

Cabinet Member Report to County Council

8 December 2016

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Smith MVO Cabinet Member for Finance & Heritage
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1. Finance

Statement of Accounts

The Council's audited accounts were presented to Audit Committee on 28 September 2016 and the Pension Fund Committee received their Accounts at the Pension Fund Committee on 22 September 2016. An unqualified opinion was received and very complimentary comments from the Council's external auditors (Ernst & Young) were received about the process and quality of the accounts.

Budget 2016-17

The second quarterly budgetary control report was presented to Cabinet on 15 November 2016. The report forecast that the revenue budget would be overspent by £9.5m of which £3.4m would be funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The capital programme for 2016/17 is £205.7m and it is expected that £137.4m will be spent by the end of the financial year.

Pensions

The Suffolk Pension Fund value at 30 September 2016 has risen to £2.456 billion, an increase of over a £100m in the quarter. In the first half year of 2016/17, the Fund has achieved returns of 10.7%.

The triennial valuation of the Fund has been completed and the Funding level has risen to 91%, an increase of 12% over the three years. The consultation on the next three years' contribution rates for individual employers commenced in November. Final contribution rates will be set by the Pension Fund Committee on 28 February 2017.

Government responses to the eight pooling submissions that were submitted in July is still awaited, including the ACCESS pool which Suffolk is a signatory. Meetings with the Marcus Jones MP, Minister for Local Government, are being arranged in late November or early December when feedback to the pool submissions will be given.

For further information please contact: Geoff Dobson, Director of Resource Management; Email: geoff.dobson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264347.

2. Procurement

Cost Down and Savings Agenda

The Corporate Procurement team is supporting Directorates to deliver year-on-year contract savings. The team has supported the organisation to achieve Capital and Revenue savings of £11.5m so far in 2016-17 through re-tendering, contract extension negotiation, inflation management and various cost-down initiatives.

Contract Management

Over 120 staff have attended basic contract management skills training throughout the organisation. Over 90 staff have been booked onto the two-day intensive training courses covering techniques of advanced contract management, where they will learn a variety of skills and techniques to manage and leverage value from contractual relationships on higher risk contracts. The first of these courses ran in the middle of October and received very positive feedback from attendees.

The Council's Contract Management Board is following up on this training over the coming months to review how the training has been embedded and applied.

Development of Procurement Capacity

Alongside training in contract management the procurement team is currently developing a suite of tools. Templates, e-learning and face to face training to support staff who may be involved in undertaking quotations or low value tendering. This support will be accessible through the 'myLearning' Portal from early next year and is designed to ensure a consistent and compliant approach to the procurement process following the introduction of additional requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations in 2015.

Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Recommendations from the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group were presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 30 September and Cabinet on 18 October. The Task and Finish Group has made a total of fourteen recommendations on procurement and contract management which are now being considered by Councillors and Officers.

Major Procurement Activity

The Council's Procurement Team is undertaking some tenders of significant interest: -

- Case Management Software for Adult and Children's Care Services, currently in the competitive dialogue stage;

- The Hold – Bids have been received and are under evaluation; and
- Bridge Crossings for Ipswich and Lowestoft – the procurement strategy has been finalised and documentation is now being prepared prior to going to market.

For further information please contact: Aidan Dunn, Head of Procurement; Email: aidan.dunn@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264394.

3. Property

Smarter Workplaces Ipswich

Following both Mid Suffolk District Council and Babergh District Council confirming their desire to move their HQ functions to Endeavour House, work is continuing on the “Smarter Workplaces” programme to ensure there is space for the partner councils to be accommodated. The programme is investigating innovative ways to use the space available and encourage staff to work more flexibly and embrace the opportunities offered by modern technology.

Riverside

The Riverside Offices project has now been completed and the facility was provided below budget and on time with a great working environment for all staff and enabling a much closer collaborative relationship between the Council teams based there. Staff feedback has been very positive.

One Public Estate

The Council and partner authorities, including Ipswich Borough Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, submitted a bid to the Cabinet Office to join the next phase of its One Public Estate (OPE) Programme. The focus of the bid was around the creation of a new Ipswich and Central Suffolk Property Partnership, building on the existing collaboration of the Suffolk Property Partnership.

The new partnership will focus initially on creating a public sector hub in Ipswich, looking to maximise the property and service benefits from the co-location of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils alongside Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council. The partnership will also create the structure and forum to identify, bring forward, and drive future property based projects, which would include a comprehensive range of public sector partners.

At the end of October 2016 the Council received confirmation that an initial £25k of funding had been awarded, to develop the outline proposals into a detailed Services and Assets Delivery Plan. This Plan and application for further funding will be submitted to the Cabinet Office in December.

For further information please contact: Duncan Johnson, Interim Assistant Director, Corporate Property; Email: duncan.johnson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264194.

