

SCDC report for July 2017 from T.J. Haworth-Culf and Maureen Jones

Now the elections are out of the way, and the prolonged ‘purdah’ period has finished, we are back to business as usual. Thank you so much for your support.

Financial Year Outrun Report 2016/17: Once again, we have a very positive report on the Council’s financial performance for 2016/17 in respect of the General Fund, Reserves, the Capital Programme and the Collection Fund.

The key points to highlight are:

- Through careful and effective budget management the Council delivered savings and achieved additional income, which helped to meet spending pressures and reduction in Government Grant.
- The Council increased its General Fund balance by £74k, to £4.194m, maintaining a prudent level of around 3%-5% of gross expenditure.
- The Council was able to increase its Earmarked Reserves by £8.571m. £6.676m of this was to the Business Rate Equalisation Reserve. This was due to rates income above the Governments baseline and a one-off transfer of a surplus from a prior year reduction in the appeals provision.
- The Capital Programme expenditure for 2016/17 was £4.096m, funded from external grants and contributions, capital receipts and capital reserve. The Council did not enter into any borrowing in 2016/17 to finance its capital expenditure and consequently remains debt free. The final outturn position is subject to the audit of the Statement of Accounts. The audited Statement of Accounts will be submitted for approval to full Council in September 2017. Charging for Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Re-Visits: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has revised its guidance to allow local authorities to charge for revisits to reassess food businesses, under the FHRS, when the revisit happens at the request of the Food Business Operator. This report seeks Cabinet approval to add a charge of £110 + VAT for these revisits, where they occur at the request of the business and where there is no statutory requirement to provide a re-inspection. Charging for re-inspections was discussed and supported by the Suffolk Food Liaison Group with a view to introducing a common approach across Suffolk local authorities.

And this approach is consistent with one of the three themes within the East Suffolk Business Plan, which is ‘financial self-sufficiency’ and that we should charge for services provided by the Council, where appropriate.

Economic Development and Regeneration Staffing Budget: It is proposed that the role of the Programme and Partnerships Manager within the Economic Development and Regeneration team is extended for a further two years. This contract extension is required to provide the Council with the resource to develop and manage tourism delivery partnership arrangements, project manage the Sizewell C economic assessment and SCDC’s beach hut development programme. The securing of this resource will directly support the delivery of three Business plan actions and will also contribute towards the wider economic growth and financial self-sufficiency aims of the plan.

Other News

As well as the General Election, June was a month dominated by major events for Suffolk Coastal, with Suffolk Show, the official opening of East Suffolk House and the thrilling Suffolk Armed Forces weekend, which we hosted at Felixstowe.

Suffolk Show: Hundreds of families visited our ‘Get Active in Suffolk Coastal’ stand in the Sports Village at Suffolk Show. Kids of all ages got involved in the 50m cycle sprint, took part in the Wattbike competition, and decorated wooden bikes to celebrate the impending arrival of the Tour of Britain to Suffolk on Friday 8 September. The show also gave us the opportunity to shout out about our multi-million pound Leisure Redevelopment Programme, as well as letting people meet our operators, Places for People Leisure, with their mascot ‘Pooch’ and find out more about our other events happening this summer, including Women On Wheels and Operation Camouflage.

One of our aims within the East Suffolk Business Plan is to increase access to quality leisure, cultural facilities and activities that support and promote healthier lifestyles. Hopefully our presence at the Suffolk Show will help people find out more about the work we are doing and encourage more people to get active in Suffolk Coastal.

Official opening of East Suffolk House: Thank you to all of you who attended the official opening of East Suffolk House. Over 100 guests were present to see the Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, Clare, Countess of Euston, carry out the opening duties – amid praise for the design of the new building. At the event, we recognised that bringing this project home on time, within budget and to such a high specification was a major achievement for the council. The fact we have achieved this without creating any extra tax burden on local people and now have offices that should create significant long-term saving for the tax payer – is something we can all be proud of.

Importantly, we have now got a modern, energy-efficient headquarters, which will enable us to continue to provide a high quality of service to local people. We have also proved that government buildings can be attractive, as well as being functional and providing good value for money!

