

Cabinet Member Report to County Council

15 September 2016

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Matthew Hicks, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection
Contact details:	Telephone: 01728 628176 or 07824 474741 Email: matthew.hicks@suffolk.gov.uk

1. Natural and Historic Environment

Anglo-Saxon Rendlesham Conference

Members may be interested in a last-minute reminder about the much-acclaimed Anglo-Saxon Rendlesham conference to be held on 24 September 2016 at the Apex, Bury St Edmunds.

Please visit <https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham-conference-2016> for further information and booking. This conference will discuss the significance of what we have discovered about the Rendlesham site.

Archaeology Team Relocation

Members may be interested that the Archaeology team have now moved offices and are located at Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Bury Resource Centre, Hollow Road, Bury St Edmunds, IP32 7AY. The team can be contacted on 01284 741230 or archaeology@suffolk.gov.uk

Wings over the Brecks

Fantastic footage of a Goshawk feeding its chick from the *Wings over the Brecks* project in the SCC-hosted £2.2m HLF-funded Breaking New Ground (BNG) can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGtcu6iKool&feature=youtu.be>.

Four Goshawk chicks have been fitted with high precision GPS tags, which will enable details of their habitat requirements, prey selection and home range size, to be revealed as never before.

Touching the Tide

Touching the Tide (TtT), the highly successful SCC-hosted £1m HLF-funded project on the Suffolk coast, finished in July after three fabulous years. Although Lottery funding is drawing to a close, work to increase understanding of coastal change will continue so Members may still hear the TtT name. Meanwhile the beautiful Map of Mystery, produced to highlight all of the interesting stories and quirky places to visit along the coast, is back in print

after the first 15,000 disappeared in a few weeks. The last TtT booklet, *Suffolk's Changing Coast* has been published – and is a very readable guide to how and why the coastline evolves and to the different approaches to managing this process.

Finally TtT's last formal report, into the landscape impacts of coast defences, has been completed, and will help to inform and support the AONB's responses to future coast defence proposals. Over 18,700 items of beach litter, weighing over 1,240kg, were collected by an amazing 735 volunteers in 2015. The 2015 results of the beach litter surveys carried out by volunteers in Suffolk, facilitated by the SCC-hosted Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB team as part of the Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch schemes, are now published online here. The results help to illustrate the extent of the problem of rubbish on our beaches and estuaries, and also the fantastic efforts made by Suffolk volunteers to help tackle the problem.

Suffolk County Council's cabinet has endorsed the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan 2016-2021. During the debate a number of councillors praised the work of the AONB team and the valuable contribution the AONB makes to Suffolk's natural heritage and rural economy.

The plan can be seen at <http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/about-us/aonb-management-plan/2016-2021-management-plan/>

For further information, please contact: Nick Collinson, Head of Natural and Historic Environment; Email: nick.collinson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264562 or 07595 091053.

2. Environment Strategy

BEE Anglia - Support Energy Efficiency in Small Businesses Across Norfolk and Suffolk

The £6m EU funded Business Energy Efficiency Anglia (BEE Anglia) project is now delivering at full scale, providing free support for businesses in Suffolk and Norfolk to go green and save money by reducing their energy costs. The project has three core offers that have been designed to help our businesses reduce carbon emissions and save money using independent advice, funding and recognition for their efforts.

The project provides businesses with a free energy efficiency audit from an independent source. This allows business owners and managers to discuss technologies and opportunities from energy efficient lighting to bio-mass boilers and even new equipment that could save the business money and energy.

At time of writing, 38 businesses have been supported to identify total annual savings of £800,000 and 14,000 tonnes carbon – the equivalent of over 4,000 flights from London to Sydney. Tim Basey-Fisher from St. John's Hall Storage in Beccles commented "Having a BEE Anglia advisor come to our business and take the time to understand our individual needs and requirements was very valuable; the report that they produced for us has enabled us to prioritise improvements to our premises that will have the most significant energy and

cost savings and reduce our carbon footprint. The fact they could then help us with a grant towards this was a very welcome bonus.”

BEE Anglia is funded by the European Regional Development Fund and is being delivered across the region through a partnership of Groundwork, Norfolk County Council, NWES and Suffolk County Council.

