

East Suffolk Community Partnership Board. Monday 7th December 2020

Report by Steve Gallant on the Outcomes of “Bringing Ideas to Life”

East Suffolk Community Partnership Annual Forum 2020

5 Day Virtual Programme 2-6th November 2020.

1. Recap:

1.1 Forum Purpose:

- For the Community Partnership Board to demonstrate its leadership by hosting a high-profile event in East Suffolk for representatives from our communities, voluntary organisations, community groups, public services, and businesses, focussing on the strategic priorities identified by the Board and individual Community Partnerships ((Social Isolation and Transport & Travel).
- To celebrate early wins and demonstrate the impact of the Community Partnership Board and Community Partnerships.
- To enable the eight Community Partnerships to i) highlight the impact they are having within their communities and ii) problem solve shared challenges.
- To share knowledge and expertise in the Suffolk System and beyond to work together for the benefit of our communities and businesses in East Suffolk.

1.2 Forum offer (to delegates):

- Networking opportunities across a range of different sessions.
- To get up to speed on what is happening and what is on the horizon in East Suffolk.
- Opportunity to collaborate and improve life for everyone who lives and works in East Suffolk.
- A platform to promote their organisation or business to a wide audience.

1.3 Constraints:

Due to Government restrictions on events / social contact due to Covid-19 the decision was made to cancel a one-day conference and organise a programme of virtual events over the course of a week. The full programme can be viewed here: [HERE](#)

2. Resources

2.1 The critical resources that made the event happen were:

- support from individuals from a wide range of different organisations willing to offer resources and support to make it a success.
- Partnership Manager time to pull the content together.
- £3,325 Board funding to commission EELGA to provide event support.
- Good will of the keynote speakers and facilitators, most of whom did not charge for their time.

3. How did we do?

3.1 Forum in numbers:

- Hosted 10 separate sessions (and an 11th additional Fringe Event)
- Participated in a total of 16.5 hours of presentations and discussion
- Welcomed a total of 208 delegates
- 593 individual bookings over the 10 sessions, as most people attended more than one.

4. Outcomes:

4.1 Monday: “Bringing ideas to life” Launch Event

Steve Gallant promoted the Community Partnerships by bringing participants up to speed on their priorities and their impact over the last 12 months. A new promotional video featuring four of the Community Partnership Chairs, together with Steve Gallant and Letitia Smith, was also given its first public viewing. You can view the video [HERE](#)

The keynote speaker, Dominic Campbell (CEO of FutureGov), set the scene for the week with a thought provoking and at times challenging exploration of how we need to constantly question ourselves about i) what it is we are looking to achieve in our communities and our organisations, and ii) how we organise ourselves, our communities, and our organisations to do it. His presentation was made more relevant by his reflections on the impact of COVID 19 and the response of our communities to the challenges it has posed.

4.2 Tuesday: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness in East Suffolk

A packed day of four sessions that included a blend of experts in their field, together with our own successful local community-led projects. This proved to be both a challenging and inspirational day where participants learned lots about the importance of staying socially connected and how we can best approach the task by working together at a very local community level. The learning and ideas from this day were captured and will be fed into the work of the Social Isolation and Loneliness Task Group.

4.3 Wednesday: Travel and Transport in East Suffolk

Another excellent day with two sessions that focused on two of the most important issues for our Community Partnerships – rural transport and active and sustainable travel. Participants were updated on what the data is saying about travel and transport in East Suffolk – together with the rapidly changing national transport priorities. They then participated in positive discussions about how we can all work together from a regional to a local level to make a better future for travel and transport in East Suffolk. The learning from this day, including the ideas for potential local community initiatives, were captured, and will be fed into the work of the Transport Task Group.

4.4 Thursday: Focus on Technology

It was important for us to reflect the rapid advances in technology and increasing use of data currently underway somewhere in the programme. This is because they are increasingly disrupting

traditional ways of doing business and offering us challenging and exciting opportunities for our local communities. We started with an excellent session on a home-grown East Suffolk Programme – our Smart Towns Programme. This is an exciting development and it stimulated lots of interest and discussion which was captured by the Smart Towns Programme Manager. In the afternoon we were taken on a whirlwind tour of BT Adastral Park to see examples of cutting-edge technology that being developed right here in East Suffolk. Delegates were invited to follow up directly with the facilitators if they wanted to know more about any of the tech solution they had demonstrated.

4.5 Friday: “Looking to the Future in East Suffolk” Closing Event

This session gave Steve Gallant the opportunity to review the week before reinforcing positive messages about the Community Partnerships.

This was followed by a presentation about the potential impacts of Covid-19 on East Suffolk people and places by Nicole Rickard, Head of Communities, East Suffolk Council and NHS Norfolk & Waveney / Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups. The presentation was structured around the following themes:

Population and Deprivation

Health and Wellbeing

Employment and Economy

Housing and Welfare Support

Communities and Inequality

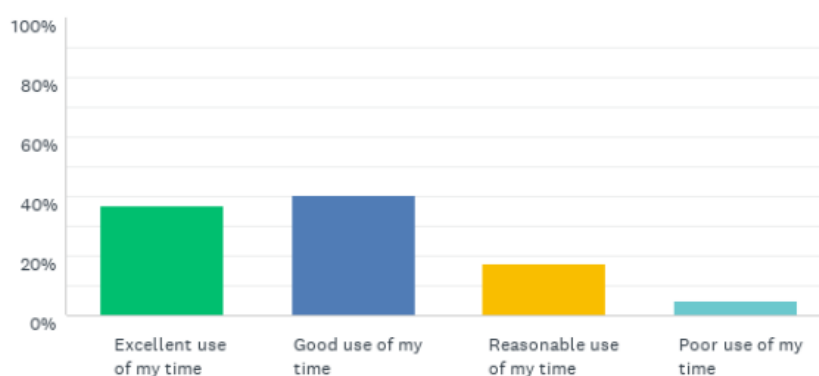
Participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions about the issues raised in the presentation and discuss potential solutions. The outcomes will be fed into the work of the Board.