4. Culture, Libraries, and Heritage

Heritage Programme: 'The Hold'

Since the last report, the project team has been focussing on these key tasks:

- **Procurement of the design team to progress architectural designs for the building.** 27 initial submissions were shortlisted to 4 suppliers, who have submitted tenders. Evaluations will be complete by mid December 2016.
- Our **Activity Plan Officer** began working on 12 October 2016 and is in the process of recruiting volunteers to participate in 'Mapping Suffolk's Stories' - a countywide programme of activity that will see the Record Office working alongside community groups. The activity plan will run alongside the capital build and will last until 2021.
- Proposals to establish a fundraising committee have evolved into **establishing a brand new charitable organisation** called the 'Suffolk Archives Foundation'. Trustees have been recruited and the application to the Charity Commission will be submitted before the end of November 2016. The work of the new charity will involve fundraising for 'The Hold' and carrying forward the initial work on fundraising conducted by Friends of Suffolk Record Office.
- A Creative Europe partnership visit has been carried out, which should unlock a **co-operation grant** to assist with the funding for 'Mapping Suffolk's Stories'. The project will provide the opportunity to collaborate with two European archives – Sweden and Lithuania, working towards common objectives for broadening archives participation and audience development.
- Preparing the **Business Case to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership** for match funding.

The Development Phase of the project is anticipated to last until October 2017, at which point Round 2 submissions will be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund to unlock the delivery grant of £10.3m. 'The Hold' is still on track to open its doors late in 2019 (the 900th anniversary of the oldest document in the collections), with a formal opening targeted for spring/summer 2020.

For further information please contact: Amy Rushton, Heritage Lottery Fund Project Co-ordinator, Email: amy.rushton@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264519.

5. Suffolk Record Office (SRO)

The Public Service Quality Group (PSQG) for archives and local studies National Survey of Visitors to UK Archives started across SRO branches on 24 October 2016 and will run for 2-3 weeks. This survey takes place approximately every 18 months and has been running since 2002. It enables us to benchmark our service against others and provides useful information for Heritage Lottery

Fund and other bids. As it took place over half-term week this year we hope younger visitors will have filled in the questionnaires.

Ipswich Record Office Open Day on 29 October 2016 attracted 97 people hoping to find out more about, local and family history research and meet local organisations such as Friends of the Suffolk Record Office, Suffolk Local History Council, and Suffolk Family History Society. They also saw an exhibition on World War One research – ‘Brave Men of Ipswich’ and learnt more about ‘The Hold’ project. 40 attendees had strongroom tours which enabled them to see more treasures from the archives, for example Norden’s Survey of 1601.

Collaboration with University of Suffolk – four work placement students started their ten week sessions at Ipswich Record Office in late October. They are developing archival knowledge and skills in accessioning, cataloguing, preservation packing and more.

A session to **support 3rd Year History students with their dissertations** was held on 24 October 2016. A list of their research topics was provided in advance, archives were produced to get them started and general advice provided on using a variety of sources. Those who were still a little vague on exactly what they wanted to work on were given ideas of possible collections to consider. Dr Louise Carter commented afterwards *“Thanks again for the great session this morning. It was a real help for the students and I was amazed at the materials you managed to find for some of the more obscure topics! Very much appreciated indeed. More than one seems to be hankering after a career in archives now!!”*

Explore Your Archives 2016 campaign Events happening during launch week 19-27th November 2016 in Suffolk have appeared on the national website <http://www.exploreyourarchive.org/>:

- A talk at the Bury St Edmunds Record Office on Saturday 19 November 2016 at 10.00am by local historian and author Clive Paine on St Edmund.
- A talk at the Ipswich Record Office on Saturday 26 November 2016 at 10.30am by local historian David Empson on The Brave Men of Ipswich World War 1 project.
- A family history clinic at the Lowestoft Record Office on Saturday 26 November 2016 at 10.30am.

Consultation on the new draft Government Strategic Vision for the Archives Sector – is running from 11 October 2016 to 11 January 2017 <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/consultation-strategic-vision-for-archives.pdf>>.

For further information please contact: Kate Chantry; Email: kate.chantry@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 263913.

6. Suffolk Libraries

Performance

Suffolk Libraries submitted its annual performance data to us, to coincide with its own AGM. The news is encouraging: issues rose modestly in contrast to the picture nationally, visits to libraries in Suffolk in 2015-16 held steady, and early indicators this year show a rise in visits. The number of attendances at events and activities in the first quarter of 2016-17 show an increase of 26% on the same quarter last year.

Suffolk's libraries continue to make a strong contribution to organised and informal learning, volunteering opportunities and to supporting vulnerable people, particularly through the New Chapters support service for people with mental-ill health.

The year-long Year of Reading has attracted authors and audiences to libraries in unprecedented numbers, and the many of the most recent Bookfest events across the county have been sold out.

Work in driving literacy up has included engagement with over 1000 pupils, and the learning from the Chatterbooks project, which ended in July has been rolled out to two new libraries as well as three of the original five trial sites.

Successful refurbishments

Aldeburgh, Newmarket and Kedington libraries have had substantial improvements, funded by their friends' groups, from developer contributions the Council has successfully requested, and from other sources.

I was pleased to be at the successful and very well-attended launch event at Newmarket in October; to celebrate the hard work of Suffolk Libraries staff in completing the improvements in the limited time available.