East Suffolk Water Abstractors Group (ESWAG) Conference

In July I attended an important conference and farm visit, organised by ESWAG, for delegates from a wide range of backgrounds – politicians, water companies, supermarkets, agriculture and statutory agencies. The now Minister with responsibility for water and flooding, Dr Therese Coffey, was also in attendance. The conference focussed on the importance of water for agriculture and the economy of the east of England – the driest areas in the UK and where soil and climate provides the best conditions to grow a wide range of vegetables and fresh salads. Without sufficient and reliable water availability some £1.1bn of UK’s fresh produce, currently grown with irrigation, and over 50,000 jobs are at risk in the east of England. Providing public water supplies to the ever growing population in this part of the country will be increasingly challenging in the coming decades as demand grows and a changing climate makes droughts and floods more likely.

Delegates heard about Defra’s abstraction reform, including the opportunities for water resource planning and trading across multiple sectors; innovation in water and carbon efficiency in growing and processing vegetables and about Suffolk’s pilot project looking at holistic water management in the Deben catchment (see www.greensuffolk.org/HWMP). Henry Leveson-Gower, Head of Water Resources at Defra showed great interest in this innovative approach to managing water resources, flood risk and the water environment holistically and we were able to discuss with him of the legislative and financial barriers to making better use of available water, using natural flood management measures and improving the environment and water quality in our rivers and streams.

Recognising business achievements with the Suffolk Carbon Charter

BEE Anglia is also supporting the growth of the Carbon Charter, and Councillor Fleming hosted a BEE Anglia networking event at local property management business Woolley in Freckenham to launch this new stage of the Charter’s development. This includes subsidised assessments for a further 500 businesses, and expanding the Charter’s reach into Norfolk.

The Charter continues to grow both within and outside BEE Anglia, with over 380 of the environmental accreditations now awarded to small businesses across the county, these recognise the achievements to reduce carbon emissions, track the improvements and savings made by each business.

*For further information, please contact: Matt Hullis, Head of Environment Strategy,
Email: matt.hullis@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264446*

3. Waste

Changes to improve the layout of Foxhall Recycling Centre

There has been a change in the layout of containers at Foxhall Recycling Centre in order to improve traffic flow, parking and customer experience. Customers can still recycle all of the same materials as before.

There is now an area behind the containers which allows container changes and compaction to take place without the site having to close to the public. To help customers get used to the new layout, extra staff have been on hand to point people towards the correct container and leaflets have been given to visitors to explain the changes. The double-sided site, introduced last year, has been replaced by a new single-sided design which avoids the need for site closure to service the containers, and simplifies the experience for visitors. Having trialled the previous layout for 12 months, the feedback from site staff and visitors was that the double sided layout was difficult to manage. Site staff paid careful attention to how the site could best operate and proposed the alternative design, which makes use of the larger site created during last year's work.

Improvements to Mildenhall HWRC

Work will begin at Mildenhall Recycling Centre this autumn to extend and improve the existing site. The work will take approximately 9 weeks and the site will be closed for 3 consecutive days during this period. To minimise inconvenience to customers the site closure will incorporate a Wednesday. Once confirmed we will notify residents of the closure dates on the website, on site with signage and leaflets and via social media.

Once complete, the extension will improve the customer experience by allowing the site to remain open when a bin needs emptying and make it easier for customers to recycle and dispose of their waste. See www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk for any future updates.

West Suffolk Operational Hub

Following the West Suffolk Council's approval to progress plans for a West Suffolk Operational hub at Hollow Road on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds, archaeology works began last month with the ground investigation taking place this month. These works will help to inform the design of the site and the subsequent planning application.

The West Suffolk Operational Hub is a project involving Forest Heath District Council, Suffolk County Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council as development partners. Further information on the project can be found at <http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bins/wsoperationalhub.cfm>

For further information, please contact: Steve Palfrey, Head of Waste; Email: steve.palfrey@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264787.

4. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

Blue Light Property Sharing in Suffolk

Plans for blue light property sharing based around Felixstowe and Saxmundham fire stations have now been agreed by the Blue Light Executive Board, which is overseeing plans for increased collaboration between our emergency services in Suffolk.

