i. Be the key contact for the PDP;
  - ii. Support, guide and advise the Chairman in the running of the PDP;
  - iii. Attend all meetings of the PDP as a matter of course;
  - iv. Ensure the PDP is entered on the cabinet forward plan, and;
  - v. Act as the named for point of contact for information after the PDP has completed its work.
- c. A named officer should also be assigned to lead on research for the PDP
- d. Officer support for a PDP will normally be drawn from the appropriate directorate(s).

### 5. Short description of issues to be covered

- a. These should be identified and agreed by the sponsoring Portfolio Holder(s), working with the Lead Director and officer group, and in consultation with other councillors as appropriate. They may be amended at any time during the life of a PDP;
- b. At this time, any work already undertaken elsewhere in the council that may have an influence on, or be of benefit to, the PDP should be highlighted;
- c. If the PDP risks duplication of any work already undertaken, the Portfolio Holder may wish to reconsider the issues the Panel will discuss.

## 6. Key Drivers

- d. These should be identified by the relevant Portfolio Holder(s), working with the Lead Director and officer group. They should include, where appropriate, links to the council's strategic plans, such as 'A Better Way for Suffolk.'

## 7. Outcomes of the PDP

- a. These should be identified by the relevant Portfolio Holder(s), working with the Lead Director and officer group;
- b. Such outcomes should not pre-empt the conclusions and recommendations of the PDP but should give a clear indication as to how its findings may add value to the work of Suffolk County Council.

## 8. Monitoring of Outcomes

- a. The sponsoring Portfolio Holder(s)/Chairman, working with the Lead Director and officer group should clearly indicate how and by whom progress against the PDP's outcomes will be monitored, should its recommendations be implemented;
- b. Guidance and advice on the above may be sought from the Council's Improvement Team.

## 9. Indicative Timescale

- a. The initial timescale will be identified by the sponsoring Portfolio Holder(s), working with the Lead Director and officer group. This should include:
  - i. An indicative first meeting date, allowing proper time for the process of obtaining nominations, and;
  - ii. A proposed date for formal cabinet discussion of the PDP's outcomes.
- b. A more detailed timescale may include the following:
  - iii. A *confirmed* date for the first meeting of the PDP;
  - iv. A proposed date for CMT to consider the draft final report;
  - v. Deadlines for completion of draft and final cabinet reports (*to be advised by Leader's PA*), and;
  - vi. An *agreed* date for cabinet to receive the final report.
- c. Within the context of the agreed timescale, supporting officers should agree:
  - vii. A date for the first meeting of the supporting officer group, and;
  - viii. A date by which supporting officers must complete the draft final report.
- d. Officers should not commit to meeting dates in advance of nominations to PDPs being made.

All proposed dates for PDP meetings *must* be made with reference to the Corporate Diary, in order to avoid other council meetings, and agreed with the Chairman before contacting Panel members for their availability. The Corporate Diary can be accessed via the Councillor Services calendar on Outlook. Group Leaders should be advised of PDP meeting dates, once they have been agreed.

After an appropriate time a PDP should reconsider its timescale. If the Chairman, following consultation with other Panel members (and relevant Portfolio Holder(s) if appropriate) and discussion with supporting officers, agrees that the Panel will *not* be able to report to the cabinet on the indicated date then a new date should be identified.

## 10. Identification of Membership

- a. Members of a PDP may be appointed by the Chairman and/or decided by Group Leaders;
- b. It is the responsibility of the Policy Unit/Democratic Services to obtain nominees for a PDP.
- c. Requests for nominations should be sent by email to the Policy Unit ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) and should be accompanied by the completed PDP Proforma (*see attached*);
- d. If requests for nominations are not forthcoming, the Chairman of the Panel should discuss the matter with Group Leaders directly, if he/she feels the delay may inhibit the work of the Panel.

- e. If Panel members are to be appointed by the Chairman, the Policy Unit must still be notified of the appointed members

Standard Email to Request Nominees from Group Leaders:

To: [Group Leader]

Subject: [Name of PDP]

Dear...