New initiatives

Suffolk Libraries has joined the British Library's Living Knowledge Network. Membership includes national libraries, city libraries and some new recruits including Suffolk. Its purpose is to ensure that the largest publicly funded libraries, British Library in particular, are properly connected to the public library network and vice versa. The intent is to find opportunities for joint projects that support business, culture and learning, especially in places outside London.

For further information please contact: Stephen Taylor. Email: Stephen.taylor@suffolk.gov.uk . Telephone: 01473 265309.

7. Arts Development

Suffolk and Norfolk County Council arts teams support the New Anglia LEP Cultural Board. We have recently secured £1.2 million of investment from the Arts Council's Local Creative Growth Fund to deliver **StartEast** a cultural sector growth programme. **StartEast** will develop and deliver business support and investment for artists and creative people planning to develop and grow a cultural business. This support will be bespoke; created and delivered by cultural specialists with experience and knowledge of the market place for cultural goods and services and business development tools. **StartEast** will be targeted at cultural sole traders, small/medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and new start-ups with the ambition to build a business or social enterprise, working in Norfolk and/or Suffolk. We will support them to grow, to expand into new markets, to secure and extend current and new contracts and to increase their turnover and productivity. **StartEast** will support at least 180 enterprises. It will be launched in January 2017 and will run for three years.

The New Anglia Cultural Board launched its Strategy **Culture Drives Growth** at DanceEast on 8 November 2016. The strategy has been developed by Norfolk and Suffolk's cultural leaders with support from the New Anglia LEP and Arts Council. New Anglia LEP Cultural Board includes museum representatives from Gainsborough's House and Ipswich Museums. Mark Pendlington Chairman of the New Anglia LEP and Darren Henley Chief Executive of the Arts Council both delivered speeches at the event. Mark Pendlington said that 'culture is at the heart of the growth agenda' and Darren Henley said that Norfolk and Suffolk's cultural sector was 'second to none'. Both applauded the strategy and the ability of the cultural sector in Norfolk and Suffolk to collaborate. This strategy will attract investment and stimulate enterprise, making the East a great place to live, work, visit and in which to invest.

8. Museums

The Suffolk Museums Partnership has worked with a number of Suffolk museums to attract funding from Heritage Lottery Fund. **The Long Shop Museum** has been awarded £161,200 development funding that will enable them to work towards the second stage of their £1.9m application for a project worth over £2m that will transform the site that celebrates industrial heritage of East Suffolk. The Heritage Lottery Fund has also awarded **Gainsborough's House** a development grant of £280,700 that will support it in working towards the second stage of its £4.73m application. This £7.5m project will transform Gainsborough's House into a national centre for Thomas Gainsborough and one of the region's leading heritage museum and galleries. Both museums have been able to achieve this with the support of their County Council revenue grants.

Her Majesty The Queen officially opened the **National Heritage Centre for Horseracing and Sporting Art** on the 3 November 2016. Councillor Colin Noble and I attended. Also known as Palace House, this major new tourist destination celebrates the Newmarket's status as the historic home of horseracing and sporting art. It is at the heart of the community and has transformed the centre of

the town. It is situated in the remains of Charles II's sporting palace and stables, and spans five acres in the heart of Newmarket. Palace House comprises three complementary attractions; the new National Horseracing Museum, a National Art Gallery of British Sporting Art, and a chance to meet former racehorses, in the flagship yard of Retraining of Racehorses. The project is an important example of partnership across the public, private and charity sectors, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Forest Heath District Council, Suffolk County Council, the Racing Industry as well as many private trusts, foundations and individuals from the world of horseracing and beyond.

The £5,000 '**Working Together**' award was formally presented to representatives of the programme by Councillor Jane Storey on 21 September 2016 and recognises the strong partnership working this programme has involved. The award was granted to the Association for Suffolk Museums for the '*Creative Heritage in Mind*' project that is coordinating with museums in Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Stowmarket and Sudbury, an experienced artist and the Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust for the benefit of people with mental health conditions.

The Suffolk Museum of the Year awards were held at the University of Suffolk on 10 October 2016. This is the fifth year that the Association for Suffolk Museums has run the Awards. I had the pleasure of attending and gave a brief welcome. total of 19 museums took part over all. Following a public vote, 5 museums were shortlisted. Southwold Museum won Museum of the Year 2016 and the Long Shop Museum took the Special Award for Family Friendly Museum of the Year. Dunwich and Felixstowe shared the (discretionary) Judges' Merit Award and Ipswich Museum received the Learning and Access Award from the University of Suffolk for its training museum and innovative audience development work with young people. The East Anglia Transport Museum, won the Object of the Year Award for its rare and carefully restored "half-deck coach".

The National Horseracing Museum and Ipswich Transport Museum represented Suffolk at Transforming People to Transform Museums conference in Colchester Castle on 30 September 2016. This national conference explored how heritage and arts organisations are reacting to new challenges through radical approaches in partnership working, workforce development and the use of museum and gallery spaces. The two museums talked to delegates about their successful volunteering programmes and led a volunteering workshop.

For further information on any of the topics above: contact Jayne Austin, Museum Development and Partnership Manager, jayne.austin@suffolk.gov.uk Telephone 01473 265008