

Chedburgh Parish Council

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Erskine Centre,
Chevington Road, Chedburgh on Monday 11 May 2015 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Michael Chester, Pat Fisher, Teresa Landymore, Margaret Rickard, Clare Varney and Peter Westcott (Chairman)

In attendance: Paul MacLachlan (Executive Officer), County Cllr Terry Clements, Borough Cllr Angela Rushen and 5 members of the public.

The following documents will be appended to the signed minutes:

- the Agenda;
- the following appendices:
 - A: Chairman's Report and Statement of Accounts;
 - B: Report from Ickworth Park Primary School;
 - C: Report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team;
 - D: Report from Chevington, Chedburgh, Depden and Rede Community Council;
 - E: Borough Councillor's report;
 - F: County Councillor's report.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from PCSO Anthony Welford.

2. Report from the Chairman of Chedburgh Parish Council

The Chairman, Peter Westcott, gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix A. Cllr Westcott thanked fellow councillors for their willingness to stand for a further term of public service.

It was noted that the Parish Council were still working with the Planning Authority and Bocket Park to deliver a satisfactory outcome to the public open space in the former fireworks factory.

3. Report from Ickworth Park Primary School

Headteacher, Ann Morley, gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix B.

It was noted that the school's planned admission number (PAN) had been reduced to 30 and that only one extra classroom was being built despite becoming a full primary school.

4. Report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team

In the absence of PCSO Anthony Welford, Cllr Westcott gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix C.

5. Report from the Chevington, Chedburgh, Depden and Rede Community Council

Chairman, Elizabeth Williams, gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix D.

It was noted that the Community Council were experiencing difficulty obtaining quotations for the replacement/repair of the Erskine Centre roof.

6. Report from Borough Councillor, Angela Rushen

Borough Councillor, Angela Rushen, gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix E.

Chedburgh Parish Council

Cllr Westcott congratulated Cllr Rushen on her re-election and thanked her for her regular attendance at Parish Council meetings and her interest and support in parish matters.

7. Report from County Councillor, Terry Clements

County Councillor, Terry Clements, gave a report which is produced in full at Appendix F.

It was noted that the vehicle activated signage sponsored by Cllr Clements was about to be installed on Chevington Road.

It was further noted that BT has upgraded the street cabinet on Chevington Road serving premises with postcodes beginning IP29 4.

8. Public Forum

Hannah Parry, from Havebury Housing Partnership, spoke about a possible plan for 8 two-bedroom, shared ownership houses on land opposite the Marquis Cornwallis pub. Hannah commented that, if the scheme progressed, it would not impact on the ability of the Marquis Cornwallis to continue trading as a public house.

Councillors expressed some concern at the prospect of further housing development in the parish and felt strongly that it ought not to proceed if it in any way threatened the future of the Marquis Cornwallis.

It was agreed that the minutes be approved at the Parish Council meeting dated Monday 13 July 2015.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm.

Chairman, 13 July 2015

CHEDBURGH PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix A: Chairman's Annual Report 2014/15

Membership

Membership of the Parish Council changed during the year with Alex Blake leaving the area. We are grateful to Alex for her contribution to the Council.

There are 7 places on the Parish Council of which only 5 were filled at 31 March 2015. I can, however, report that the following local residents were elected unopposed at the Parish Council election dated 7 May 2015:

Michael Chester
Patricia Fisher
Teresa Landymore
Margaret Rickard
Clare Varney
Peter Westcott

There still remains one vacancy on the Parish Council which councilors will be keen to fill.

Finance

As you can see from the 2014/15 accounts, the Parish Council's finances are sound with year-end reserves totaling £7,972.92. Of these reserves £1,260 are allocated to the following ring-fenced reserves:

RAF Memorial	£110.00
Donations to local organisations:	£250.00
Play area improvements:	£900.00

Other than the Parish Precept (£8,420.00) and Borough Council grant (£1,200.00), the only other significant item of income comes from the National Air Traffic Service (NATS). Payments from NATS increased during the year and will be maintained at £400.00 per annum.

The main item of expenditure arises from Parish Council salary costs. These were increased in 2014/15 due to payment of a contractual retirement gratuity of £855.89.

The Parish Council sought competitive tenders for the 2015/16 cutting of the field at the Erskine Centre. West Suffolk was successful.

The Parish Council has placed an order for the renovation of the bus shelter on Chevington Road.

