

Parish Report December 2013

Councillor

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Suffolk Better Broadband Monthly Update

Here is the first edition of our "Broadband Monthly Update" for Councillors. The idea here is that we can share as much information as possible about the progress of the rollout, translated where possible to divisions. As you will see, we will have "passed" 10,000 premises with fibre broadband by Christmas, and will be adding a further 10,000 every quarter to the end of 2015.

This is very much a first draft, so we are happy to take comments or suggestions for improvements. In addition, we will be soon be re-launching our coverage map on the website (www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com) to give more granular information, an improved legend and improved messaging. As ever, for any queries or comments, please get in touch at broadband@suffolk.gov.uk

Greenest County Awards 2014

Now in their seventh year the Greenest County Awards 2014 were launched last night at Birchwood Primary School in Martlesham, winners of the 2013 Champion of Champions public vote award.

The Creating the Greenest County Awards is an annual event which highlights the excellent environmental achievements going on across Suffolk, celebrating the huge number of inspirational people, businesses, communities, schools and projects across the county. The Awards 2014 sees the introduction of the Public Vote award, which this year will be Greenest Community Project. This award will celebrate a community or a group of local volunteers who are working together to improve their surrounding environment, raising environmental awareness and making a difference to others. The final shortlist will then be put to a public vote. You can nominate yourselves, or nominate a group which has inspired you. Just make sure you enter!

Councillor Richard Smith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and the Environment said "I am happy to be supporting the Creating the Greenest County Awards. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the inspirational work that is going on in Suffolk's businesses, schools and communities and encourage others to follow in their green footsteps. I would also like to thank our sponsors who make the Awards possible."

For further information on each category and information on how to enter visit www.greensuffolk.org/awards2014. The closing date for entries is the 31 January 2014 with winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on 28 March 2014.

New Rising High in Suffolk website and internship programme launched

A new website has been launched today to provide young people with access to development and job opportunities within local government in Suffolk. The launch of the website coincides with the announcement of 20 internship opportunities and one industrial placement in Suffolk councils next year, details of which can be found on the website. Rising High in Suffolk has been developed as part of Raising the Bar to support young people in the county. Through the Exemplar Employer programme, and with its partner councils in Suffolk, Suffolk County Council is looking to develop and offer quality placements for young people of all ages and abilities. These placements might be through work

experience, apprenticeships, internships, industrial placements or a graduate programme. The Exemplar Employer programme allows for ongoing development of young people. All of these opportunities are supported by offering young people access to a range of awards and accreditation schemes.

The Rising High in Suffolk website has been designed and developed by young people for young people, to learn about jobs in local government and access opportunities. Through its development numerous opportunities have been provided for young people to develop skills and experience the work place. The website also includes stories from young people who have already benefited from experience within local government, it is hoped that these will help to inspire other young people considering entering the world of employment.

The website aims to:

- Raise awareness about roles and career paths in local government.
- Showcase work experience, apprenticeships, internships and the graduate programme for young people in Suffolk.
- Allow young people to find and apply for the opportunities on offer
- Provide a platform for local councils in Suffolk to promote the opportunities available
- Encourage young people to register and receive emails about opportunities and other career related information.

Following the success of a pilot internship programme in the summer 2013, there are now a further 20 internship placements on offer for summer 2014 in Suffolk councils. Based across a diverse range of services, these placements will provide young people with the opportunity to work for twelve weeks in a local authority, gaining knowledge and experience of the public sector, developing skills and identifying career pathways. Priority will be given to students who have been raised in Suffolk, in an effort to support and develop our local young people into employment.

Councillor Lisa Chambers, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for education, skills and young people, said: "As part of our commitment to Raising the Bar, I want all young people in Suffolk to be well prepared to enter the workplace and make a successful transition from education into sustainable employment. As an employer, the county council can support this ambition, by putting in place a programme of opportunities and workplace experiences for young people that is of exemplar practice. This means that, with our partner councils, we are looking at ways of making local government attractive to young people and position ourselves as employers of choice. I am delighted this website will provide a key access point and I hope we will see many more young people taking up opportunities within local government as a result.

The new Rising High website can be accessed via: www.risinghighsuffolk.org.uk

Yotta contributes to award winning lighting project

The Street lighting software from Yotta has been an integral part of an award winning project by Suffolk County Council (SCC). The part-night lighting project, which was awarded Highways Magazine's Excellence Award 2013 for Environmental Sustainability, has achieved cost savings, lowered carbon emissions and improved maintenance efficiencies. Yotta's Mayrise Street Lighting software was implemented in order to support Suffolk's aspirations to be the greenest county in the UK, following cabinet approval of a part-night-time lighting policy. In conjunction with a Telensa Intelligent Lighting System, the Mayrise software was used on personal digital assistants (PDAs) with barcode readers to link newly installed telecells on street lighting columns to the centralised Mayrise asset database. The integrated Mayrise/Telensa system also allows for real-time fault reporting, improved maintenance, and the introduction of an out of hours service for emergency services, allowing areas to be relit if requested.

Supported by the integrated Mayrise/Telensa system, the project was delivered on time and nearly £25,000 under budget. Cost savings are £641,000 per annum and a reduction of 3,300 tonnes of carbon has been achieved. SCC's maintenance contractor has also calculated carbon savings through maintenance efficiencies and reduced fuel consumption of around 300 tonnes per year. Richard Webster, electrical services manager for SCC, commented, "The use of state of the art software from Yotta has been crucial to the success of our part-night lighting project, and therefore our success in

these awards. However, the benefits for residents of Suffolk have been much greater, with significant financial savings and environmental gains having been made.” Nick Smee of Yotta said, “We’re really pleased to have been an integral part to the success of this project and have been able to contribute, not only to the cost saving, but also the reduction in carbon emissions.

