

Leader & Cabinet Briefing



August 2016

Welcome to the August edition of the Leader & Cabinet Briefing – the monthly publication aimed at keeping all informed about the current key issues and achievements of the Council.

This will be a relatively brief document, rounding up some of the key issues facing us at the moment, reflecting the fact that we have fewer meetings during August.

Merger of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils: At the Simultaneous Cabinet meeting on 25 July, Cabinet members considered the detailed merger proposal and agreed that the next steps are taken towards the creation of a new, single District Council for east Suffolk from 2019.

The proposal reflected upon the considerable achievements of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney who have worked in partnership since first sharing a Chief Executive in 2008. The Councils have saved approximately £16m since 2010 by working in partnership together. The proposal for merging the two Councils is designed to ensure the most effective delivery of the Councils' shared vision for east Suffolk, as set out in their joint Business Plan (2015-2023), and will deliver further savings of at least £1.3m per annum.

Now that both Cabinets have agreed to the proposals, detailed public engagement is planned to take place in the autumn, initially it's proposed to take place from 1 November to 12 December 2016. This is to include telephone polling (between 10-15 minutes) of a representative sample of 1000 residents from across East Suffolk. An analysis of this detailed public engagement will then form part of the report to the Full Council meetings, proposed to be held in January 2017.

You can view the full report by following links to the meeting at:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil/council-meetings-and-decisions/agendas-reports-and-minutes-of-council-meetings/

Devolution: Since your last update, you will have heard a lot in the media about the latest on the East Anglia Devolution deal. It has now been proposed that two deals (Norfolk/Suffolk and Cambridgeshire/Peterborough) are made. Council leaders and LEPs believe this is the best way to get the most benefit for the people, places and businesses across East Anglia.

The two proposed deals worth more than £1.5bn have now been drawn up between Central Government and 19 councils across Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Greater Cambridge/Greater Peterborough LEP.

The two deals, propose that two new East Anglia Combined Authorities would be created, chaired by Directly Elected Mayors – elections for which would take place in May 2017.

The Norfolk/Suffolk deal has been endorsed by all councils in Suffolk, along with Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council, the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, South Norfolk Council and the New Anglia LEP –as you may be aware, some Councils in Norfolk have decided not to go ahead at this stage. All councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and partners have agreed to their proposal deal.

Councils in Norfolk and Suffolk have undertaken a Governance Review to look in depth at the pros and cons of joining together. We have published proposals for how a new combined authority could work, called a Scheme of Governance.

Local people, businesses and organisations are now being asked what they think of the Scheme of Governance. The responses are sent to the Secretary of State who looks at these, alongside the Governance Review and the draft Scheme of Governance. They will then decide whether a Mayoral Combined Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk should be set up.

The consultation runs until Tuesday 23 August – please encourage your local communities to take part in the process: www.eastangliadevo.co.uk/consultation

Local plan: The next crucial stage in the development of Suffolk Coastal's local plan will be reached this month, when the Planning Inspectorate stages public hearing sessions.

On 20 June 2016, Suffolk Coastal submitted two site allocations documents for independent examination and the Planning Inspectorate have confirmed with Suffolk Coastal District Council that the public hearing sessions will start at 1pm on Tuesday 30 August 2016 in the Council Chamber at Melton Hill, Woodbridge.

The hearing sessions will consider the following:

- Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document
- Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Development Plan Document

The Planning Inspectorate have appointed Elizabeth Hill BSc (HONS) BPHIL MRTPI to conduct the Examination to determine whether the two documents are sound. If found sound the documents will guide the future development and growth across the district up to 2027.

Further information about the Examination process, will be added to the Council's website as the process continues - www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/suffolk-coastal-district-local-plan/area-action-plan-for-the-felixstowe-peninsula/joint-examination/

Cycling on the prom: We are now making headway in allowing people to cycle on Felixstowe's Promenade after it was discussed at Full Council on 28 July.

There is currently a bylaw in place which prohibits cycling on the promenade. However, the ban is not enforced and is often ignored by cyclists.

It was agreed that signs prohibiting cycling are removed and a new sign is installed stating that cycling is permitted.

Felixstowe Town Council formally requested that Suffolk Coastal District Council (which imposed the bylaw) removes the signs and allows people to cycle on the promenade.

The meeting discussed the results of Felixstowe Forward's consultation which had a great response from local people, saying that they support Felixstowe Town Council's request to allow cycling on Felixstowe Promenade in the future. It found that over 500 respondents, nearly two-thirds, voted for cycling to be allowed on the Prom.

Felixstowe Seafront Gardens: We had some great news in July that Felixstowe Seafront Gardens has been awarded a Green Flag Award.

The Gardens is among a record-breaking 1,686 parks and green spaces that have received a prestigious Green Flag Award – the mark of a quality park or green space. The gardens have also been given Green Heritage site accreditation for its interpretation of the historic features and standards of conservation.

The award, now celebrating its 20th year, recognises and rewards the best parks and green spaces across the country. A Green Flag flying overhead is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities.

The judges commented that the gardens, infrastructure and signage were all to a very high standard and particular praise was given to the partnership working.

Go paperless: Customer Services are working hard with teams across the Council to encourage digital and paperless methods to make things as simple as possible for our customers, as the roll out of Universal Credit continues.

To help our customers, work has been done to create a digital map showing free PC and Wi-Fi locations in east Suffolk by Customer Services Intern, Alice Owen.

The map aims to help our customers find their nearest computer location and points on the map include children's centres, libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaus and Jobcentres. Each icon provides detail on the level of service offered at each location such as free Wi-Fi and computer access as well as access to IT training and support. To view the digital map, visit: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/digital-map-for-east-suffolk

A national competition has also been launched to encourage as many people as possible to pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit. And in doing so, everyone who signs up before 30 September will be entered into a prize draw with a chance of winning £5,000.

Cabinet Members are being asked to help promote this by having a photo taken of them signing up. Please help promote this through your own methods if you can.

You can encourage residents to sign up by calling our Customer Services team on: **01394 444339**.

You can download the leaflet from: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/council-tax

Fly tipping: I'm sure you were all pleased to hear that we have been making progress in catching and fining fly-tipping offenders in the district.

We're reminding residents and visitors of the need to ensure their household waste is disposed of properly after two residents were given Fixed Penalties for fly-tipping - one Rendlesham resident admitted to dumping waste in a layby in Bromeswell in May and a Saxmundham resident admitted to dumping waste outside the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Leiston whilst the site was closed, in June.

Since May 9 this year, local authorities have the powers to issue any person found responsible for illegally dumping rubbish with a Fixed Penalty Notice of £200 as an alternative to being prosecuted for the offence. If paid within ten days, the penalty is reduced to £120.

Failure to comply with the notice within 14 days may result in prosecution proceedings, which in the event of a conviction by a Magistrates Court can result in a maximum fine of £50,000 and / or a prison sentence of 6 months being imposed, with Crown Courts able to impose even steeper penalties of up to 5 years imprisonment and an unlimited fine.

Suffolk Coastal Norse is dealing with all reports of fly-tipping very seriously. We're asking residents to be vigilant of people dumping waste irresponsibly and to make sure that anyone who arranges for any waste to be taken away from their home by anyone other than Suffolk Coastal Norse to remember the Scrap Code, to avoid being held responsible should their waste end up fly-tipped.

Fly-tipping can be reported in confidence online: www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/waste/fly-tipping or by calling Suffolk Coastal on **01394 444000** or email scs@ncsgrp.co.uk

Best wishes,

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