

**SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

***Cllr Stephen Burroughes – November 2018***

* **TRANSFORMATION FUNDING**

Suffolk Coastal District Council, on behalf of all the Suffolk Authorities, has been awarded a grant of £87,500 to deliver a pilot scheme supporting patients with housing needs when they are discharged from hospital, as well as reducing the chance of them being admitted to hospital. Based upon the successful Warm Homes Healthy People model, the funding will pay for a housing co-ordinator to work in Ipswich Hospital and the local community to resolve complex, housing-related patient issues.

The project includes the lease of two “halfway home hubs” to provide temporary accommodation for patients, who are medically fit for discharge but cannot return home until a housing issue is resolved. The project will give practical assistance to resolve problems that prevent patients from returning or remaining in their homes.

* **New Ward boundaries finalised for new Council**

Ward boundaries for the new East Suffolk Council have been published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The Commission’s final recommendations propose that East Suffolk’s 55 councillors should represent eight three-councillor wards, ten two-councillor wards and eleven one-councillor wards. In response to local feedback during the public consultation, the Commission has changed some of the proposals it put forward in July, as well as changing the names of some proposed wards as a result of local suggestions. The full recommendations are available on the Commission’s website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk).

The proposed new arrangements must now be implemented by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force the recommendations – will be laid in Parliament in the coming weeks. The draft Order provides for the electoral arrangements to come into force at the authority’s first elections in 2019.

* **Armistice Day Parking**

This is the 100th Anniversary of the 1918 Armistice, and many people across the district are planning commemorative events. This year, Armistice Day (11th November) also falls on a Sunday, so the events are likely to attract large crowds to commemorate the sacrifice of all those in the armed forces who died during World War One. This year (2018) is a particularly significant date, as it marks the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. The councils want to support people who want to commemorate this significant day.

The councils are offering free parking at every car park across Suffolk Coastal and Waveney for the entire day, as there are parades and events being staged in different places throughout the day.

* **Christmas Events**

The councils are also supporting shoppers and traders in the build up to Christmas, particularly with events such as Christmas markets and Christmas lights being switched on.

Obviously, in the build up to Christmas, there is a larger variety of events being held over a longer period of time. However, we would still like to do our bit in supporting the community events and are getting into the festive spirit by offering periods of free parking during the weeks leading up to Christmas.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney have decided to offer two-hour blocks of free parking to support local shops and community organisations, which can be used to link to specific events twice during the build up to Christmas (so two sessions of free parking in the four-week period before Christmas). Town and Parish Councils can decide which days they would like to operate the two-hour’s free parking, and in which car park(s) across east Suffolk, then contact Sue Keeble at Norse to express their interest and take up the offer. Sue can be contacted at: [Susan.Keeble@ncsgrp.co.uk](mailto:Susan.Keeble@ncsgrp.co.uk)

* **Getting Suffolk Coastal Connected**

Work is now beginning to improve the broadband service in the rural areas of Suffolk Coastal. Suffolk Coastal is an active partner in the county-wide, Suffolk Better Broadband Programme which has the aim of providing 100% superfast fibre broadband coverage across the county. But it is recognised that there is likely to be 2-3% of properties that will be without access to reasonable broadband services when the existing programme ends in 2020. In rural areas, the percentage without access is expected to be much greater.

So, in support of our Enabling Communities priority, a Suffolk Coastal Enabling Broadband Programme Board was established in June 2017 with the aim of supporting those communities which are likely to be in that 2-3% that will not have access to an affordable high speed broadband service.

