

July 2015 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Have your say on the re-shaping of Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Service

Suffolk Fire and Rescue (SF&R) is asking the public for their views on helping to shape the future of the Service. The pre-consultation, running until 24th July, is asking members of the public, our staff and other partner organisations to put forward their thoughts on how to maintain a service with a reduced budget, detailing what they value about the current service and what aspects should be preserved. SF&R provides a round-the-clock, seven-days-a-week emergency service to the people of Suffolk. The service currently employs 701 people; 208 full-time firefighters, 435 on-call firefighters and 58 fire service staff in non-operational support roles. It is further supported by 26 community fire volunteers, a number that the service is keen to increase. In 2014/15 SF&R received 6,762 emergency calls for help and subsequently responded to 5,003 emergencies across Suffolk. This is a reduction of about 40% from the number of 999 calls we attended 10 years ago. In Suffolk we are expecting to have to make savings in excess of £1m over the next two years with details becoming clearer in the government autumn spending review. Let us know your views by e-mail, at: FireServiceRedesign@suffolk.gov.uk; call us on: 01473 260588 between 9am and 5pm (Monday to Friday); or write to us at: Service Redesign Programme Manager, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service HQ, 8, Russell Rd, Ipswich, IP1 2BX. Maintaining valued services in a tough financial climate requires some difficult decisions. The Fire and Rescue Service is one such valued service, and it is vital that we hear from as many people as possible before coming up with our proposals for the future. We would urge everyone who is interested to get in touch and let us know their views. . The pre-consultation booklet and related information can be found on the Service's webpage: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/emergency-and-rescue/fire-service-redesign/>

Are you a private foster carer?

As part of Private Fostering week, which began on Monday 6 July, SCC is appealing to Suffolk residents to let them know about children who are being privately fostered. Private fostering is when a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is looked after by someone other than their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more. A close relative includes a step-parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt, but not extended family, such as a great aunt or uncle. If you are involved in a private fostering arrangement or know about one, please contact us on 01473 265025. You can find out more about the support available to private foster carers and why it's important to let us know your arrangements at www.suffolk.gov.uk/privatefostering.

Programme to support Suffolk's vulnerable recurrent mothers shows real success

SCC is delivering positive, visible results in supporting and reducing the number of vulnerable women across the county who are susceptible to repeated pregnancies and whose babies are removed through assessment and court proceedings. In 2010, the council began analysing data available concerning women who have multiple children removed through court proceedings. The 'Positive Choices' programme was developed as a result. In the 12 months from April 2011, 34 babies were removed from their mothers at birth in a local hospital. Of these, 24 women were mothers who had previously had babies removed, and four of these mothers had had as many as eight children removed previously. In just four years, the programme is starting to really show signs that the support and advice it offers to vulnerable women is making a difference. During its initial pilot, a team of three worked with a group of women, providing advice and support to address some of the underlying issues behind the women's' recurrent pregnancies. As a result of the pilot's success, SCC established the Positive Choices Team, whose primary objective is to support women who have previously had their children removed from their care, or are at risk of having further children removed. The team is currently working with 45 women and of these 25 are receiving intensive support, in addition 16 women are being further supported in an outreach capacity. We are wholeheartedly committed to supporting vulnerable people in Suffolk. That's why the work we have done in helping these mothers is so important. It is outcomes that matter and that is why the clear positive results we are seeing are so encouraging.

Refinancing proposal for Suffolk's Energy from Waste facility will save over £24million

SCC's cabinet will discuss proposals to re-finance part of the capital costs of the Energy from Waste facility at Great Blakenham, when it meets on 14th July. If the cabinet do agree to the proposal, the new agreement would reduce contract-fee payments to Suez Environment (formerly SITA UK), saving over £24million over the remaining lifetime of the contract. If all goes to plan, the hope would be that the refinancing will take place later this year.

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