

Parish Council Annual Report Year Ending March 2020.

The most notable event this year was that finally in November the Parish Council, as sole trustee, took over responsibility for the village hall, which is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Prior to this, a working party was formed in order to plan the refurbishment of the hall, and to start fundraising. Thanks are due particularly to Mr Neil Smith, for drawing up plans and a budget, and to Cllr. Clark for spearheading the fundraising. It was hoped that initial and urgent work to deal with the damp could be put in hand in the Spring, but as the country went into lockdown towards the end of March due to the Covid 19 virus, this has been put on hold. Grateful thanks are also extended to Mr Fisher for the many years he has served running the hall.

The Parish Council was pleased to welcome Councillor James Mallinder, as the new District Councillor, and he has already given the village a great deal of support.

Plans for VE Day celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe, on May 8th, to include a tea party, then an evening event with forties style music and dancing, organised by Cllr. Clark, and financially supported by Cllr Mallinder from his Enabling Communities Budget, were put on hold in March because of the Coronavirus pandemic and the imminent lockdown. It is hoped this can now take place in August, to coincide with VJ Day.

Councillors and the clerk have attended various seminars and outside meetings through the year, including the Budget Review, a Planning Forum, a workshop on Assets of Community Value, the Local Plan Hearing, Woodbridge and District ASB and the Deben Parishes Joint Forum.

Sincere sympathy was extended to Cllr Whitmore, whose wife, Ann, passed away in October. In order to care for her at home, Cllr Whitmore resigned from the Parish Council in September, but was warmly welcomed back onto the council as a co-opted member in January.

Eyke Millennium Group.

The group maintains responsibility for checking the defibrillator on a monthly basis and submitting an online report to *Community Heartbeat*.

Apart from this, it has been a quiet year, but as usual the group was pleased to put up the Christmas Tree outside the church. The lights help to create a very festive atmosphere, and this was commented on by many. Members also like to support the Christmas Tree Festival inside the church, and this year did so on the theme of Christmas related ideas starting with M, so mince pies, Mary, Magi and mistletoe all made an appearance, along with Merry Christmas, of course.

Members had also volunteered to help with the preparations for the VE Day celebrations, which are now on hold until, potentially, August.

Recreation Ground Report 2019/20

There have been a few instances of fly tipping over the past year, but the litter has been kept to a minimum as a result of regular checks. The play area is neat and tidy and the play equipment is checked often.

The car park barrier was damaged by a vehicle some time ago, and as a result is currently ineffective. Repairs are in hand.

The copse area, protected by the deer fencing in the far corner of the ground is flourishing.

Eyke Annual Parish Meeting
Suffolk County Council
2019/20 News Highlights

Here is a selection of news items from Suffolk County Council that featured over the last 12 months. For further details on any of these stories, please go to the end of this report. For more news items, visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/>.

- **New street lighting proposed to reduce the county's carbon footprint**
- **County Council approves budget to spend more on services for vulnerable residents**
- **New permit scheme aims to address roadwork disruption**
- **New recycling centre opens in Bury St Edmunds**
- **Date agreed for plans to tackle Suffolk's parking problems**
- **Suffolk celebrates CQC success**
- **Council pushes forward with commitment to creating more places for specialist education in Suffolk**
- **Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service rated "Good" in Government inspection**
- **The Hold topping out ceremony**
- **Eleventh shared Police and Fire station officially opened**
- **£750,000 improvement scheme at St Peter's Wharf, Ipswich, completes early**
- **Suffolk businesses celebrated for reducing carbon emissions**
- **Suffolk pothole repair scheme to go countywide**
- **Suffolk County Council awarded £4.41m for smart street lights**
- **New Highways Self Help scheme empowers Suffolk people to do more in their community**
- **Ofsted confirms that Suffolk County Council's Children's Services are 'Outstanding'**

Andrew Reid

County Councillor – Wilford Division

Tel: - 07545 423799

Email: - Andrew.reid@suffolk.gov.uk

Dear Resident

In May I have been your district councillor for a year . My first year in local politics has proven to be both positive and inspiring.

I hope very much I have lived up to expectations to be an active councillor involved in your community and getting to know as many residents as possible. Over the last year I have attend 9 village fates, an inspiring afternoon in Shottisham at their open gardens and Sutton's beautiful flower festival .

In September I held a number of surgeries across the ward where I was able to help residents in their individual concerns .

Then at the end of 2019 a carol service , two harvest festivals and afternoon making apple juice with Boyton Parish council .

Asked to be the first Cabinet member for the Environment at East Suffolk is a great honour and I am grateful to the leader in trusting me with this important portfolio .

I have approached this with energy and enthusiasm to push the agenda and make a real difference. Making sure environmental considerations are at the top priority of everything we do and completely embedded into our decision process and policy formation .