The Parish Council set a 2015/16 budget of £10,080.

Planning

During the past year the Parish Council has been consulted on 6 applications, 3 of which relate to the former fireworks factory.

By far the most significant was the application for development of 2.6 hectares of public open space within the fireworks factory area. The Parish Council is liaising with local residents, the developer and the planning authority regarding the work required to deliver a satisfactory outcome.

Village Handyman

We are very grateful to Ian Leggett who continues to work as village handyman.

Ian's contribution to village life is largely unseen but hugely significant. Ian empties village litter bins, collects litter strewn across the parish, monitors the street lights and reports those not working, checks the field and play area (cleaning and repairing where necessary and possible), organizes the village gritting teams and monitors the drains within the village for obstructions and blockages.

The village would not be the pleasant place it is without Ian's unstinting contribution.

Parish Clerk

Our longstanding Clerk, Tony Couzens, retired on 31 December 2014. Tony served the parish very ably and we are grateful to him for his contribution to the work of the Parish Council. Tony is succeeded by Paul MacLachlan.

Paul is an experienced Clerk who has recently moved to Suffolk from Worcestershire. We look forward to working with Paul for many years to come.

There are many others within the parish whose contribution adds to our quality of life including:

Pat Fisher, who tends the village flower beds and hanging baskets and keeps the parish notice boards up to date.

Wayne Horridge and **Stan Fisher**, who continue to assist Ian Leggett with jobs around the Village.

Our County Councillor, **Terry Clements**, who has been instrumental in delivering vehicle activated signage for the village.

Our Borough Councillor, **Angela Rushen**, who has provided much support with the planning application at the former fireworks factory and who has also supported the village with funding from her Locality budget.

Peter Westcott

Chairman

Chedburgh Parish Council

Chedburgh Parish Council
2014/15 Statement of receipts and payments

Reported to Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 11 May 2015

		2014/15 Actual	2013/14 Actual
Income			
	Precept	8,420.00	8,279.00
	Parish Support Grant	1,200.00	0.00
	National Air Traffic Service	400.00	162.59
	VAT Refund	0.00	294.14
	Interest	14.95	11.54
	Total	10,034.95	8,747.27
Expenditure			
	Salary costs	4,489.85	3,617.68
	Chairman's Allowance	0.00	70.00
	Environment maintenance	1,224.13	1,245.98
	Insurance	1,144.20	1,121.30
	Publications and training	12.00	12.00
	Subscriptions	313.00	276.00
	Audit costs	100.00	300.00
	Section 137 payments	233.79	187.49
	Administrative expenses	245.14	160.36
	Cost of meetings	100.00	120.00
	Fixed assets	0.00	0.00
	Other costs	0.00	179.29
	VAT on payments	261.81	294.14
	Total	8,123.92	7,584.24
	Surplus for the year	1,911.03	1,163.03

Bank Reconciliation	Bank balance at 31 March 2014	6,187.49	
	Less outstanding cheques	-125.60	6,061.89
	Surplus for 2014/15		1,911.03
			7,972.92
	Bank balance at 31 March 2015	7,972.92	
	Less outstanding cheques	0.00	
	Funds at 31 March 2015		7,972.92

Fund Allocation		2014/15	2013/14
Ring fenced funds			
	RAF Memorial	110.00	110.00
	Donations to local organisations	250.00	150.00
	Clerk's retirement fund	0.00	728.68
	Play area improvements	900.00	900.00
	Total	1,260.00	1,888.68
Unallocated funds		6,712.92	4,173.21
Total Funds		7,972.92	6,061.89

11th May 2015

Thank you for inviting me to your Annual General Meeting again this year. I feel it is important that the residents of the villages which feed our school are kept up to date with developments at school.

This is an exciting era for the school as it moves towards another stage in its development. The school continues to be very popular and we are again pleased to have reached our Pupil Admission Number for Reception children in September 2015. As many of you will be aware September 2015 will mean that we become a full primary school in line with the majority of the rest of the country with children staying with us until they reach year 6 then transferring to the upper school for year 7.

We were delighted with the outcome of the Admissions Consultation earlier this year which means that from the school year 2016-2017 our catchment secondary school will be King Edward VI School with whom we already work very closely.

Building works for our new classroom have now started and the children are very excited to watch the progress on a daily basis. The contractors for the project are SEH French and we have already had many preliminary meetings with them. Internally we have had to make some adaptations to the daily running of the school but we are very excited about this project and look forward to being able to use the extended and refurbished premises in the autumn term.