Building work, subject to planning consent, should start in September and October 2016 respectively, to accommodate local Police teams at the fire stations. The facilities will also be available, where desired, as 'drop-in' bases for ambulance crews.

Feasibility studies are also being undertaken to determine whether sharing is advantageous in Beccles, Leiston, Stowmarket, Mildenhall, Newmarket and Sudbury. These projects, where supported, are likely to be taken forward from 2017. Sharing at Mildenhall is linked to the Mildenhall-Hub project, which is being led by Forest Heath District Council.

A feasibility study is now well underway to establish the best location, in the centre of Ipswich, for a blue light response base for Fire, Police and Ambulance. Other partners' requirements are also being sought with a view to optimising the use of the property. Options include redeveloping the current Princes Street fire station site or, instead, constructing a new building at an alternative location close to the town centre. We expect recommendations to be developed for discussion in the autumn and for building works, where approved, to start in 2017.

The above works are substantially funded by the £4.93m DCLG transformation grant, received by the Council in 2014-15, and Home Office funding provided to Suffolk Constabulary.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

On 17 May 2016 Cabinet agreed the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan 2015-18, and arrangements are being made by the Chief Fire Officer for implementation.

20 full-time firefighter posts will be removed from Princes Street after the 2nd full-time crewed fire engine has been removed. 4 of these posts will be retained to support on-call fire station crewing, during weekdays, across the county (details below). In line with the Cabinet decision, there will be no firefighter redundancies and the reduction in staff establishment will be achieved through normal turnover.

A 6-week formal consultation with the 48 full-time firefighters at Princes Street has now closed. This was designed to focus on the principles and arrangements for selecting staff for transfer to other full-time stations. Following the removal of the fire engine, Princes Street's headcount of full-time firefighters will be reduced to 28.

Later in the year the third on-call fire engines will be removed from Lowestoft South, Ipswich East and Bury fire stations and the on-call establishment at each station will be reduced from 21 to 15. This will also be achieved through normal turnover.

Work is progressing to support the procurement of a Rapid Response Vehicle for Wrentham fire station. A working group comprising officers, firefighters at Wrentham and trade union representatives will help determine the vehicle type (there are several options), the operational equipment to be carried and the crewing arrangements for the vehicle. Officers should be in a position to procure the vehicle by the end of the year.

On-Call Crewing Reserve

Officers have been working to improve on-call fire station availability in Suffolk and have now established an On-call Crewing Reserve, which is made up of 4 newly created full-time firefighter posts, an additional 4 temporary full-time firefighter posts (up to 18-month duration temporary contract) and over 50 existing on-call and full-time firefighters who have agreed to provide cover at on-call fire stations on the basis of being paid for the extra hours they provide, in their off-duty periods.

The crewing reserve will be available primarily during weekdays to cover the hours where availability is the most challenging. We expect the initiative, together with a range of other changes and improvements, to lead to improved on-call fire station availability across Suffolk.

On-Call Firefighter Recruitment

Officers have recently made changes to the on-call firefighter recruitment process, which has reduced the time it takes for applicants to register an interest in a firefighter vacancy, complete selection testing, undergo a medical and start basic training. This should help to fill vacancies in a more timely manner.

The number of on-call firefighter vacancies currently stands at 39, across all 35 fire stations in Suffolk, from an establishment of 460 on-call firefighters. This is broadly consistent with establishment levels over recent years. Officers are currently targeting recruitment activities in the following areas; Sudbury; Bungay; Reydon and Southwold; Orford; Stradbroke and Eye stations, with a view to filling the recruit course courses in October 2016 and March 2017.

The number of applicants who have completed application forms for the current recruitment window, which closes on 2 September 2016, is 82. However, this number is likely to be reduced following initial sifting. Officers aim to have up to 20 people on each recruit course, which are held at the Service's Wattisham Flying Station-based Training Centre.

New Uniform

Officers are making arrangements for the replacement of the current workwear uniform, which is worn by firefighters daily. This work is necessitated by the current contract coming to an end.