Unfortunately in March all of this is suspended . In reaction to the Coronavirus I want to express my thanks on behalf of all residents to how proactive, caring and thoughtful you are on the Peninsula . All villages have a volunteer group who are keeping an eye on vulnerable residents and I am helping to make sure support is focused in the right direction .

We are blessed in living right in the middle of some of the most beautiful countryside of the UK and looking outside there is something reassuring to see blue skies , watching the birds start nesting and to see the spring flowers ,proving everything will eventually be back to normal .



Cllr James Mallinder | Deben Ward
Cabinet Member for the Environment

East Suffolk Council

07810 815879

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk

EYKE PARISH COUNCIL AGM MAY 2020

TREE WARDEN'S REPORT

It has been a great year for the copse since the erection of the deer fence. Trees are now growing well, losing only a relatively small number through the drought of last summer as well as the normal winter loss. The fruit trees we planted 4 or 5 years ago as part of the Scattered Orchards scheme are doing well and at the present time are in flower. Last autumn I cleared all the brambles around the fruit trees and will continue to do so. Unfortunately, the daffodils, aconites and snowdrops planted by Jan Stangoe and I three years ago have disappeared! Most probably mice.

Last November we received 50 saplings from the Suffolk Tree Warden Network, originating from the Woodland Trust. Karen Watson, Ron and I planted them all, along with stakes and protective sleeves. I am happy to report that these are thriving.

Last year I attended several Woodlands Communications days at various venues. The news is still not good regarding Ash Die Back though most of Eyke's ash trees do not appear to be suffering too much, the exception being some in Low Road. I have again approached Nicholas Newton of East Suffolk council requesting that a TPO be put on the old oak tree in Church Lane but he will not do so until it is under threat.

During the last year I have spent a lot of time at the copse clearing brambles which had taken over. It is a physically hard job. However, I have cleared the great proportion of them, unearthing a few young trees that were smothered. Naturally, the brambles will keep growing but I should be able to control them better. Last summer it was like being in paradise, spending time in the copse as wild flowers brought bees, butterflies, cinnabar moths and a plethora of insects and wildlife. I am looking forward to this coming summer – maybe I will take a garden chair and my book.

Simon Sutch
Reeves Hall
Eyke IP12 2QE

16 April 2020

Eyke Charities, Treasurer's Report, year ending 31 December 2019

The Charities gifted £150 in cash to Eyke villagers and £128.62 in the form of books to Eyke School leavers during the 2019 calendar year.

The Charities' income during the period exceeded expenditure (income £345.68 against expenditure of £278.62).

The Charities' total assets at the end of 2019 amounted to £11,712. This compared very favourably with the previous year's total of £9,902 and reflected an increase in total assets, after expenditure on books and cash gifts, of 18.3%.

The funds we have under management by the CCLA have clearly performed well and the associated dividends continue to cover our expenditure.

Total yield on the COIF fund, in the form of dividends, was 3.03%; yield on the Global Equity fund was 3.16%..

I set out below a record of our year end asset position over the last seven years.

2013	£7,792
2014	£8,165
2015	£8,308
2016	£9,245
2017	£10,202
2018	£9,902
2019	£11,712

I have updated the Charities Commission online financial records as required. I just need the Vicar's details to update the Trustees' records. This is in hand.

Thank you

Simon Sutch
Treasurer

Addendum At the risk of stating the obvious, these figures reflect the financial position before the outbreak of Covid 19. FYI, as at yesterday (16.4.20) our fund values would show as £10,267 rather than the £11,335 of 2019 year end. This is a drop of some 9.5%.

Village Hall Report for Year to 31st March 2020

The hall has again been used regularly. By the Parish Council for their bi-monthly meetings and to discuss planning applications, the over 50s for regular meetings, including Jumble Sales and their annual Christmas Party, the PCC for Harvest Festival and a Spring Supper. It has also been used for various Private Parties Wine Tastings, Yoga classes on Wednesday evenings and Tai Chi on Friday afternoons.

In March the boiler was serviced.

The accounts for the year to the 31st March 2019 have yet to be examined but once done will be available for inspection. Initial figures show a surplus for the year of just under £3000.

The hall has been granted charity status and plans to change the structure of the running of the hall put in place. The latter will commence on the 1st April 2020 when a newly formed committee will be in place.

During the past year meetings have been held to discuss changes to the structure of the hall. As a result of these meetings plans have been drawn up and costings prepared which indicate that if all proposed works are to be carried out a sum in excess of £250,000 needs to be raised.

I would like to thank all the hall users for helping to keep it in reasonable condition.

With the input of the clerk to the Parish Council and members of other organisations involved in the life of the village the annual report will be made to the Suffolk Local History Society.

MJF.