There have been many, many changes in education since September 2014, including a completely new curriculum, removal of levels for assessment, a new Special Needs system, the introduction of Free School Meals for all pupils up to the age of 7 and a few other things. We at Ickworth Park have taken these changes in our stride and as always kept our focus on keeping a high quality education for all the pupils in our care.

We were delighted last summer to receive a letter from Ofsted to say that as our data had continued to be of a high standard thus they would defer our next inspection for at least a year.

Our curriculum themes so far this year have included the younger pupils studying castles, culminating with a visit to Norwich castle. Their work included taking part in a medieval banquet and entertaining parents and friends to a demonstration of medieval dancing.

Last term the younger pupils studied the rainforest, looking at life processes and the habitats of animals.

The older pupils have studied the Romans and their impact on our lives; they visited the castle in Colchester as part of their studies. Last term the older pupils studied earthquakes and volcanoes and become very knowledgeable on tectonic plates, the ring of fire, and completed their studies by creating volcanoes which erupted with varying degrees of success.

As we move into the summer term Key Stage 1 are using Ickworth Park as their focus and looking at the lifestyles of children who lived in Ickworth Park and at Hunneyball Lodge.

Key Stage 2 are looking at schools over time and incorporating the history of our school which fits really well with the current development of the school.

The children in reception wrote to their parents, inviting them to come and see the igloo that they had made with 800 recycled milk cartons. They then performed their Chinese New Year song with instruments and a dragon procession. The children also enjoyed sharing their own learning journey with their parents. The igloo was a great success as was the task of squashing the bottles at the end of the project.

Alongside these themes we are continuing with our sporting activities with teams entering tournaments for tag rugby, athletics, netball, cross country, multi skills and more. These tournaments are run in conjunction with the Bury School Partnership.

We continue to be committed members of the Bury Schools Partnership and work very closely with the other schools. Other activities linked to the Partnership included our recent involvement with the '10 pieces concert' at the Apex. The children from year 4, along with their cellos, performed set pieces and also a piece they had created. The year 3 pupils are due to perform at the Apex later this term. Due to lack of space parents and friends were not able to see the year 4 performances so we decided to have a music morning in school. Lots of parents and friends joined us for the morning which gave the year 4 pupils chance to show off their cello playing skills, the year 3 pupils played their violas and the year 1 and 2 pupils performed a piece on the xylophone. The children in Reception also performed some songs. This proved to be a fantastic musical celebration morning.

We have continued with our homework activities and the children are able to display their work at the end of the term parents are invited into school to look at the display.

We are very grateful to a range of organisations for supporting our musical activities. We feel that this is an important part of our school and we plan to continue with the current music provision for next year. So, as from September 2015, we will have cello tuition with the year 4, violas and violins for the year 3's and percussion for the year 1 and 2 pupils. However, we have an exciting new development planned, the year 5 children will be learning to play the double bass, they will I believe be the only group to do this.

Last term we took part in the 'Young Voices' concert held at the O2 Arena in London. Nothing can prepare you for the sound of thousands of children singing in harmony. Young Voices combines the power of singing together as one, with accompaniment from a wide range of musicians and artists, to create an amazing performance.

Every year, schools across the country practise music in class with their teachers to prepare themselves to take part in these massive concerts. Over the years the children in the choir have performed with artists such as Alexandra Burke, Joss Stone, and Gary Barlow as well as raising over 1 million pounds for Children's charities such as CLIC Sargent.

With a full live band, backing singers and the internationally acclaimed conductor David Lawrence, it makes for one of the most exciting and memorable musical experiences you can imagine.

The pupils organised a range of fund raising events such as a Roman fashion show and a cake sale in order to help with the purchase of the T-shirts needed by adults and children alike. On Monday 21st January there was great excitement for the 70 children as our trip began. The children had an early lunch before we set off for London. On arrival we were guided to our seats along with the 7,500 youngsters. This is an amazing experience for all and there was great anticipation as the rehearsals began. In the evening parents and friends made the journey to London to watch the performance.

In school we have a variety of committees for the children to be part of this includes a PE committee, SNAG group for Food for Life, PR committee and School Council. The School Council recently ran an election to coincide with the General election. The children elected leaders to represent 4 charities, voting took place on 8th May with voting booths and a secret ballot. The winning charity is going to organise a fund raising event and the school and A&M Multi sports donated money to the other 3 charities. These committees give the pupils the opportunity to gain perceptions of their peers and have input into various activities in school.