Initially, work was carried out with local communities to identify the worst affected areas and to map out what work needed doing. Then, in May this year, Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet threw its weight behind the scheme – and put aside £250,000 to pay for the work. Now the contracts have been awarded and work has begun to provide the improved coverage in the worst hit areas, across over 50 parishes across the top half of the District (in an area north of a rough line across from the Orford Peninsula). For more information, see our website at: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/enabling-better-broadband-in-suffolk-coastal/>

* **Support available as Universal Credit rollout continues**

The rollout of Universal Credit continues across Suffolk Coastal, but local people are being reassured that there is support in place to help them through the transition. In the Suffolk Coastal area the final Jobcentres to move over to Universal Credit Full Service were Leiston, Felixstowe and Woodbridge, which became Full Service Jobcentres in October. Universal Credit, which is assessed and awarded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is a new single benefit which brings together six of the existing ‘legacy benefits’ - Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit.

It aims to simplify the benefits system and help ensure people are better off in work. It is paid as a single monthly payment, direct to the customer, similar to a wage. The changes mean that any new claims for older-style legacy benefits made by people under pension age will now need to apply for Universal Credit instead, which has to be applied for online.

We recognise that this is a period of uncertainty for people and want to make sure are supported through the application process as well as having all the information they need about the benefit changes.

A huge amount of information is already available on our website. We are also working with a whole range of partners to make sure that people in this area can access the support they need to take the worry and uncertainty out of the change to Universal Credit.

The support available through Suffolk Coastal includes:

* Help is available for people needing to make or maintain their online claim – they can visit us at one of our customer service centres across East Suffolk where staff are on hand to help, as well as public access computers being available;
* We can also help people applying for Universal Credit who want to look into how they can make the most of their new single monthly payment. Suffolk Coastal is working with Felixstowe Citizens Advice and Leiston, Saxmundham and District Citizens Advice to offer free personalised financial advice. This can be accessed by speaking to their work coach or talking to Citizens Advice directly;
* Suffolk Coastal’s Housing Benefits and Housing Options teams are preparing for Universal Credit by working with Felixstowe, Leiston and Woodbridge Jobcentres, sharing our knowledge of Housing, Homelessness, Discretionary Housing Payments, help with making and maintaining an online claim and help moving over to a single monthly payment;
* We are also working with Citizens Advice, Flagship and the Disability Advice Service to help people make or maintain the online Universal Credit claims;
* A Private Landlords’ guide to Universal Credit has also been produced, following comments made in the Waveney are when Universal Credit was rolled out there. This is on our website at: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit)
* We have worked with North East Suffolk and Felixstowe Citizens Advice to produce a social media video to help people prepare for UC – on our website at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit) or on Youtube.

Find out more about Universal Credit at: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/universal-credit)

* **Green Bin Rollout & Removal of Unwanted Brown Bins**

****Phase one of delivering the new garden waste bins to homes in Suffolk Coastal is now nearing completion, although we will continue to deliver the new bins to those who signed up for the scheme later on.

We are now starting the process of collecting all unwanted brown bins in the district. This is being done area by area, according to the normal routes and dates for collection.

A week before the removal of the brown bins, our refuse crews will leave a hanger on all grey bins when they empty these. The hanger will explain what to do and when to put the brown bins out for us to take away.

If the brown bin is no longer required, households are being asked to put the unwanted bin out with their blue bin on the normal collection day, and re-use the bin hanger. Please securely attach the hanger to the unwanted brown bin so that the ‘tick’ is clearly visible. You can also put a note on any unwanted brown bin, asking for it to be taken away. Just make sure it is securely attached and clearly visible.

On collection day, the refuse crews will empty ALL brown bins as well as green bins. Any unwanted brown bins will then be sprayed with temporary paint and left on the side of the road. The removal crews will pick these up later on the same day. The removal crews will only take the bins with the sprayed marking. If there is any doubt as to whether the bin is wanted or not, it will not be removed.

We don’t know how many households want to keep their brown bins for repurposing and how many will need to be removed. Therefore, it is hard to set a timescale of the operation, but we estimate that around 40,000 unwanted brown bins will be removed.

We will try to publish a weekly schedule on our website of the roads we will be collecting from. This may change, depending on how many bins are left out for removal. If you are already a member of the scheme and haven’t opted in yet, you can still change your mind. We will continue to provide the upgraded bins, free of charge, to anyone who is eligible, even after the autumn rollout.