The Cabinet has agreed to establish the above PDP and I have been asked by *[name and title of Chairman of PDP]* to send you details of the issues to be covered by the Panel and the timescale over which it is proposed to complete its work. These are both covered in the attached Terms of Reference.

In order to fulfil its objectives and agree its recommendations within the proposed timescale it is suggested that the inaugural meeting of the Panel be held on *[likely first meeting date]* and that the outcomes of its work be discussed at the Cabinet meeting scheduled for *[insert date]*.

The Panel will comprise *[x]* councillors in the proportion *[e.g. 4 Conservative, 2 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat]* Given the proposed timescale, I would be grateful if you could let me have details of *[x]* nominees from the *[Conservative/Labour/Liberal Democrat]* Group by *[date]*

#### 11. Identification of other parties involved

- a. This relates to third parties (internal and external) identified at the outside, who may make a valuable contribution to the work of the PDP.

#### Completion of Proforma

When the Proforma establishing the PDP has been completed, it should be sent by email attachment to the Policy Unit, which is responsible for managing and co-ordinating PDPs. ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) The Policy Unit will share this information with Democratic Services, who will post the following on Colin:

- i. Title of PDP
- ii. Proposed timescale and agreed meeting dates (as known)
- iii. Name of Chairman
- iv. Membership
- v. Issues to be discussed

#### Completion of a PDP

It is the responsibility of the lead officer supporting the PDP to advise the Policy Unit ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) and Democratic Services ([mary.clancy@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:mary.clancy@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) when the PDP has completed its work.

#### Protocols for Communicating with Councillors

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It is important that communications from officers to councillors surrounding the establishment and running of Policy Development Panels are carried out in the appropriate manner.

1. Requests for nominations should be sent by email to the Policy Unit ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) and should be accompanied by the completed PDP Proforma (*see attached*).
2. Unless agreed otherwise, requests to councillors regarding their availability for proposed Policy Development Panel meetings should be made on a group by group basis, i.e. one email to the Conservative members; one email to the Labour members; one email to the Liberal Democrat & Independent members. All groups should be given the same time span in which to respond and all such requests should be made in the name of the Chairman of the Panel.

3. If responses to requests for availability are not forthcoming, the Chairman of the Panel should be advised, who may then either contact members directly or via Group Leaders.
4. Communications to councillors and communications to officers should be made on separate emails.
5. With the exception of those dealing with nominations, all communications to councillors on a Policy Development Panel should emanate from the same supporting officer (The Lead Officer), so that councillors have a single point of contact.
6. It should be the responsibility of this officer to ensure that the Chairman, Lead Director and any other relevant supporting officers are kept up to date with the establishment and management progress of the Policy Development Panel.

## Part 6: Further Information

### Contacts

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Ian Seggar	Policy Manager (PDPs)	01473-260134
Alex Hopkins	Head of Policy	01473-265778
Eric Whitfield	Monitoring Officer	01473-264209
Mary Clancy	Head of Democratic Services	01473-265111
Sue Morgan	Scrutiny Team Leader	01473-264512

### Reference Information

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Suffolk County Council Constitution:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/CountyCouncillors/TheConstitution.htm>

‘A Better Way for Suffolk’:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DFEC1667-D96F-4B52-919E-9356B5102260/0/FINALABetterWayforSuffolk190906.pdf>

Corporate Plan:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/0E43ECF5-787F-4F85-B6C7-C91832D029B7/0/CorporatePlan200608FINALVERSION.pdf>

All PDPs:

<http://colin.suffolkcc.gov.uk/CouncilBusiness/CouncillorsArea/PolicyDevelopmentPanels.htm>

## **Appendix 1: 'A Better Way for Suffolk'**

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### *Innovation in Service Delivery:*

Policy Development Panels should bear in mind that the assumption that a local authority should always directly deliver services is no longer valid. In the future Suffolk County Council will become an enabling authority – ensuring services are delivered in the most appropriate manner to provide high quality outcomes and value for money. Consideration should be given as to which services should be provided directly and which could be provided better by others or in partnership. Collaborative working and working in partnership may allow the council to take advantage of economies of scale and shared expertise, reducing bureaucracy and finding new and improved ways of delivering services. Innovation can help the council rise to the challenge of changing customer demands and help ensure that everyone is able to readily access the services to which they are entitled.