We also have a Suffolk Show committee. This committee is leading the way for our show garden at this year's Suffolk Show. 6 schools have been selected to create a garden for the competition. Our garden is entitled 'a slice of Suffolk history' and is based on Ickworth house. The garden will include a variety of plants and constructions all top secret at the moment! Parents and friends have supported this venture by giving time and financial support. Please do come and see the garden if you go to the show.

We continue with our range of clubs for the pupils. These have again included Let's Get Cooking, football, multi skills, racquet skills, wake and shake, netball, ballet, spanish and gardening.

I have to say our football first team did win the league this year. One of the principal of the teams we put forward is that of team spirit and supporting each other and learning about winning and losing and how to deal with both.

Throughout the year we have had many other activities including:-

On Friday 13th March, we raised money for Comic Relief by coming to school with a funny face! We had fun learning the 'Put on a funny face' Red Nose Day song in assemblies. We also bought the special Comic Relief bags of Malteasers and each class made their own yummy Malteaser cakes!

Children in Elm and Beech had a very special visit from 4 Golden Retriever puppies! The children (and puppies) enjoyed having lots of fuss!

On Monday 9th February we launched our reading focus week! The children took part in lots of different reading activities throughout the week. The children particularly enjoyed sharing their favourite books with children from other classes and with children of different ages. There was a 'Get Caught Reading' photo competition too! This week we also reminded ourselves of the importance of reading and how we should all try to read at home as much as possible

On Thursday 13th November 43 year four pupils visited King Edward School to take part in the Media Animation Project as part of the Bury Schools' Partnership. The children started the day off with a tour of everything the school has to offer from the sports leadership students. The pupils spent the day creating characters and backgrounds for their animations. On their return to school they shared their expertise with the year 3 pupils. Parents were invited into school to see these animations.

I hope this has all given you a flavour of the school but I must stress that behind all these exciting activities the pupils work very hard in the classroom and they do achieve very well compared to pupils nationally. This is a credit to the hard work and commitment of the pupils and that of the staff in the school. We do work as a team in school to give the pupils in our care a wide variety of opportunities alongside our very high expectations of them in their learning, so that when they leave us in year 6 they can use these experiences and build on them to make informed choices as they continue on their learning journey.

Appendix C: Safer Neighbourhood Team

Crime Report for Chedburgh during the period 11 May 2014 to 10 May 2015

Presented to Annual Parish Meeting dated 11 May 2015

- Burglary: Dwelling with Intent where a downstairs window was smashed which woke up the occupants who saw the intruder in the house, nothing was taken and 1 Male has been dealt with for this offence which happened at 0320 on the 14/07/14.
- Burglary: Other building where entry was gained via a small hole and money, tobacco and alcohol were removed. This happened between 0000 and 1030 on the 02/08/14.
- Criminal damage to a vehicle where the windscreen was smashed. This happened overnight between the 12/09/14 and the 13/09/14.
- Burglary: other building where a padlock was cut to a garage and 2 Honda Petrol Motors were removed, this happened overnight between the 27/03/15 and the 28/03/15.
- Criminal damage to a vehicle which was scratched which happened between 1400 and 1858 on the 08/04/15, 1 male has been reported for this offence.
- Theft of an insecure copper radiator which was left outside, this happened between the 10/04/15 and the 16/04/15.

*PCSO 3282 Welford
Suffolk Constabulary
St Edmundsbury Rural South
safer neighbourhood team
Clare Police Station
Clare
Cavendish Road
Suffolk, CO10 8PH
TEL: 101*

Chevington, Chedburgh, Depden & Rede Community Council

Appendix D: Report for Chedburgh Parish Council AGM 2015

During the latter part of July 2014 Cheryl Collins resigned due to pressure of work as she is now also Acting Rural Dean. Liz Williams agreed to take over as Acting Chair until the AGM in November 2014. At that meeting she agreed to Chair the Council for a further year until November 2015.