Eight of the sessions were recorded and can be viewed again at the Annual Forum playlist on the East Suffolk YouTube channel [HERE](#)

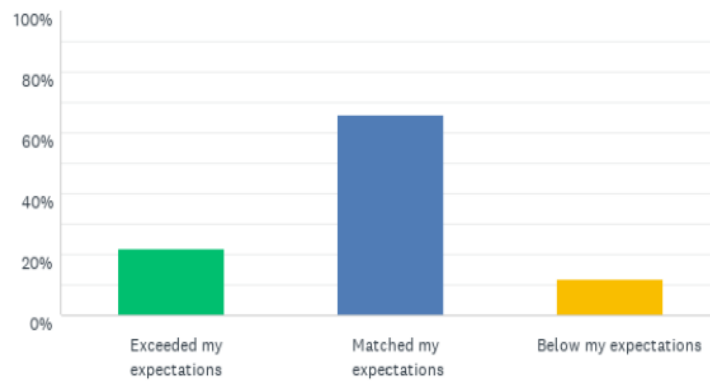
5. Delegate feedback:

A survey was created on SurveyMonkey and a link sent to every delegate. The total number of responses was 62 and the results of that survey are shown below:

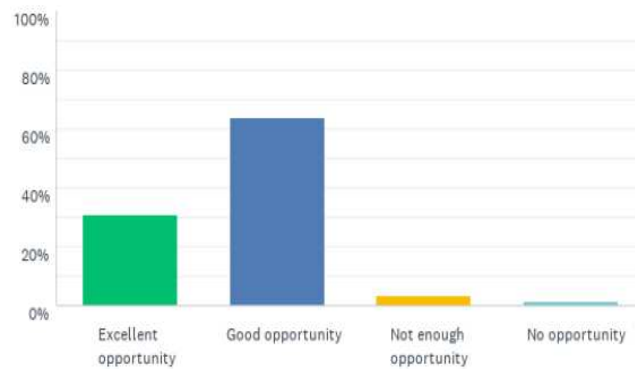
Q1 Was attending the forum a worthwhile use of your time?



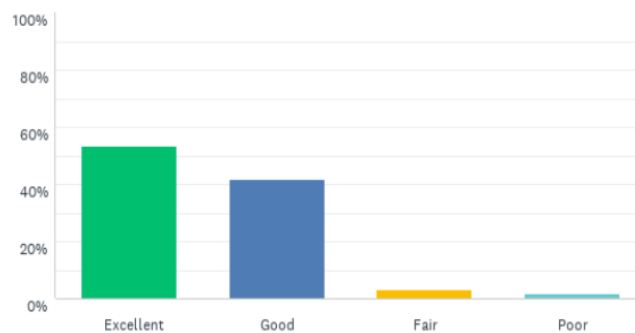
Q2 Did the Forum match your expectation from the pre-published information?



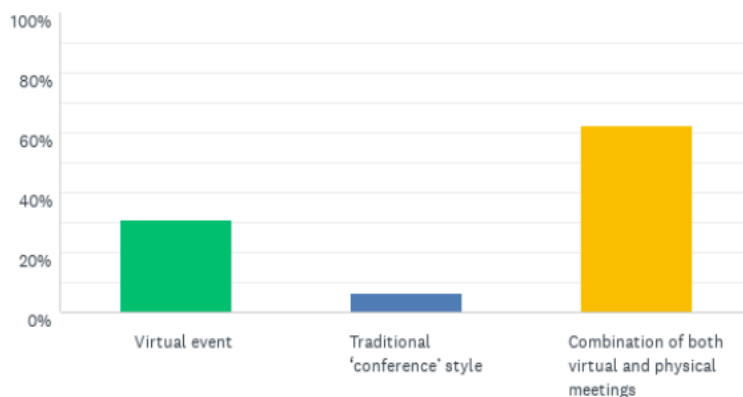
Q3 Did you get enough opportunity to ask questions and participate in the discussions?



Q4 Overall, how would you rate the organisation of the event (website info, booking system, joining instructions, support)?



Q5 What format would you prefer for Community Partnership events in the future?



Respondents were also given the option to comment, which were largely positive. Three themes emerged:

- There was both *support* for a week-long event (because it gave people the opportunity to attend multiple sessions), but also *disappointment* because they were “...all good sessions...” and it was just impossible to spend all week attending them.
- The idea of a fringe event was popular.
- Pre-session briefing notes / or more bullet point 'triggers' for conversations.

6. Conclusion

The Board is asked to consider the contents of this report and give some thought to:

- The impact of the event set against its original purpose
- The Lessons learned that will help inform future events
- Initial ideas for how we may want to proceed for the Annual Forum 2021 (Virtual / physical conference / hybrid event etc)