### *Promoting Opportunity for All:*

Suffolk County Council has a key role in promoting equality of opportunity for all residents. People of all ages can require support to maintain their independence and develop the skills they need to fulfil their potential. Some communities face complex problems of economic and social deprivation. The council wants to provide opportunities for everyone to help them make the most of their lives and will work closely with the voluntary sector and other organisations to help bring this about, by planning together, setting joint priorities, and jointly commissioning services to deliver the priorities.

### *A Healthy, Prosperous and Safe Suffolk:*

As part of its community leadership role, the council has a duty to promote a healthy approach to life and work and will work in partnership with key agencies across Suffolk to promote healthy lifestyles and work with people to improve their health, enabling them to make the lifestyle choices that benefit them. The council will also encourage the growth and development of the county's economy, striving to improve prosperity across the county, with particular focus on those areas with the highest levels of deprivation. And in Suffolk, partners have agreed that the reduction of crime and the fear of crime are a priority, so by enabling residents to tackle their worries, both should be reduced.

### *High Quality Transport & Access:*

An integrated and well maintained transport infrastructure provides the core to Suffolk and is the major factor in improving access to key services. An important new element of the council's second Local Transport Plan is the inclusion of an accessibility strategy, which aims to improve the ability of people in Suffolk to access health, education, employment, shops and leisure services. It is important that the road network allows for movement of goods and traffic, whilst the rail and bus network can move large numbers of people more efficiently and reduce the environmental impacts of transport. A mixed transport system will help the council to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability.

### *How we Deliver – A Better Way:*

In order to deliver the ambitions set out above, the County Council itself must change fundamentally, with effective political structures, strategic planning and performance and risk management processes. Suffolk County Council will develop its community leadership role and hold external organisations to account on behalf of the people of Suffolk. The council needs systems that enable it to manage the business well and facilitate more effective working. It should recognise and respond to the diverse nature of people's skills and needs, and reward good performers. Its property portfolio must reflect the needs of a modern business, and it needs to dispose of outdated assets. Improved efficiency in the County Council's own processes means it can continue to improve services and the experience of the Council's customers and service users.

To deliver excellent services, the council has a set of values that underpin all that it does. These values are fundamental to the delivery of improved services to the people of Suffolk. They are:

*I put customers first:*

We will measure our success by the level of customer satisfaction. We will ensure everyone knows about our services and deliver that which works most effectively for customers, citizens and communities. We will consult our current and potential customers and ensure their needs and wishes underpin the development of our policies and the nature and quality of service provision.

*I deliver excellent results:*

We will strive to deliver the best outcomes for the people of Suffolk. We will promote excellence in all that we do and reward the delivery of excellent results. We will develop and support all our staff to give them the tools they need to do an excellent job.

*I work for a team that has no boundaries:*

We will value leadership that cuts across boundaries and makes new connections. We will develop internal structures to ensure accountability but opportunities, support and challenges will be available across the organisation. We will enter action-orientated partnerships with other partners and sectors.

*I make a real difference:*

We will take bold steps to transform services, grasp and shape opportunity and not dissipate energy through inappropriate caution. We will adapt process, policy and delivery in the light of results, and changes in the external environment. We will value ambition for individuals, the organisation and for Suffolk's communities, citizens and customers.

*I learn, I adapt, I create:*

We will promote adaptability and flexibility, learning from what works and from what doesn't. We will encourage active learning and support the exchange of creativity and innovation, ensuring capacity to do today's job and a readiness for tomorrow. We will promote an ethos of managed risk to encourage innovation.

## Appendix 2: PDP Terms of Reference Proforma

Completed Proforma should be sent to:

Ian Seggar, Policy Manager, Policy Unit. [ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

Theresa Harden, PA to the Leader and Deputy Leader. [Theresa.harden@cexec.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:Theresa.harden@cexec.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

Note: Boxes 1 to 11 *must* be completed before lodging Terms of Reference with the Policy Unit. Any subsequent additions or amendments should be reflected on a revised Proforma and lodged with the Policy Unit as above.