Events

A Curry Demonstration was put on in September by the Church and Community Council which was well attended and we had a Carol Concert in December with the Ashton Singers. In January we held a dance to The Blue Skies Trio which was reasonably well attended and in March we had Great Barton Film Club run a free film night for us which was, sadly, not so successful. In the coming year we are having a Quiz Night in May, we are heavily involved with the Summed Fete in June and have Shakespeare in the Park (A Midsummer Night's Dream) in August, a proposed dance with the Collage Band in October and a Carol Concert in December. All monies made from these events will go to the repair/refurbishment of the Erskine Centre. We have introduced Line Dancing for Exercise on a Wednesday afternoon and Pilates, Otago, Brownies, Gardening Club and Little Teacups Playgroup are flourishing at present. Once a month after Otago class we run a soup and natter lunch for those participating and hope to extend this to others at some point. We also had a visit from the Coffee Caravan in April which several people attended and where information on many topics was available.

Structure/Maintenance

Since November we have replaced the disabled ramps in Little Teapots with them sharing half the cost and provided new fencing around a large part of their play area. Unfortunately due to the extreme wet weather in the early part of the year we had a sewage flood backing from the main drain in the lane next door which necessitated the closure of the Centre and Little Teapots for a period of two days whilst Anglian Water dealt with the problem. Fortunately the fact that it was able to escape through manhole covers to the side of the hall prevented an upflood through the toilets and inside the building. We also sustained a leak in the Hall which, on investigation, proved to be one of the clear panels in the roof. This was repaired but professional advice tells us that all the clear panels in the roof need replacing and the bolts checked and replaced where necessary in order to give the roof another 10/12 years life and the work would be better done before the next winter period. The alternative is a completely new warm roof which has it's own inbuilt insulation thus removing the mould problem we have and which would last approximately 35/40 years. The cost for the former would be in the region of £7,000/£7,500 the latter between £40,000/£45,000, neither figures includes redecoration of the ceiling inside. Originally we decided on the latter option but the difficulty in getting enough quotes together to go for funding applications is making this almost impossible and unless this is resolved imminently we shall have to go for the repair option and see if we can get some funding with the one quote we have been able to get and match fund. We had hoped to have some funding coming via Chedburgh Parish Council, as previously discussed, through the new Housing Scheme. However due to problems there this has not materialised yet and it would be unwise to count on it until it actually arrives. This means that any other refurbishment plans for the Erskine Centre have had to be put on hold until the matter of the roof is resolved. On a more upbeat note we have had our two yearly Fire Assessment and passed with flying colours, our Fire Extinguishers required no major work, our PAT testing is up to date with no problems and our three yearly visit from the Environmental Health Officer gave us a very good report. We are due an electrical inspection in August which may throw up some problems. The outside gutters and grounds have been regularly attended to as has the inside furniture and the bar carpet and upholstery have been cleaned.

Finance

Financially we are sound with a good working balance but having to match fund on a roof repair would deplete our resources considerably but would have to be done.

Liz Williams

Chair, Chevington, Chedburgh, Depden & Rede Community Council

Appendix E: Borough Councillor's report

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting for Chedburgh.

Firstly, on a personal level, I am sure you will be aware that I have already been returned, as your Borough Councillor for the next five years. I continue to thoroughly enjoy the work which is involved. I am a member of many committees and working parties and have taken full advantage of the numerous training and briefing sessions arranged for Councillors by SEBC. It certainly is a steep learning curve to keep abreast of new legislation that keeps being announced by government, in particular planning legislation. It is important to be able to bring knowledge of changes to Parish Councils. It is also good to be able to take back to SEBC issues that are important to the residents of Chedburgh.

Being a councillor can take up a lot of time; some weeks I can have a meeting every day, but other weeks can be much quieter, depending on the demands of different committees. My role as VC of Planning is the most time consuming and, I must say, the one I find the most interesting.

It has been good to have been given £2,500 this year to spend in our wards. The money is not a huge amount, but it is intended to 'seed' an idea to get it off the ground with the hope that the project will grow and develop and benefit the whole community. The £500 I have given to Chedburgh has helped with small tables for this room and provided money towards the costs of putting on the fete in June. A similar amount of money will be available to be spent in Chedburgh in the coming year, so get your thinking caps on!

Locality Budgets have complemented the awarding of the Rural Initiative Grants Scheme which is administered by the Grant Working Party which I currently chair. This scheme awards larger grants to villages for capital projects.

St Edmundsbury, as a whole has really moved forward this year. We have been awarded extra money from the government through our new way of working with FHDC. We are known now as West Suffolk; however, we remain separate councils, with 2 sets of councillors, and 2 separate budgets, but we share a joint leadership team and our Officers. By working together we are better able to face the considerable financial challenges that we are faced with and as a result, we have saved local taxpayers a good few million of pounds.