Eyke C of E Primary School



This term across the school, children have had exciting trips. Year 5 spent a day dinghy sailing at Aldeburgh Yacht Club. By all accounts it was an extremely exciting day and the children had the opportunity both to sail and get very wet! Fortunately nobody got too wet on the KS1 trip to Bawdsey. This was the Fabulous Finish for the children's Seaside Topic this term. Governors will be able to tell you how much the children have enjoyed their topic as they have been in school talking to the children and looking through their topic books. The children all spoke very confidently about the learning they have been doing. As I write we also have 37 children from Year 5 and Year 6 away at Hilltop Activities centre. We look forward to hearing about all their adventures on their return on Monday.



Music goes from strength to strength at Eyke. This term choir have been to Bury St Edmunds Cathedral to take part in the Big Sing with children from other church schools all over Suffolk. It was a wonderful day. The children took part in a rhythm workshop in the cathedral grounds and a singing workshop in the cathedral itself and finished with a performance of music they had learnt in a concert for visitors to the cathedral. The following week they spent the day in Aldeburgh at St Peter and St Paul Church singing with children from other local schools. Currently 24 children are learning the violin and viola – not bad for a school of 127 pupils! As well as having instrument lessons and musicianship tuition the children also part of string ensembles, the Acorns, Saplings and Oaks and this term they performed for parents at celebration assembly. Next year we are increasing our offer to include piano, cello and the double bass!

For the second year running we are delighted by the academic achievements of the children. Our phonics scores and KS2 results were again particularly strong. This is a testament to the commitment and creativity of our teachers and LSAs; the support and guidance of our Governing Body; all the parents who support the children at home; and volunteers in school, especially those who come into read every week.

The term has ended in great style with the KS2 production of The Inspector Calls. This year we performed in the village hall, enjoying the stage and the velvet curtains. The children performed with humour, confidence and enormous enthusiasm and the singing was exceptional.

Unfortunately the real inspectors still haven't arrived –we would have loved for them to see our fantastic performance!

Eyke C of E Primary School



As I signed off from our newsletter last term I noted that it was a pity the real Ofsted inspectors had missed our school performance of “The Inspector Calls”. Well this term they arrived! We are delighted to have been rated Good in all areas but even more delighted with the detail of the report. The noted that as well as the children enjoying their lessons they are also, “polite and considerate towards each other and the adults who teach them” The also wrote that, “Pupils learn to be independent and responsible and are involved in the wide range of extra opportunities and clubs the school offers.”

We are particularly proud that they recognised that pupils’ emotional wellbeing has a high priority and that we offer good nurture and support to vulnerable children who as a result are growing in confidence, attend school better and learning more.



This term the KS2 children have been learning about life in Victorian Britain discovering what life was like for children and about the legacy that the Victorians left in our community. Fortunately the Rev Darling, who started our school, kept detailed records in beautiful leather bound books so the children have had lots of opportunity to read first-hand accounts in their original format. We were very interested to discover that in 1887 10 children arrived in our little village of Eyke from the first Dr Barnardo’s children’s home in London. The topic has also been brought to life by a trip to the Longshop Museum in Leiston and old workhouse. Other trips this term have included a computing day at BT and four pupils from Year 5 taking part in the “Team Maths Challenge” at Woodbridge School in which we were delighted to have been placed 4th.

The term draws now to a close with three performances of our whole school nativity play, Stories of Christmas, on Tuesday and an Instrumental Recital on Thursday. This Friday choir will be singing in the Christmas Tree Festival at All Saints Church with the community - this year our decorations are all made from recycled materials. We hope it is the start of a peaceful Christmas.

Eyke C of E Primary School



Last term we had our visit from OFSTED and this term the inspector called again. SIAMS. We are delighted with the report that recognises our desire for all our pupils to succeed and realise what is possible within themselves and our commitment to providing a learning environment which is full of opportunity. The report also noted the quality of RE teaching, the fact it is child led and that pupils enjoy RE and are proud of the work they produce. The report also said that pupils are clear that their voice matters and that they are given many opportunities to make a difference to the life of the school and to be courageous advocates in improving the lives of others.



This term we were delighted to welcome the Diocesan Kagera Team to Eyke. The children had a wonderful day learning about life in Kagera: they made nature scenes and toys out of recycled materials, tasted fruits and learnt about Church and Worship which involved lots of singing and dancing. They also created a beautiful Khanga textile with our school bible passage, "If you can believe, all things are possible" which we will hang in school. The special lunch of curry, rice and exotic fruits also went down a treat!