1. Subject and Title of PDP	
2. Sponsoring Portfolio Holder(s) and Chairman Portfolio Holder Chairman (if not Sponsoring Portfolio Holder)	
3. Lead Director	
4. Supporting Officers	
Lead Officer (Name, Title and Contact Details)	
Officer Leading on Research (Name, Title and Contact Details)	
5. Short description of issues to be covered	
Existing work that may relate to the work of the PDP	
6. Key Drivers	
Does this PDP relate to the council's current strategic framework? If so, in what way?	
7. Outcomes of the PDP	
8. Monitoring of Outcomes	
9. Indicative Timescale Proposed date of first meeting Proposed date for CMT to consider draft report Date for Cabinet to receive final report	

The PA to the Leader and Deputy Leader will advise the Lead Officer of the deadlines the Panel must meet in order for Cabinet to receive the final report on the stated date. This will include a date for Cabinet briefing of the draft final report and deadline for submission of the final report to Committee Services. They will also ensure the PDP is added to the Cabinet Forward Plan.

10. Membership (and any named substitutes) Name, Title and Contact Details	
11. Any other parties involved	

**Note: Completion of a PDP**

It is the responsibility of the lead officer supporting the PDP to advise the Policy Unit ([ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seggar@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) and Democratic Services ([mary.clancy@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:mary.clancy@policy.suffolkcc.gov.uk)) when the PDP has completed its work.

**Appendix 3: REQUEST FORM FOR ADDING A KEY DECISION TO THE COUNCIL OR CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

ONCE COMPLETED, PLEASE EMAIL TO THERESA HARDEN, PA TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Tel: 01473 264012)

Names of Director and Portfolio Holder submitting request	
<b>Date of submission</b>	
1. Title of Report	
2. Who is the decision-maker, Cabinet or County Council?	
3. What is the proposed meeting date?	
4. What are the implications of not making the decision on this date?	
5. Short description of key decision to be taken	
6. Why is this a key decision? It is because it is likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or</li> <li>b. to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority. (Suffolk County Council has adopted a threshold of £500,000 for key decisions).</li> </ul>	
7. What are the key drivers for the decision? (e.g. Policy Development, New Legislation, Central Government)	
8. Is there a statutory requirement to report this to Cabinet? If yes, please provide details.	
9. Relevant Scrutiny Committee	
10. Is this item in the Scrutiny Committee's forward plan? If yes, please give date	
11. Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Who will be consulted?</li> <li>b. How will they be consulted?</li> <li>c. When will they be consulted?</li> </ul>	
12. Name, job title, phone number and email address of person(s) to whom representations should be made	

## GUIDANCE ON THE CABINET FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

### **Key Decision**

Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations Part III [Statutory Instruments 2000 No 3272] states:

*“8 (1) In these regulations a “key decision” means an executive decision which is likely –*

- (a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or*
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.”*

### **Threshold**

Suffolk County Council has adopted a threshold of £500,000 for key decisions. This plan includes decisions which the decision maker has decided are key decisions in that they

- (a) involve significant expenditure or savings; or
- (b) have a significant effect on communities

even though they are either below the adopted threshold or impact on people in one electoral division only

### **Forward Plan**

Section 22.1 of Part 2 of the Council’s Constitution sets out the statutory requirement to publish a Forward Plan of key decisions as follows:

*“A Forward Plan of key decisions over the next four-month period will be publicised regularly as required by Regulation 13 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000.”*

Regulation 13 (as amended) states:

- “13 (1) A forward plan shall be prepared, in accordance with this regulation and regulation 14, by the executive leader ... and the first such forward plan shall be prepared as soon as is reasonably practicable after the authority has adopted executive arrangements*
- (2) A forward plan shall contain details of all the matters likely to be the subject of key decisions in the relevant authority for a period of four months; and the first such plan shall have effect from the first working day of any month.*
- (3) A forward plan shall be updated on a monthly basis, and a new forward plan produced at least 14 days prior to the first day upon which the forward plan will come into effect, with any outstanding matters contained in the previous forward plan being included in the latest forward plan.*
- (4) The most recent forward plan shall be taken to have superseded any earlier plan or, as the case may be, each earlier plan.”*