Extra money has also come by way of grants through our housing strategy, both in new build and bringing empty homes back into use. Council tax has been frozen yet again, however, this cannot continue in the longer term and a small rise may be necessary in the future.

As a Council, SEBC has 3 main priorities which will continue to take precedence over the next 2 years. These are;

Increased opportunities for economic growth

Encouraging resilient families and communities that are healthy and active

Homes for our communities

To give some examples of these priorities:

1. Promoting Economic Growth. By doing this we can apply for grants from the LEPs, in this instance the New Anglia LEP. This is the source of much of government money and this is helping us with our 2031 Vision. The Eastern Relief Road which will link Moreton Hall to the A14 at the Rookery Crossroads is currently coming forward hopefully to be completed by September 2016. This road will provide a new entrance to Bury and will link in with the Suffolk Business Park, a 68 hectare development providing a new upper school, 500 homes and over 14,000 jobs in the next 25 years.
2. Our Locality grants are an example of encouraging resilient families to play a greater role in determining the future of their communities. Culture and leisure are recognised as an essential part of life and it is good to see that the Apex is attracting increasing audiences and higher quality performers and the Christmas Fayre is now an important part of Bury's calendar. West Stow country park is now being looked at to maximise its potential and to attract tourists.
3. We continue to strive to provide new homes for our area. Clearly, housing and economic growth go hand in hand. Companies will not invest large amounts of money in an area unless there are appropriate homes in the area for their employees. Affordable Housing is also needed throughout West Suffolk. However, it has to be said that Developers have a major effect on the numbers of Affordable homes that are built as they are not as profitable for them as are open market houses.

Central government requires us as a Council to meet the demand for housing for the next 5 years. We are complying with this through our Vision 2031 document which is our masterplan for St Edmundsbury which indicates the location of development areas.

Planning services have merged with FHDC and have been generally overhauled, resulting in a quicker turn round of applications. Keeping up with frequent changes in legislation has been challenging for both officers and members of the DC committee. We now have a robust enforcement team working alongside the planning officers. The former Fireworks Site with its various ongoing problems will, I suspect, keep us engaged for yet another year!

SEBC is now working more commercially. For example we now have own MOT facility for all our HGV fleet, whilst also servicing Suffolk and Norfolk Police and Havebury Housing vehicles. This saves money and at the same time brings in revenue from outside the council.

The West Suffolk Operational Hub, is envisaged to be developed near the Hollow Road junction by the beet factory. The results of the public consultation period are being evaluated. This project would bring together the recycling, waste transfer and depot operations of St Eds, Forest Heath and Suffolk County Council. Costs will be saved and former land released for redevelopment.

I hope that provides you with albeit a general overview of the workings of the past year in the Borough Council, together with an insight into the future.

I will always be pleased to try to help anyone in the village who might have an issue that is concerning them. My phone number is 01284 386647, or my email address is angela.rushen@stedsbc.gov.uk

I am pleased to take any questions.

Angela Rushen

May 2015.

Appendix F: County Councillor's Report 2014/15

- **Holding Council tax for fifth year in a row**

Suffolk County share of council tax is to be frozen for a fifth year in a row. This means that Suffolk residents will not pay any more than they did in 2010/11.

The council has successfully delivered savings in excess of £130m over the last four years. However, with the government's deficit reduction programme set to continue until at least 2018/19, there is a forecast of a further £120m budget shortfall that will need to be addressed over the next three years. The Council tax freeze was agreed as part of the budget proposals for 2015/16, which include savings of £38.2million, to be made across services delivered by the council during the financial year 2015/16. The bulk of these savings (£24.6m) will be delivered through wide-ranging transformation programmes which will result in the council becoming a leaner and more focused organisation. Over the last five years, there has been a reduction of around 47% in workforce numbers across council services.

- **Suffolk schools' ascent of league tables confirmed**

Figures out last month confirmed the trend of improvement in Suffolk's relative position in educational attainment.

In data released by the government in January, Suffolk has climbed 12 places in the national league table for GCSE results since the previous year; from 137th to 125th out of 151 local authorities. This means we are getting ever closer to bridging the gap between ourselves and the national average. This was always expected to be a tough year for results, on account of changes to the way GCSEs are measured nationally. As a result, there was a nationwide reduction in the level of results. In 2012, Suffolk had fallen 8.9% behind the national average at GCSE, prompting the establishment of the Raising the Bar programme. Since then, there has been slow but has shown improvement, with the gap between Suffolk and the national average narrowing to 4.6% in 2013, and now, following 2014's results, to just 1.7%.