Key Stage 2 have also had trips "Ducking Down the Deben" this term. They were fantastic days out following the path of the River Deben. The children started in Debenham only a mile from the source of the river and where the river is a ford. They then went onto Brandeston to see how the river changed 10 miles downstream. Elm Class had a big surprise as the river had burst its banks after Monday night's rainfall and the surrounding area was flooded. By Wednesday the water level had dropped again and Silver Birch were able to measure the depth, width and flow. The children then went onto Woodbridge to see where the river becomes tidal and finally ended up in Bawdsey looking at the mouth of the river. A fantastic example of how our teachers bring our curriculum to life.

The term draws now to a close with strange, unprecedented times. The school is eerily quiet and the arrival of the spring flowers and the potato shoots in our school garden can only be witnessed by most of the children virtually. The strength of our school community is evident in the wonderful messages of support we are receiving and the enthusiasm with which pupils, parents and teachers are working together from their homes to ensure learning continues.

Eyke Annual Parish Meeting

Suffolk County Council

2019/20 News Highlights

Here is a selection of news items from Suffolk County Council that featured over the last 12 months. For further details on any of these stories, and more, visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/>.

New street lighting proposed to reduce the county's carbon footprint

Suffolk County Council is looking to reduce its carbon footprint by investing £9.8m in street lighting, after Cabinet approved an LED street lighting replacement project on 25 February 2020.

Following a review of its street lighting policy in 2010, and with energy prices set to increase at between 8% and 12% a year, the Council has decided the high energy consumption of its existing lanterns could create further pressure on its resources in the near future.

The Council owns and maintains over 60,000 street lights. Back in 2010, the Council took numerous steps to help reduce both the energy costs and carbon footprint of its lighting stock. This included the introduction of part-night lighting arrangements and conversion to LED for those lighting units that were consuming the highest level of energy.

The proposal to convert the remaining street lighting stock to LED will help to reduce both Suffolk's energy consumption and carbon footprint, whilst providing crisper illumination of the streets for residents. The project will also ensure that Suffolk remains resilient to any future energy price increases. The project will be completed in the autumn of 2022.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

"We recognise the importance of our environment in Suffolk and the impacts of climate change. Where possible, we want to ensure that we protect and enhance the natural environment, decrease carbon emissions and reduce the use of scarce resources, for the well-being of future generations and the natural world. Initiatives such as this are important in helping us to achieve that aim.

"We will be replacing almost 43,000 lights with new energy saving LED lanterns. This will save approximately 60% of our current energy bill which can be invested elsewhere. We will be able to reduce our carbon usage by around 80%, benefitting residents throughout Suffolk."

County Council approves budget to spend more on services for vulnerable residents

On 13 February 2020, Suffolk County Council approved its annual budget. The Council will increase its spending power again this coming financial year, particularly in Children's and Adults services, where demand continues to rise year on year.

In 2020/2021, the Council's budget will rise to £556million which represents an increase of £37m (7.1%) from 2019/20. Children's and Adults Services represent around 70% of the Council's overall spend.

This year's budget is based on a 12-month financial settlement from government, rather than the three or four-year agreement which is usually offered.

As well as addressing the need to maintain funding for key services, the Council will invest an additional £3.5m into two one-year programmes, the Suffolk 2020 fund (£3m) and a highways investment fund (£500k).

The Suffolk 2020 fund will be used for projects that can deliver a real difference for local communities. The intention is to adopt good ideas covering more than one area of Suffolk, rather than having a number of small-scale projects. To qualify for the fund, projects must link to one of the following themes: carbon reduction; carbon offset, road safety, natural environment; built environment; innovation; and use of technology.

Each project must offer a clear return on investment through positive economic, social, or environmental impact. County Councillors can put ideas forward on behalf of their community and must seek the sponsorship of a Cabinet Member for consideration. Further details of the fund will be made available in due course.

The £500k highways investment fund will focus on improving the safety of pupils and parents travelling to and from school, by refreshing lines and cleaning and repairing signs in and around school zones.

The funding is allocated for use within the 2020/21 financial year and looks set to benefit areas around many Suffolk schools, complementing the road marking renewal programme that is taking place as part of the move of civil parking powers. Suffolk Highways officers are developing a plan of how these extra works will be identified and delivered. Further information will be announced in due course.

Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Gordon Jones said:

"The setting of a balanced budget is never easy. Especially given the continuing financial challenges we have seen during the last few years in a number of our services.

"It is right that we continue to focus our budget and resources where they will have the biggest impact. I am pleased to say this year our calls have been answered, at least in part. The provisional local government settlement for this year enables the Council to set a budget for 2020/2021 that will see no change to current service levels over and above those planned through our ongoing transformation programmes.

“Unfortunately, however, as we are only getting a 12-month settlement, we lack the longer-term certainty needed to deal with the large departmental budgets that we manage including Children’s and Adults Services. We are therefore taking the measured decision to raise council tax by 1.98 per cent and implement a 2 per cent rise in the Adult Social Care Precept, which is ring-fenced for use within our highest demand service.”