I am sure that colleagues will want, like me, to ensure that Suffolk's firefighters have access to uniform which is good value for money, smart, presentable, readily identifies them as firefighters and makes the best use of improved fabrics, which enhance the safety of firefighters and last longer.

Officers have been consulting staff and trade unions and are now almost ready to initiate the procurement process for the new uniform.

Co-responding Trial

The trial of a potentially life-saving scheme in which Suffolk firefighters attend certain medical emergencies with the East of England Ambulance Service is going to be initiated soon.

Fire and rescue services across the UK are participating in a national emergency medical co-responding trial which will see some firefighters responding to emergencies where people suffer cardiac arrests. In Suffolk, training for crews at Lowestoft South, Sudbury, Long Melford, Haverhill and Felixstowe fire stations is taking place and this should be completed in September 2016.

During the trial period, the East of England Ambulance Service will inform the Service's 999 Fire Control of any cardiac arrests in the trial areas, where an emergency response is required. A fire crew, where available, will then be dispatched to the emergency and, on the arrival, they will render life-saving support. In all cases, an ambulance and paramedic will also be sent to the emergency, as they are now.

The initiative will ensure that people in Suffolk, whose lives are in danger, get help and assistance as quickly as is possible.

The Chief Fire Officer will initiate the co-responding trial in Suffolk when our crews have completed their training and the support arrangements for them are in place.

The national trial will come to an end at the end of February 2017 and will be kept under close review by the fire and rescue and ambulance services at local, regional and national levels. On completion, discussions will take place nationally to determine the lessons learnt and next-steps, one of which is to determine whether to permanently roll-out the initiative in some, or all, areas of the UK.

999 Combined Fire Control

Over recent months officers from Cambridgeshire and Suffolk have been reviewing the formal agreement which governs the provision of 999 control

services for the two services. This work was required due to the expiry of the agreement on 31 July 2016.

The outcome of the work identified that it was most advantageous for both parties to continue with the current 999 combined fire control arrangements and, therefore, to seek an extension to the agreement. To this end, on 1 August 2016 the agreement was extended for a further period of 5 years.

For further information, please contact: Mark Sanderson, Deputy Chief Fire Officer; Email: mark.sanderson@suffolk.gov.uk, Tel: 01473 260540.

5. Corporate Health and Safety

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The new Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHAW) strategy 2016-19 has now been approved and will assist in the delivery of the Council's safety, health and wellbeing vision of "Everyone home safe and well" which the Council holds as being applicable to our staff, contractors, service users, pupils and the public we serve.

The strategy has four themes with each led by members of the SHAW Board. The themes are Procurement and Contract Management, Schools, Working Well for Suffolk and SHAW Culture.

The SHAW Strategy Action Plan 2016-17 was approved at the SHAW Board earlier this month. This details the primary actions for each of the four themes along with the work being carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety team. It also has a set of performance measures used by the SHAW Board. This is available to view on MySCC at:

<https://suffolknet.sharepoint.com/sites/myscc/myjob/healthandsafety/Pages/StrategicInformation.aspx>

The new incident reporting system has been available since 1 April 2016 and is providing useful information for directorates and the SHAW Board. This system is a module in the Council's HR system iTrent and has been set up at no additional cost to the Council. It is also being used by some schools which will save them and the Council time and money. All county schools will be encouraged to use it over the coming year.

For further information, please contact: Paul Butcher, Head of Health and Safety; Email: paul.butcher@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 260596.

6. Emergency Planning

Regulatory Pilot

On 26 and 27 September 2016, the Head of Emergency Planning hosted the Office for Nuclear Regulation which is reviewing the regulatory inspection regime for local authority duties under Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and public Information) Regulations 2001. Suffolk County Council is responsible for offsite nuclear emergency arrangements around the Sizewell nuclear sites and for providing public information in the event of any nuclear emergency.