- **Big improvements in early years and Key Stage 1 results**

The number of Suffolk's three to seven year olds achieving expected levels of attainment has improved significantly, figures show.

New statistics released by the Department for Education indicate an improvement in early years and Key Stage 1 attainment and, therefore, an upward surge in Suffolk's position in national league tables. Suffolk has made a big improvement of 10% in their Early-Years Foundation-Stage Profile (EYFSP). This means there are 10% more children in Suffolk achieving a good level of development in 2014 (59%) than in 2013 (49%). These results mean that Suffolk has now either met or exceeded national figures for Key Stage 1.

- **Suffolk first in the country to extend Better Broadband BDUK programme**

Plans to extend the roll-out of super-fast broadband to more households and business were signed and sealed last week.

SCC and BT signed a contract, under the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme, to continue working together on the provision of a fibre network for Suffolk. The project will use public and private funds to deliver a fibre network to parts of the county not covered by previous plans. The £15m capital grant from BDUK will be locally matched by £5m from the New Anglia LEP's Local Growth Fund and £10m from SCC.. As the service becomes increasingly available, people should use the 'Better Broadband for Suffolk' website (www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com) to check to see if their home or business can receive faster broadband services.

- **Drive to create 5,000 new apprenticeships to address skills shortage**

A £1.5million campaign aimed at doubling the number of apprenticeships in Suffolk and creating thousands of new jobs and training opportunities for young people was launched last month.

SCC and the New Anglia LEP are leading the programme, and are calling on employers to help create the new apprenticeships that will secure the aimed-for 5,000 new opportunities by 2019. Increasing the number of apprenticeships will play a vital part in tackling the skills shortage in Suffolk and creating a more successful and sustainable economy.

- **Norfolk's waste to create energy in Suffolk**

The landmark deal between Norfolk and Suffolk has been honoured, and waste began arriving at the Great Blakenham site in September.

Both councils stand to make savings of around £1 million each from the two-year deal. SCC stands to benefit from economies of scale, because sending more waste to the EFW will reduce the treatment cost per tonne. These new savings come on top of the £8million a year that the EFW is expected to save for Suffolk's tax payers. The EFW was designed to handle up to 269,000 tonnes of waste each year.

- **Suffolk's blue-light partnership awarded nearly £5million in funding**

A newly-awarded government grant will help increase the number of shared bases in Suffolk for fire, police and ambulance services.

The grant of £4.94 million follows the submission of a joint-bid, led by SCC's Fire and Rescue Service, earlier in the year to the Department of Communities and Local Government. The national funding will be provided in 2015 to help establish more shared bases in Suffolk. The collaborative approach creates long-term financial savings for all parties and it will help the partners work more closely together in the community.

- **Stay Safe Scheme badges launched across Suffolk**

Suffolk's Hate Crime Service and partnership organisations have launched Stay Safe badges to help support vulnerable adults.

The Stay Safe Scheme was developed to enable vulnerable people to feel safer when out and about by providing them with places they can go to, should they need help or support. Suffolk Police has supported Stay Safe by producing more Stay Safe cards, stickers and funding the Stay Safe badge, which will help identify these vulnerable ones. Suffolk Hate Crime Service will be happy to provide advice and

information on the scheme. A full list of Stay Safe Places can be found at www.suffolkhatecrime.org.uk or phone 01473 668966.

Chedburgh Local Issues

As the Parish Council is aware I have two budgets for use in my Division, a Highways Budget and a Localities Budget not big budgets but does enable Councillors to deliver in their areas.

Last year I did commit to buying three Vehicle Activated Signs, VAS, I knew the ones the County had bought were insufficient to cover all of the County. Wasn't easy getting it sorted but hopefully you will see a benefit in Chedburgh. Claire Starling has been co-ordinating their use and making sure the posts are in the right position in each Parish.

From my Locality Budget I have supported SARS, Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, as I know Parishes have supported them in my Division and they are a worthwhile cause.

I also gave a small grant to The Bury Society- Magna Carta to support the Workshop for Schools at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, several children were able to visit this while it was on show.

Thank you for your support during the Year

Terry G Clements