We received many positive comments from our guests, who were treated to a tour of the building by Stephen Baker and Andy Jarvis. For more details, including the background of the accommodation project, see: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil/headquarters-accommodation-project/

Suffolk Armed Forces Weekend 2017: The month was rounded off with the highly successful Suffolk Armed Forces Weekend 2017, which attracted thousands of people into Felixstowe for a fun-filled weekend, with a serious side.

As well as providing entertainment for all the family, the event recognised the huge contribution made by our servicemen and women, as well as marking the important 350th anniversary of the Dutch attack on Landguard Fort (which was the last time foreign forces launched an armed landing on English soil). On Saturday, visitors including many military personnel and their families enjoyed a great day out at the seaside, which included live music, historical re-enactments, children's entertainment, an air display and fireworks. Several key seafront attractions also offered special discounts and offers for military personnel. On Sunday, the English were victorious once again, as visitors enjoyed a spectacular re-creation of the 1667 Battle of Landguard Fort against the dastardly Dutch. Amidst the cannon fire, swords and muskets, 'Captain Darell' raised the English flag leading his men to victory. The organising committee and volunteers, spearheaded by our staff at Felixstowe Forward, put in a tremendous amount of hard work to make this event such a big success – so our thanks must go out to them for creating this enjoyable weekend. The atmosphere in Felixstowe was fantastic and the weekend provided a great showcase for what the resort has to offer. The Suffolk Armed Forces Weekend was a county event, hosted by Suffolk Coastal District Council and held in Felixstowe. It was very much a community event, supported by a variety of organisations such as the Suffolk Armed Forces Community Covenant, Royal British Legion, Felixstowe Town Council, Suffolk County Council, Landguard Fort Trust and the Royal Marines Association.

Art comes to East Suffolk House: At the opening of East Suffolk House, I announced the fact we want to commission some art from the local community for the new headquarters. We are looking to commission a local artist to create a new and exciting public piece of art and in return, gain some recognition for their work. The artwork will be displayed in the reception area of East Suffolk House and the Council is looking for something which reflects Suffolk Coastal as a district, drawing on aspects of the East Suffolk Business Plan and compliments the architecture of the building. Artists are being asked to send in their ideas along with a written statement, examples of their previous work, CV and an outline budget detailing the costs associated with their proposed ideas. Written proposals will be assessed by the judging panel in early September, which is made up of representatives from Suffolk Coastal Councillors, Staff, Suffolk Coastal Norse and Flipside Festival. Up to 5 shortlisted artists will then be invited for interview with the Panel and then Suffolk Coastal staff and councillors will be able to vote for their favourite. The winner will be announced in November and it is expected that the successful artist will then have three months to create their work and it be hung in place for the official unveiling, which is expected to be in April 2018. The deadline for online submissions is 5pm on 25 August 2017 – for more information see: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil/headquarters-accommodation-project/art-commission-for-east-suffolk-house/

Success of Extra Electrical Recycling Banks: New recycling banks, being trialed at two locations in Suffolk Coastal, are proving a great success. Since mid-February 2017, special recycling banks for small WEEE (waste electronic and electrical equipment) have been in place at the community recycling points on the Market Place car park in Saxmundham, and behind the Deben swimming pool in Woodbridge.

The new facilities enable residents to deposit waste appliances such as hairdryers, kettles, toasters, electric clocks, irons, food mixers, DVD players, radios and small electrical hand tools, and are serviced by the Council's operational partner Suffolk Coastal Norse. The new banks in Saxmundham and Woodbridge have already diverted over 2 tonnes, meaning that an estimated 1500 small domestic appliances are now destined for recycling, which might otherwise have gone to

waste. The trial facilities in Saxmundham and Woodbridge complement existing facilities at the three Household Waste Recycling Centres in the district at Felixstowe, Leiston and Foxhall, all of which also accept waste electrical and electronic items in addition to a range of other household items for recycling. Households in the UK have an average of 25 electrical and electronic items and, currently, only 10% of them end up being recycled when they reach the end of their useful life. These items should not be placed in any of the wheeled bins that residents have at home, as they contain a mixture of materials, including metals that can be harmful if not disposed of correctly, but which are valuable if recycled properly. The community recycling point behind the Deben Pool in Woodbridge has also recently seen its textile bank capacity upgraded.