The Office for Nuclear Regulation work is part of a wider national programme being led by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy aimed at improving assurance of UK nuclear accident response arrangements post Fukushima. Initial feedback was very positive and confirmed the robustness of the Sizewell nuclear emergency arrangements that have been significantly updated over the past 3 years. A number of suggestions were made to improve how the County Council validates key nuclear response capabilities provided by other local responders and these will be taken forward over the next 6 months in conjunction with the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

*For further information, please contact: Andy Osman, Head of Emergency Planning;
Email: andy.osman@suffolk.gov.uk, Tel: 01473 265332.*

7. Trading Standards

Prosecutions

The information below provides an overview of recent, successful Trading Standards prosecutions. As well as punishing those guilty of these offences, these actions support vulnerable people who have been deceived, disincentivise those who might be planning future cons and scams in Suffolk, and support those businesses in Suffolk who seek to trade lawfully:

Carl Shrubshall – Carl Shrubshall, 45, from Thurston, director of Beckwill Builders Ltd of Bury St Edmunds pleaded guilty to eighteen counts of fraud at Ipswich Crown Court in late-May relating to building work carried out on four houses for contracts totalling £1million, leaving a trail of distress and chaos behind him. On 8 July 2016 he was sentenced to 45 months' imprisonment. Jailing him, Judge John Devaux told Shrubshall that his dishonesty had impacted on innocent victims and had been perpetrated over a lengthy period.

Colin Louch – Colin Louch, 61, director of Caltrad Ltd, a Hadleigh-based importer of consumer goods, was found guilty at Bury Magistrates' Court in June of supplying toy scooters and medical devices which did not comply with the required safety standards. Louch was found to have failed to take his duties as an importer adequately seriously, having previously received a caution from Suffolk Trading Standards. He was convicted by the Court and

ordered to pay over £50,000 in fines and costs, who were clearly not impressed with his disregard for consumer safety.

Thomas Doran – Thomas Doran, who ran a paving company, Clacton Reinforced Paving Ltd, has been sentenced at the Old Bailey after he evaded £94,000 in tax by hiding thousands of pounds in his children's bank accounts. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, suspended for two years, fined £50,000 and must also pay £6,000 in prosecution costs. Doran was arrested in February 2014 and a joint investigation by HMRC and Suffolk Trading Standards revealed he had used the stolen tax to fund a lavish lifestyle. A Trading Standards prosecution of Doran last year resulted in him having to pay £59,000 to his victims for aggressive and misleading trading practices. This case is an excellent example of agencies working together in protecting communities from those preying on the elderly and vulnerable in Suffolk and in bringing to justice those that seek to cheat the public purse.

Ahmed Kaki – Ahmed Kaki, 33, of Kaki Limited, trading as Cost Price, Compair Crescent, Ipswich pleaded guilty to selling unsafe, counterfeit cigarettes at Ipswich Magistrates' Court in July 2016. He was sentenced to 180 hours' community service and ordered to pay costs of £3,841. This case follows an investigation by Suffolk Trading Standards officers, who received a complaint from a customer who believed that they had purchased counterfeit tobacco. During a visit to the shop, officers found 175 packets of illegal tobacco, which represented a retail value of around £1,500 if the products had been genuine. The cigarettes were found to not comply with the safety standards for self-extinguishing which are essential protection against fires, particularly house fires. Some of the cigarettes were found to be counterfeit and others did not have the correct warnings about the harm tobacco causes. The sale of illicit tobacco also undermines the government's smoking cessation policy. Mr Kaki has had his alcohol licence revoked as a result of this matter and previous sales of alcohol to minors.

Join the Fight Conference 2016

Following the success of last year's Join the Fight Conference we will be holding a similar event this year on Wednesday 16 November 2016, again at Trinity Park in Ipswich. This will be run with our colleagues from Norfolk Trading Standards to gain further benefits from our on-going collaboration. Over 100 delegates from partner organisations attended last year to learn and explore how we can work together more effectively to prevent the people of Suffolk from falling victim to scams, rogue traders and associated financial abuse. This year's programme is of a similarly high-quality, and includes speakers from the National Scams Team, a national high street bank and Professor Keith Jones of Bournemouth University.

For further information, please contact: Graham Crisp, Interim Joint County Trading Standards Officer, 01473 264888, graham.crisp@suffolk.gov.uk or Matthew West, Interim Joint County Trading Standards Officer, 01473 265242, matthew.west@suffolk.gov.uk