New permit scheme aims to address roadwork disruption

On 28 January, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet gave the go-ahead for a new permit scheme that they hope will reduce delays on Suffolk’s roads caused by roadworks.

The introduction of a roadworks permit scheme for the county’s roads will give Suffolk County Council’s Network Assurance Team enhanced powers to place conditions on work carried out by utility companies and other organisations, including Suffolk Highways.

At present, public utilities simply need to inform Suffolk County Council of the dates when they are planning to do their works. Under a permit scheme, they would have to ask for permission and the council can either approve, refuse or amend their request as they see fit.

Applicants would also have to pay a fee when applying for a permit to do roadworks. The cost will vary depending on the duration of the proposed work, the strategic importance of the affected road, and the time of day the work is due to take place. If roadworks occur outside of the peak congestion periods, the fee could be reduced.

The permit scheme is used successfully elsewhere in the country and there is typically a reduction in congestion on the network.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

“A permit scheme will provide more power to control proposed roadworks. It places responsibility on the applicant to better plan their work. I hope a permit scheme could reduce the impact of that work on the road network and our residents.

“A permit scheme should result in less disruption and less time that vehicles spend in traffic/delays. Consequently, there should also be a reduction in fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

“According to the Department for Transport, other counties that have run a permit scheme have seen a reduction in disruption and so we will endeavour to ensure those who live, work and visit our county also benefit.”

There will be a cost to the local authority to administer the permit scheme because they will need to recruit additional staff and amend existing software to cater for permits. However, the costs associated with the additional work involved will be recovered through the fee income associated with the scheme, making it cost neutral.

The permit scheme will be in place from 1 April 2020.

New recycling centre opens in Bury St Edmunds

The £3.9million flagship site in Fornham Road, Bury St Edmunds, opened on 16 January and replaces the now closed recycling centre at Rougham Hill.

The new recycling centre is part of the West Suffolk Operational Hub, a £23million project by West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council to manage waste by relocating a number of facilities to a single site.

The centre is the first open air site in Suffolk where all containers can be accessed by the public from ground level, removing the need for steps. Visitors can recycle the same wide range of materials as they did at the Rougham Hill recycling centre.

There is also an onsite Reuse shop selling items either reclaimed from the skips or donated directly by the public, with proceeds going to the Benjamin Foundation.

Paul West, Cabinet Member for Waste at Suffolk County Council, said:

“This new flagship site will be a significant asset to people in west Suffolk.

“It is purpose-built to enable the growing communities of west Suffolk to recycle and reuse their rubbish safely and efficiently. And, as all the containers are now on one level, there are no steps to contend with. It is also a safer site with lorries emptying containers in a totally separate area.”

Date agreed for plans to tackle Suffolk’s parking problems

In January 2020, it was announced that councils in Suffolk will take on responsibility for local parking management from 6 April 2020.

Traditionally, roadside parking offences were a matter for the Police. However, parking has become a lower priority for them, so Suffolk County Council is transferring this responsibility to local district and borough councils under a process known as civil parking enforcement, or CPE.

This means each council will be responsible for issuing parking fines, warnings and notices in their area, although a deal has been struck by Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils to have their parking enforced by Ipswich and West Suffolk officers.

A consistent approach is being planned across the whole county, meaning fines will be the same, regardless of which authority manages parking in that area.

Councils already manage public car parks in many towns and villages, so the changes make sense. Suffolk Constabulary is supportive of the move because the transfer of responsibilities will enable them to spend additional time on keeping communities safe and arresting and bringing offenders to justice.

Moving the responsibility from the police to local councils requires that statutory notice is given in Parliament. The parliamentary order was laid on 9 January 2020.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

“Civil parking enforcement powers will soon sit with our district and borough councils across Suffolk. It is essential in enabling our communities to have closer management of their local parking challenges.

“A lot of residents come to us with concerns that people parking in their towns and villages are becoming more inconsiderate, and something needs to be done about it. We agree, and as a result are committed to seeing these parking issues managed locally to ensure fair and safe parking for all.

“I very much welcome the cross-council collaborative working in order to deliver better parking for residents and those visiting Suffolk. Our colleagues will continue working together to ensure CPE is successfully launched and I look forward to seeing the benefits locally that these changes will bring.”

Suffolk celebrates CQC success

In January 2020, Care Quality Commission statistics showed that Suffolk is now top of the table for comparator local authority areas.

In Suffolk, 89.04% of Adult Social Care locations are rated as ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by the Care Quality Commission, the standards agency for adult care.

When it comes to the national rankings, Suffolk is performing equally well. Ranked as third nationally for ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ rated care locations, Suffolk shines out as a great area for adult social care.

This is particularly impressive when it is considered that Suffolk has over 100 more adult social care locations than any of the other areas listed in the top ten.

Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Care, said:

“This is an incredible achievement and something that is worth celebrating. This to me, illustrates that Suffolk is a great place for Adult Social Care, with a wealth of care providers who do fantastic work.

“There are of course, still areas where we can improve and I know work is continuing to raise standards where it is required, but I am confident that we are working hard to address any concerns.

“These results make me incredibly proud and grateful to our care providers for the fantastic way that we are caring for local people.”

More information regarding the CQC ratings of local authority areas or individual care locations can be found on the [Care Quality Commission website](#).

Council pushes forward with commitment to creating more places for specialist education in Suffolk

Suffolk County Council, like many other local authorities, faces an increasingly large demand for education places for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).

In September 2019, a cross-party Policy Development Panel (PDP) was established to review the county’s local offer and identify suitable specialist education places.

The work of the PDP involved a comprehensive analysis. They visited a variety of SEND settings in and around the county, considering the views of service users and

their families, partners, and education providers on the best way to grow Suffolk's specialist education offer both in the short and long term to meet future demand.

A green light to move forward with the work of the PDP was given at the Cabinet's Committee meeting in January 2019. Further work was then done by the Council's Capital Strategy Group to provide an overview of the required level of investment for individual projects.

In April 2019, Cabinet approved a financial investment of up to £45.6 million to support the development of a number of local specialist provisions for children and young people with SEND. The investment, which covers new special schools and specialist units attached to existing mainstream schools, will create over 800 new specialist education places in the county.

Providing more specialist education placements locally will mean that the county's children and young people with additional needs will not have to spend unnecessary time away from their family and home travelling to a specialist provision outside of Suffolk. They will also have the opportunity to strengthen their roots within their local community, so they are able to build strong local networks as they move into adulthood.

In December 2019, Suffolk County Council were in a position to announce more details of the development of new SEND units attached to mainstream schools in the county. Following a thorough evaluation process, a number of suitable schools have been identified to develop:

- Two Generic Key Stage 1 Units at Pipers Vale Primary Academy and Burton End Primary Academy.
- Three Communication and Interaction Key Stage 2 Units at Murrayfield Primary Academy, Houldsworth Valley Primary Academy, and Causton Junior School.
- One Cognition and Learning Key Stage 2 Unit at Clements Primary Academy.
- Three Communication and Interaction Key Stage 3/4 Units at Copleston High School, Ixworth School, and Newmarket Academy.
- One Cognition and Learning Key Stage 3/4 Unit at Castle Manor Primary Academy.

In total, this means an additional 168 new specialist placements will be available for children and their families in Suffolk from September 2020, on top of existing specialist provision. A further commissioning round will begin in Spring 2020 and will consider further expressions of interest from mainstream schools who hope to open units in September 2021.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service rated "Good" in Government inspection

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has undergone its most comprehensive, independent inspection in many years and has been rated as "Good" for its effectiveness, efficiency and how well it leads and manages its staff.

The findings come from a report published on 17 December 2019 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Inspectors

reviewed every aspect of the service, from how we respond to 999 emergencies, to looking at policies, and interviewing a wide range of firefighters and staff.

The report praises many aspects of the service, particularly how well it collaborates with other emergency services and agencies, how it responds to fires and other emergencies, how it ensures fairness and promotes diversity, and the financially sound way the service is run.

Mark Hardingham, Chief Fire Officer, said:

“The ‘Good’ rating we have been given is pleasing and positive for our first inspection. This is down to the hard work and dedication of all our staff and I’m extremely proud to be their, and Suffolk’s, Chief Fire Officer.

“The inspection has reported a balance between what we do well and what we need to do better, much of which is already in hand and some of which will be new work.

“I’m especially pleased that the work we have all been doing on leadership, culture, values, equality and inclusion has been recognised.

“We will never stop working to ensure we provide a good and professional fire and rescue service to Suffolk’s communities whenever they need us.”

Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection at Suffolk County Council, said:

“Our fire service is held in high regard across the county and country, and I understand the importance of continued investment. In recent years we have done this with new uniforms, fire engines, support vehicles and equipment.

“As part of this ongoing investment, we are proposing to increase the service’s budget by £500,000 plus inflation next year. This increase of close to £1m will help contribute to delivering on the improvements identified in the report, alongside our existing plans for investment.”

HMICFRS has now completed its first inspection of all 45 fire and rescue services across the country. The inspections will continue to happen regularly, and it is proposed that Suffolk will be inspected again in 2021.

The Hold topping out ceremony

On 25 September, contractors R G Carter, along with senior officers from Suffolk County Council, the University of Suffolk, Ipswich Vision and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, celebrated the official ‘Topping Out’ of the new ‘The Hold’ building.

Located on the campus of the University of Suffolk, within Ipswich’s unique and regenerating Waterfront, the building will house the majority of Suffolk’s nationally and internationally significant archives.