Return of Women on Wheels: Women On Wheels returns to Rendlesham this October and this year we hope to get even more girls and women of all ages cycling in support of the Suffolk Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal! Two rides are taking place at Army Rock Barracks, Sutton on Sunday, 1 October, offering an opportunity for all women and girls to get on their bikes to take on a challenge and have some fun. Women On Wheels events are mass participation female only rides, raising money for local charities, that put a strong focus on the fun, friendly and inclusive aspects of cycling. They are very much aimed at non-cyclists and existing cyclists alike, with routes of an achievable distance, and are open to all ages. Last year, a number of WoW events took place throughout Suffolk and rides are growing with popularity linking to the arrival of the Women's Tour and Tour of Britain (which comes to Suffolk on Friday, 8 September). The 5km starts at 11:30am for £5 and the 15km ride starts at 10:30am for £15. Under 16's are free if accompanied by an adult. Females of all ages can register for the event at: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/leisure/sportandleisuredevelopment/women-on-wheels

Coastal Conference: Tickets are now available for the Suffolk Coast Forum Conference 2017. The event at Trinity Park, Ipswich, on Friday, 6 October, is the 6th annual community conference being staged by the Suffolk Coast Forum. This year's conference focuses on valuing our coast. It aims to bring together the reasons why the coast is so important to our communities, our businesses, our economy, culture and heritage, as well as our environment. The speakers and workshops will put forward the compelling case for building the future of our coast through planning, investment and management – outlining the many innovative ways in which this can and is being done here and elsewhere. The conference is free of charge. However, we would recommend booking your place early at : www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/suffolk-coast-and-estuaries-community-conference-2017-tickets-26964786402

Funding for Activity Providers: If you're an activity provider in east Suffolk, you may be able to benefit from funding for providing holiday activities for children this year. The funding is being provided by the East Suffolk Youth Priority Action Group (ESYPAG) through the youth holiday activities programme which aims to improve the variety of opportunities available to young people aged between school years 7 – 13 (ages 11-18 years) in east Suffolk. The East Suffolk Partnership (ESP) has provided £50,000 in funding to support the initiative, which is being led by young people, with support from the district and county councils until 2018. Final decisions on successful applications will be made by a panel of young people who will also benefit from the project management skills they learn from the project. Groups can now apply for funding of up to £1,500 by completing an application form with all bids needing to present their project idea to a panel of young people for approval. This round of funding will be used to organise projects taking place during October Half Term and Christmas 2017 and can be applied by youth organisations across east Suffolk, including schools and statutory organisations, Town and Parish Councils, Youth Clubs and Registered charities.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 18 August 2017. For further details either call 01502 523354 or see: www.eastsuffolkpartnership.org.uk/home/priorities/esypag

And finally...

Philip Thicknesse – Friend or Foe? The life and very lively times of Phillip Thicknesse, Governor of Landguard Fort 1753-66, is being brought to life at Landguard Fort, Felixstowe, from 28 September – 1 October. A site specific production, developed by the Woven Theatre Company with widespread community involvement, provides a whole new perspective on a man who should be better known as an important figure in Felixstowe's and Suffolk's history. Landguard Fort is a spectacular location with a big a central courtyard surrounded by rooms, fortifications, underground passages, an outer bailey and a moat. And Philip Thicknesse is a character you will never forget! He was a man with very little respect for authority, who made countless enemies but also attracted great loyalty from his men, because he believed corporal punishment was a barbaric practice. Written by two local playwrights, Peppy Barlow and Sally Wilden, the production will be led by four professional actors and will include cartoons from primary school children, crowd scenes developed by students at Felixstowe Academy, the involvement of the Felixstowe Community Choir and the group of historic re-enactors based at the Fort. Tickets are on sale through Eastern Angles 01473 211498 or

www.easternangles.co.uk For more information click on: www.philipthicknesse.com.