* **Polling Station Review**

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils are currently reviewing the polling stations before the elections taking place in May 2019. As part of the review, everyone has the opportunity to comment on the polling stations we use, and their suitability, facilities and accessibility.

The (Acting) Returning Officer (ARO), Stephen Baker, Chief Executive of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils will publish his report and recommendations on 31 October 2018, which is open for public consultation until 30 November 2018. The final proposals will be presented and considered at a full meeting of the East Suffolk Shadow Council on 28 January 2019. Comments or representations can be made in writing to: Electoral Services, Suffolk Coastal District Council, East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1RT Electoral Services, Waveney District Council, 2 Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ or by email to [elections@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:elections@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) More details about the review and a schedule showing the current polling district areas and their allocated polling station venues can be found on the East Suffolk website: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/elections/review-of-polling-districts-polling-places-and-polling-stations-2018/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/elections/review-of-polling-districts-polling-places-and-polling-stations-2018/)

For more information, please contact the Electoral Services Team on 01394 444 685 or 01502 523 238.

* **Deben Leisure Centre officially opened**

Deben Leisure Centre was officially re-opened after its £3.5 million redevelopment on Saturday, 6 October 2018. Suffolk Coastal’s Chairman, Cllr Nicky Yeo carried out the all important opening duties alongside Cllr TJ Haworth-Culf, Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet Member with responsibility for customers, communities and leisure. After Cllr Yeo and Cllr Haworth-Culf cut the ribbon to declare Deben Leisure Centre officially open for business, our partners, Places Leisure staged a range of activities including personal trainer tasters, group exercise sessions and family fit exercise classes which were free for both members and non-members.

Deben Leisure Centre was closed in September 2017 to undergo a £3.5 million refurbishment, and is the first project to be completed in Suffolk Coastal’s five-year programme to improve leisure facilities and encourage more people to become active and fit. If you would like to stay up to date with the progress of the Leisure Programme, sign up to receive our regular newsletter by contacting [leisure@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

* **Honour Run 2018 success**

Staying on the sporting theme, the first Honour Run proved to be a great success when it took place on Sunday, 21 October 2018.

Around 250 walkers, joggers and runners of all ages took part in the run and raised a total of £2,600 for the Suffolk British Legion Poppy Appeal, which supports serving and ex-serving men and women in the armed forces.

The event was organised by Suffolk Coastal District Council and Suffolk British Legion with thanks going to the Forestry Commission and Rock Barracks who supported the event by letting us use the facilities. The run took place in Rendlesham Forest, which was established during the First World War when Britain had an increasing demand for timber.

The Royal British Legion is leading the nation in the Thank You movement – to say thank you to the WW1 generation who served, sacrificed and changed the world we live in today. #Thankyou100

* **Woodbridge Skatepark set to expand**

Plans are being developed to expand popular Skatepark in Woodbridge. Following the recent refurbishment of the neighbouring Deben Leisure Centre, the area immediately behind the leisure centre became vacant. This area has now been earmarked to expand the space available at Woodbridge Skatepark. Suffolk Coastal District Council wants to hear what the users would like to see in the additional space. To have your say, please email your ideas to [leisure@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) by 16 November 2018.

All ideas received will be shared with a number of skate companies, who will come up with their proposed design based on these. On 16 February 2019, an event will be held where the skate companies present their design ideas to the users, who will vote for their preferred one. Once the winning design has been chosen, the users will have the opportunity to sit down with the skate company to go through the design and work with them to make sure they get what they want.

Woodbridge Skatepark was built in 2008, in a partnership between the local community, Woodbridge Town Council, Just 42 Youth Club and Suffolk Coastal District Council. It officially opened in January 2009.

**Cllr Stephen Burroughes**

Suffolk Coastal District Council

Member for Yoxford & Peasenhall