More than just a new building, ‘The Hold’ project will also be the engine for a transformed, audience-focused Archives service reaching out to diverse communities in Ipswich, the county and the nation, through its activity and digital programmes, engaging people in new and exciting ways.

Paul West, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Heritage, said:

“We’re delighted to have reached this exciting milestone in the project’s development.

“The Hold will not only transform our ability to care for and showcase our county’s records and collections, but it will also engage audiences right across the county, bringing local and nationally significant exhibitions to all Suffolk Archives branches, state of the art research facilities and more access than ever before to digital collections.

The Hold is set to open its doors in spring 2020.

Eleventh shared Police and Fire station officially opened

In August 2019, the new shared Police/Fire station formally opened in Beccles. This is the eleventh shared community Fire and Police facility in Suffolk with stations already operating in Leiston, Newmarket, Saxmundham, Felixstowe, Woodbridge, Ixworth, Elmswell, Debenham, Framlingham and Clare. There are also plans for further joint stations in Stowmarket and Ipswich.

Financial support for the project was secured from the Home Office as part of central government’s drive for closer emergency services collaboration.

Tim Passmore, Suffolk’s Police and Crime Commissioner said:

“The opening of this eleventh joint Police/Fire Station in Suffolk is very good news for the county.

“There are considerable financial benefits as well as significant operational improvements that this collaboration between our two organisations delivers for people and businesses across the county.

“I am already looking forward to the next wave of shared facilities being developed. I am very proud that Suffolk continues to lead the way nationally in blue light collaboration.

Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection, Councillor Richard Rout, said:

“Our partnerships provide our communities and staff with modern facilities and maintains our presence in the community. We are able to deliver savings on the cost of running multiple buildings and enables emergency services to work closely together in supporting the community they serve.

“The sharing of facilities has also opened up further opportunities to collaborate in areas of service delivery, improving efficiencies and engagement with members of the public.

“We have seen great benefits in developing 'blue light' stations with our partners in the police and the ambulance services in Suffolk. In addition to the 11 stations shared with the Constabulary, we also share a further five with the ambulance service.”

£750,000 improvement scheme at St Peter's Wharf, Ipswich, completes early

On 19 July 2019, it was announced that the scheme which began in early January 2019 is now complete. The scheme delivers an enhanced, more welcoming area for residents and visitors enjoying the Ipswich Waterfront

The scheme also set out to accommodate the high number of pedestrians and cyclists that use the area and to support local businesses by improving access for large vehicles visiting the Port.

The scheme was funded via a bid to the Coastal Community Fund by Ipswich Vision and was delivered by Suffolk Highways, Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council (IBC). The works were completed under budget and two weeks ahead of schedule. Additional maintenance was also completed during this time, such as replacing all manhole covers and installing new bollards and railings.

The footways along St Peter's Wharf were reconstructed and there is now a clear carriageway, ensuring a defined area for vehicles and pedestrians. A seating area has been introduced, along with bicycle railings and three new trees.

Suffolk businesses celebrated for reducing carbon emissions

On 10 July 2019, an event was held at one of Suffolk's most sustainable business centres to celebrate the carbon reduction efforts of over 400 Suffolk and Norfolk businesses.

Since their launch in 2010, Suffolk Carbon Charter awards have been presented to hundreds of businesses who show commitment to reducing their carbon emissions, as part of Suffolk's ambitions for Creating the Greenest County.

Many projects have been developed under the Creating the Greenest County banner since 2007. The partnership continues to work with local communities and businesses to help realise the environmental and economic benefits of reducing energy consumption, adapting to climate change and enhancing the natural environment.

Guests saw displays of a hydrogen vehicle, electric cars, electric motorbikes and promotion of Plug In Suffolk, the UK's first open fast charging network for electric vehicles. Guests were also given a tour of the event venue, home to Woolley, a property management company that thrives on creating sustainable developments and holders of a Gold Suffolk Carbon Charter award themselves.

The event was sponsored by Business Energy Efficiency Anglia, which provides energy efficiency grants to eligible businesses in Suffolk and Norfolk.

To find out more about how your business can benefit from the Suffolk Carbon Charter, Business Energy Efficiency Anglia and other projects to support your environmental ambitions, visit www.greensuffolk.org.

Suffolk pothole repair scheme to go countywide

In June 2019, it was announced that a trial scheme to tackle potholes swiftly has been so successful it is being rolled out across Suffolk.

The Suffolk Highways scheme, which started in Ipswich in October 2018, changes how potholes are categorised.

The new system allows engineers to repair potholes close to each other during the same visit, tackling smaller potholes before they can expand.

Previously, they fixed larger holes first and smaller ones at a later date.

The new policy reduces the amount of time workers have to travel between jobs.

Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Highways on Suffolk County Council, said the previous system had been "incredibly complicated", leading to highways workers complaining that they were "driving over potholes to get to potholes".

Councillor Evans said: "The rate you pay the gangs is the same whatever they do, and the material they put in the pothole is the same, so the efficiency savings comes from the travel time.

"I am really pleased - it's about looking at ways the system can be more efficient."

Suffolk County Council awarded £4.41m for smart street lights

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport's (ADEPT) SMART Places Live Labs programme launched on 31 May 2019.

The £22.9million programme, funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) will see eight local authority led projects develop and test prototypes and applications across SMART materials, communications, energy and mobility.

Projects range from harvesting renewable energy from roads and innovative data analytics to using plastics in road surfacing treatment.

In total ADEPT received 28 bids from local authorities across the country. Suffolk County Council was one of the eight successful projects and has been awarded £4.41m for an innovative project to create a network of smart street lights across the county.

Hannah Bartram, Chief Operating Officer for ADEPT said: "Live Labs is a really exciting programme for ADEPT. It gives local highways authorities and their partners the opportunity to innovate, test and introduce new applications for emerging SMART technologies across the local road network.

New Highways Self Help scheme empowers Suffolk people to do more in their community

'Highways Community Self Help', launched in May 2019, is designed to support and empower town and parish councils in Suffolk to carry out minor maintenance tasks in their area.

The much-anticipated scheme was developed in partnership with towns and parishes across Suffolk after it was recognised that many of these councils were willing to carry out additional works to maintain and improve the look of their communities.

The types of works that town and parish councils are keen to undertake include:

- Sign cleaning
- Fingerpost cleaning/painting/repair
- Tree pruning/branch removal
- Hedge cutting/pruning
- Siding out of footways, or paths (widen to original/full width)
- Grass verge cutting
- Weed killing/weed removal.

Towns and parishes across Suffolk will be able to carry out these tasks and more through one or more of the following four options:

- Buying in services from contractors
- Using their own trained employee(s)
- Using volunteers to undertake work
- Buying additional services from Suffolk Highways.

Councillor Mary Evans, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member responsible for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs (until October 2019), said:

“Community Self Help is a further stepping-stone in our bid to work closely with towns and villages throughout Suffolk to achieve even more for our highways across the county

“I am very pleased to be launching such a long-awaited scheme and am delighted to see the interest we have had in it so far.

“This new scheme allows us to work with town and parish councils across the county who have a great sense of community spirit and pride. The scheme will empower them to undertake minor maintenance tasks on their public spaces about which they care so deeply.”

Towns and parishes that are interested in joining Community Self Help are encouraged to visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/communityselfhelp for more details.

Ofsted confirms that Suffolk County Council’s Children’s Services are ‘Outstanding’

On 21 May 2019, it was announced that Ofsted inspectors had awarded Children’s Services at Suffolk County Council the top grade of ‘Outstanding’ following their visit in April 2019.

Only eight other Local Authorities, out of 152, had at that point been judged to be ‘Outstanding’ overall.

Ofsted’s inspection report of children’s social care services said:

“Services for children are of an exceptionally high standard. They are child-focused and make a positive difference to children’s lives”.

Inspectors were impressed with improvements made across the service since it was rated ‘Good’ in 2015. The report states that, “stable and aspirational leadership and strong political and financial support have created conditions that are conducive to continuous improvement and the development of sustainable, high-quality services”.

Inspectors commended the staff, highlighting that “the work that staff are doing with children and young people is impressive; the way that they are doing it is making a real difference to their lives”. The report states that, “workers build positive and purposeful working relationships with children and their families. They ensure children are safeguarded, and that their wider needs are addressed. They consistently act to ensure the best outcomes for children”.

Workforce management was also recognised by Ofsted as a strength. Our strong workforce management was recognised again in December 2019, when Suffolk County Council was awarded silver in the Social Worker Employer of the Year category at the national Social Worker of the Year awards.

Gordon Jones, then Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills at Suffolk County Council said:

“An Outstanding Ofsted judgement for our Children’s Services is an amazing and well-deserved achievement for Suffolk. “I would like to thank everyone who delivers outstanding services to support young people in Suffolk, it is most rewarding to receive such endorsement from Ofsted. Our staff are compassionate, professional and sensitive to the needs of the residents they support.

“I do accept that we need to do more for Suffolk’s children with additional needs, and we are taking swift and effective action to address both the current shortfall of SEND services in our county, but also to build capacity with our partners for the future.

“All children have the right to the appropriate level of support they need to aspire and achieve, and I am committed to ensuring that this is the reality for all of Suffolk’s young people, including our most vulnerable children.”

Andrew Reid

County Councillor – Wilford Division

Tel: - 07545 423799

Email: - Andrew.reid@suffolk.gov.uk