

SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT



NOVEMBER 2016

- **FEES & CHARGES**

A paper is going to the November Cabinet for discussion and debate. The paper lays out in detail the suggested fees Suffolk Coastal intend to charge for services next year. We are adopting a more business-like approach to charging for services, in line with our objectives in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The reality is, faced with dwindling financial support from central Government, we need to become increasingly self-sufficient and ensuring we get the market rate for our discretionary services is one way of reducing the pressure on us to increase Council Tax. As such, it is essential that all local district councillors understand this and should be aware of what we will be charging in the future.

- **LOCATION FILMING IN SUFFOLK**

Suffolk Coastal has taken a leading role in attracting film makers into this area in recent years. In March 2016, this led to a county-wide project being developed, called 'Screen Suffolk', to build on this good work and attract a greater share of national and international film and TV production into the area. Suffolk Coastal is keen to maximise this opportunity and this is also being discussed at the November Cabinet meeting. The main recommendation is that Cabinet is seeking approval to engage a company as the council's agent for sorting out location filming agreements in the future.

- **NEW DATES – FULL COUNCIL AND DEVOLUTION**

The community will no doubt be aware that we had hoped to hold an Extraordinary Council Meeting on Monday (31 October) to consider the draft Devolution Order, which was to be followed by a Special Cabinet Meeting. Unfortunately, the Devolution timetable has slipped slightly, and because of that, we have rescheduled these meetings. The Member Briefing on Devolution will now be held on Monday, 14 November, at 6.15pm in the Council Chamber. By then councillors will have received the report and the final version of the Devolution Order that, if approved, will be sent to the Secretary of State. At the Full Council Meeting on Monday 21 November the council will consider the draft Devolution Order.

- **SUFFOLK COASTAL & WAVENEY MERGER CONSULTATION**

A recent independent survey of 1,000 residents in the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney districts in October shows that a clear majority of people are in favour of a new council for east Suffolk. The survey conducted by ComRes asked people a number of questions about the proposals. Four out of five respondents (78%) expressed a favourable or neutral view about the proposals and of those who "don't know" (20%), the majority then expressed a favourable view when provided with more information about the plans. Now we're asking everyone in the two districts to tell us what they think, as part of an engagement campaign running until Monday 12 December. Please encourage all our residents to have their say by emailing: merger@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

- **BETTER BROADBAND UPDATE**

The Better Broadband scheme has now extended its offer to people who currently get less than 2Mbps in their property and there are no other means of getting higher speeds. As an alternative to an interim

basic broadband service provided by satellite, residents and businesses may be eligible for a voucher to help with the connection cost of an interim wireless broadband service from an Approved Supplier. The free voucher that is being extended to wireless systems. For more information and to complete an application form, there is a page dedicated to people with current broadband speeds of less than 2Mbps.

visit: www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com

If you have any queries on the Scheme, email: broadband@suffolk.gov.uk

- **CANVASSERS CALLING**

Residents need to be made aware that official canvassers are now calling at homes in Suffolk Coastal where people have not yet responded to their [annual voter registration form](#). The forms were sent to all Suffolk Coastal households earlier this year. Residents are legally required to confirm or update the details of anyone at the address who is eligible to vote in the UK to ensure they are registered to vote for future elections. Over 82% of households have now responded to the annual voter registration forms. Any household which has not yet responded will be visited by an approved Suffolk Coastal canvasser, between 17 October and 25 November.

All canvassers will carry identification and will be trialling iPads to record the information for the first time. Suffolk Police and Suffolk Coastal's Customer Services will have a list of approved canvassers. Anyone concerned about the identity of a canvasser can contact Suffolk Coastal Customer Services on: 01394 383789.

Canvassers will never ask residents for money, and anyone claiming to be a canvasser who is asking for money should be reported to Suffolk Police by calling 101.

- **COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION**

A brand new grant fund, targeting community health and wellbeing initiatives has been set up by Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils. The 'Community Call to Action' programme is the first joint funding pot managed by the two councils in partnership and provides an opportunity for local community groups and voluntary sector organisations to apply for a share of £125,000, with £62,500 available within each District Council area.

The funding has been made available by the Public Health and Protection team at Suffolk County Council and focuses on five key areas: mental health, dementia, carers support, social isolation and loneliness, and encouraging people to be fit and active. Applications are now open and the deadline is midday on 30 November. Anyone interested in learning more should contact the Funding & Community Development Officer on 01394 444 720 or via email to grants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk.

- **COMMUNITIES URGED TO APPLY FOR FUNDING**

On the theme of funding, Suffolk Coastal has just launched a new grant programme and is inviting organisations to apply. The Enabling Communities Exemplar Programme aims to help deliver new 'flagship' projects that will have a significant impact on communities and tackle need in a sustainable way. Voluntary and community organisations can apply for grant assistance between £1,000 and £10,000 to help a specific project or activity which needs more funding than is available through the Enabling

Communities Budgets. To be eligible for funding, the project must be supported by the relevant Ward Councillor or the relevant Cabinet Member(s). The Exemplar Programme has no set deadlines, so you can apply at any time. Further information and application forms are available online at: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/community-grants-and-funding/enabling-communities-exemplar-programme Or email grants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or call 01394 444721.

- **LOCAL PLAN MODIFICATION**

Local people are also being asked to comment on a series of Main Modifications to the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document and the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan, which were identified following public hearing sessions held in August and September.

The Main Modifications are intended to address issues of legal compliance and/or soundness within the documents and are being published for a six week period of public consultation until Monday 28 November 2016. The Main Modifications Consultation is the next stage in the production of the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document and the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan.

Further information can be found on our website: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/suffolk-coastal-local-plan/site-allocations-and-area-specific-policies/main-modifications-consultation

Or you can contact the Planning Policy Team on: suffolkcoastallocalplan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or 01394 444558 / 444761.

- **BEST IS BRITAIN**

Congratulations to both Felixstowe and Wickham Market on being voted in the top five in their categories in the annual Great British High Street competition.

Hamilton Road in Felixstowe, was named in the top 5 of the 'rising star' category, which recognises areas that are turning fortunes around. The judges were particularly impressed with the work being done to bring together the seafront promenade and the town centre through the new 'Visit Felixstowe' brand. Wickham Market was named in the top 5 of the village category because of its commitment to revitalising the high street as a unique place for living, working and shopping.

For further information or to ask questions etc. I can be contacted at:
stephen.burroughes@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

CLlr Stephen Burroughes

District Councillor for Peasenhall & Yoxford Ward
Suffolk Coastal District Council