Plans for New Care Home and Wellbeing Centre at Glastonbury Court are submitted

Plans for a bespoke 80-bed care home and wellbeing centre have been submitted to St Edmundsbury Borough Council. Care UK is working in partnership with Suffolk County Council on the project for the new facility at the site of the current Glastonbury Court care home in Glastonbury Road, Bury St Edmunds. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing 48-bed care home and the building of the new care home and a 25-place wellbeing centre with 29 car parking spaces, bicycle and motorcycle spaces, a drop-off area for a minibus or ambulance, and landscaping.

A Statement of Community Involvement, submitted with the planning application, said the proposal had been “significantly revised” to reflect the comments received during the consultation process. Changes include improving the relationship of the building to the site boundaries, including retaining existing hedges and most of the existing trees to provide a pleasant outlook for homes overlooking the site from Whitby Road, Abbotsbury Road and Glastonbury Road.

Another design change included ensuring the overall height of the development would be no greater than that of the existing care home. The statement said: “The consultation approach demonstrates the commitment made by Care UK to engage with both local communities and the local authority throughout the design process. “Attendees have been given the opportunity to view the development proposals and to genuinely influence the design of the scheme.”

The community had hoped to continue having access to a room at the care home, and has also been exploring having its own community centre. Chris Hopkinson, regional operations director for Care UK, said they were keen to ensure the proposed new care home and wellbeing centre would become part of the community, adding the wellbeing centre would provide active day care, clubs and social activities for older people. He said a multi-purpose residents’ room, and possibly the wellbeing centre, could be made available by prior arrangement to organised groups.

Appointment of new AONB Manager

SCC are pleased to announce that Simon Amstutz has been offered and accepted the new combined Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Manager role. The panel, made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the two Joint Advisory Committees, was impressed by the way Simon drew upon his experience of management of both AONBs to set out very clearly how he will approach his new role. The Panel was also joined by Emma Hibbert the Head of Corporate Affairs at Adnams who brought a valuable business perspective to the process.

Simon has worked in the AONBs since 2006 in a variety of roles including Operations Manager, Development Officer and the manager of both of the AONBs. He comes to the post with valuable experience of securing external funding and working with external partners. Simon was instrumental in establishing Managing a Masterpiece and most recently he has participated in the Destination Management Organisation.

The Panel was pleased that a number of strong candidates put themselves forward for the post and we felt this reflected well on the calibre of the two AONBs. Simon will now lead on our behalf the implementation of the new structure that brings together our officers in one combined team to support the two partnerships.

Cabinet Decision Summary

Greater Ipswich City Deal: The Cabinet endorsed the position of Suffolk County Council as a signatory and lead partner to the Greater Ipswich City Deal.

Investing in Apprenticeships: The Cabinet approved a three year investment plan to achieve accelerated and sustainable growth in apprenticeship numbers for the benefit of young people and businesses across the county. Cabinet also approved a capped budget of £1.5m from the Council Tax Freeze Grant (now part of the contingency reserve) to establish a local Apprenticeship Service and deliver a series of targeted marketing campaigns to promote the importance of apprenticeships and drive greater take up by businesses and young people, and agreed delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People, for the procurement activity as set out in the report.

Natural Environment Update

Have you ever wondered what some of Suffolk's rarest species look like, such as the fancy-legged fly, or the Brush-thighed seed-eater? Did you know that Suffolk has 262 priority species, which make up the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan? These species are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in Suffolk. Suffolk's Biological Record Centre has developed an amazing online photo library of all these species here.

Following an extensive consultation with partners and the public earlier this year, **Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership** has reviewed its work and more clearly defined its future focus. The aim now is to provide guidance on Suffolk's priority habitats and species to those organisations with associated statutory responsibilities, such as local authorities and other statutory undertakers, including utility companies. For further information about the new approach please see here.

The Stage 2 submission for the £2m HLF-funded project in the Brecks, **Breaking New Ground**, has now been submitted to HLF. We will hear on March 6th if we have been successful. The project aims to conserve and enhance built and natural heritage as well as increase engagement and understanding. It will also provide training opportunities in heritage skills.

The development of **Sizewell C should be an 'environmental exemplar'** on the Suffolk coast, was the message that came through in an article published this month. The East Anglian Daily Times reported on work to develop Design Principles undertaken by a collaborative of environmental organisations working with Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council.

Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership's **guidance in relation to bats and small wind turbines**, which uses an easy-to-follow flow chart format, has been picked up as far away as India. The Bombay Natural History Society has asked to use the guidance, as they develop Terms of References for impact of wind turbines on birds and bats for the Government of India. The Suffolk guidance is available here.

The first round of the Suffolk Coast's HLF-funded **Touching the Tide community grants** have been awarded. Successful projects included; the Felixstowe coastal rescue patrol service, fencing and interpretation to protect little tern colonies, sailing for children with disabilities and restoration of an historic memorial. See here for more information.

Urban green infrastructure is a network of green spaces, water and other natural features within urban areas. Green infrastructure delivers multiple functions, such as reducing flood risk and cooling high urban temperatures. A new POSTnote summarises research evidence of the effectiveness of green infrastructure, and the challenges to its implementation.

Defra has announced that 27 new Marine Conservation Zones have been created to help better protect our rich marine life, 22 inshore and 5 offshore. The Stour and Orwell estuaries, although proposed for designation, were not amongst those to be designated at this time.

Suffolk Biological Records Centre is trialling a new method of creating maps from remote sources, such as aerial photography. This method utilises the power of photo editing and open source mapping software to pick out changes in ground cover and convert them to mapped areas. It is currently being trialled for monitoring the change of vegetated areas on Orford Ness over time.