

August 2016 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal

Public consultation for the Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal proposal was launched on Friday 8th July and will run to 23rd August. The questionnaire can be found at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk along with background information, links to the Deal documents and a helpful FAQ. The site offers information about the Norfolk/Suffolk deal as well as providing people with information on plans across the wider East Anglia area. The questions have been developed with Ipsos-Mori and been scrutinised by their Polls for Publication Unit, to ensure accuracy, impartiality and credibility of results, as well as to stand up to legal, media, public, business, government or third party scrutiny. Ipsos-Mori is a member of the British Polling Council, which means they are bound by industry-wide quality procedures. Suffolk County Council passed an amendment to include a question about whether residents supported the idea of a directly elected Mayor. This has been incorporated into the set of questions. To make sure as many people as possible are aware of Devolution plans in Norfolk and Suffolk, Norfolk County Council will be producing a leaflet that will go out to households. In Suffolk we are using a multi-media approach including social media, outdoor advertising, newspaper advertising, mainstream news items as well as engagement with staff and other stakeholders across the county. This approach will ensure that there is ongoing awareness throughout the period and beyond. Consultation responses will be fed back to the Secretary of State at the start of September 2016. The Secretary of State will look at these alongside the Governance Review, the draft Governance Scheme and any other views that have been sent to them to see if the proposed devolution proposals will improve services for the participating areas in Norfolk and Suffolk. If the Secretary of State thinks that their tests have been met they would talk with the councils involved and then make an order, if Parliament approves, to set up a new Norfolk and Suffolk Mayoral Combined Authority. Suffolk County Council will continue to take into account all views of residents and stakeholders up to the next decision point in October when all Councils will be asked to vote to continue with the Devolution process.

The highlights of the Deal which Norfolk and Suffolk Councils voted on are:

- A single pot of £25m a year of new money for the next 30 years (£750m) to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs. 40% of the 'single pot' will be revenue, which can support capital borrowing
- £100m, over five years, of new money to support the building of new homes across Norfolk and Suffolk. Recognising the housing market conditions in Norwich and Ipswich, Government will also provide the Combined Authority with an additional £30m over five years, split equally for Norwich City and Ipswich Borough, to meet its housing needs
- A guaranteed £225m transport budget for the next four years
- Control of an existing c£20m a year Adult skills funding to ensure the training offer matches the needs of local businesses and the local labour market
- Control of an existing c£2m Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE grant) to enable funding to better meet the needs of local Norfolk and Suffolk employers
- Greater control over who delivers transport services in Norfolk and Suffolk, and how they are delivered, rather than it being imposed on us by Central Government

Council shows strong support for delivering high quality apprenticeships

Councillors from across the Chamber at Suffolk County Council unanimously offered their support to a motion pushing for delivery of high quality apprenticeships for young people in Suffolk. Suffolk County Council established the Suffolk Apprenticeship Service in 2014 which has already delivered a 15 per cent growth in the numbers of young people who have been able to secure an Apprenticeship. The service has supported thousands of young people and employers over the last two years. This followed work undertaken by the council in 2013 as part of the Greater Ipswich City Deal in 2013, when a commitment was made to achieve the ambitious growth target of 5000 additional Apprenticeships by 2019. The Apprenticeship Suffolk Business Service is delivered in partnership with Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, and has worked with over 4,000 small and medium sized employers across Suffolk, generating in excess of 500 new Apprenticeship vacancies. The profile of Apprenticeships has been raised through a wide range of events, publishing regular local vacancy information online and profiling local employers and Apprentices through the local media. Suffolk's Young Ambassadors Network of Apprentices has supported this work by going into schools and local communities to spread the positive benefits of Apprenticeships to other young people. In Ipswich, the MyGo youth employment service, a national flagship model, is now well established and has supported over 4,600 young people since January 2015, including encouraging many people into Apprenticeships. A MyGo Centre is due to open in Lowestoft at the end of July. During the autumn at the third Suffolk Skills Show the

council will launch the new online platform 'Icanbea' with district and borough councils to connect young people and businesses more directly to see what Apprenticeship opportunities are out there. Welcoming the motion which was put forward by the Suffolk Labour Group, Suffolk County Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills said: "High quality Apprenticeships are a vital route into work for young people today. Taking up the opportunity that an Apprenticeship offers means that the young person can secure the essential first step on their career ladder and gain vital personal and technical skills. There are also many benefits to business from employing Apprentices and there are some excellent examples of Suffolk employers using Apprenticeships as the cornerstone of their talent pipeline.

Upper Orwell Crossings – excellent level of response to consultation so far

There has been a huge amount of interest in Suffolk County Council's proposal for three new River Orwell crossings since the launch of the Upper Orwell Crossings consultation earlier this month. During the first couple of weeks of the consultation over 7,000 people have visited the website www.Suffolk.gov.uk/UpperOrwellCrossings leading to over 10,000 page views. 700 people have attended public exhibitions and more than 490 people have completed the consultation survey already. There have also been 575 reactions, comments and shares on social media with social media advertising reaching over 55,800 people. Feedback so far shows that people think that regeneration, more businesses and jobs are important benefits of the proposal and that managing congestion is one of the key issues to be considered as the proposal continues to develop. Whilst the feedback on social media has been very encouraging, it is important for those who wish to comment officially to complete the consultation survey that is available on the Council's website at www.Suffolk.gov.uk/UpperOrwellCrossings. In March 2016, Suffolk County Council received a provisional funding agreement of £77million from the Department for Transport for all three of the Upper Orwell Crossings. This followed the approval of its Outline Business Case which demonstrated how the proposed crossings would support investment, enterprise and regeneration in Ipswich, and would relieve congestion and improve connectivity for all road users.

The consultation is open until Friday 12 August and the public exhibitions are an opportunity for all those who are interested in commenting on the proposal to speak to a member of the project team and provide feedback

Friday 1 July to Friday 12 August (between 9am – 5pm) Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX

Friday 22 July to Friday 12 August (During opening times) Chantry Library, Hawthorn Drive, Ipswich, IP2 0QY

The crossings are estimated to cost in the region of £100 million, but it is anticipated the economic and transport benefits for Ipswich would amount to £600 million. This means that for everyone £1 invested in the crossings, £6 of benefits are realised. Suffolk County Council is hoping to commence construction in 2019 with construction taking 2 to 3 years.

More than a third of Suffolk's schools to benefit from new funding partnership

More than a third of Suffolk's publicly funded schools have been awarded funding through a new £600,000 partnership between Suffolk County Council's Raising the Bar programme and the nationally renowned Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). The partnership aims to boost the attainment of pupils by bringing the best education research to the county. Suffolk schools were invited to bid for money from the Challenge Fund to use for projects that have been evaluated by the EEF and have shown promise in raising educational attainment elsewhere in the country. The additional cash will enable the successful schools to implement different programmes covering mathematics, reading and writing, and science. Some focus on developing effective teaching strategies, while others are aimed at students who are at risk of not reaching their potential by providing focused additional support. Suffolk schools responded positively to the opportunity and a total of more than 120 schools have been offered funding, to train a total of more than 600 school staff. Over the last two years, almost £600,000 has already been invested in helping schools improve education in Suffolk by funding interventions and approaches put forward and developed by schools. The new fund will support more disciplined innovation, where schools are financially incentivised to implement evidence-based programmes and interventions.

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