



FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 23 November 2022

Subject	Cabinet Members' Report and Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council
Report by	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
-------------------------------	------

Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Purpose of Report: To receive the Cabinet Members' Report and the Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council, for information.	
Options: Not applicable.	

Cabinet Members' Reports to Council

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mary Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
Contact Details:	mary.rudd@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07867 372976

Licensing Services

Licensing Services is continuing to support licensed premises and drivers during the recovery from the pandemic and global economic difficulties caused by the war in Ukraine.

In terms of numbers:

- (a) In relation to alcohol and entertainment, in October 2021 there were 1091 licensed premises and clubs in East Suffolk and in October 2022 there has actually been a small increase in this number, against a decrease in the number of licensed premises nationally year on year (since 2012 in the case of drink led premises and since 2017 in the case of food led premises), to 1120 Premises and Club Premises Licences issued in East Suffolk.
- (b) In relation to taxis, there was a significant reduction in the number of licensed hackney carriage vehicles in East Suffolk over the last 12 months and large increase in private hire vehicles. In October 2021, there were 94 licensed hackney carriage vehicles, 319 licensed private hire vehicles and 79 private hire operators in East Suffolk. In October 2022, there were 69 licensed hackney carriage vehicles, 375 licensed private hire vehicles and 77 private hire operators. It is hoped that the new fare increase for the North of the district may reverse this shift from Hackney Carriage to private hire.
- (c) In relation to gambling establishments in East Suffolk, in October 2021, there were 37 Gambling Premises Licences issued and by October 2022 there was a small reduction to 35 Gambling Premises Licences in East Suffolk.

In terms of festivals, Members will be aware Latitude went ahead between 21 and 24 July 2022. I attended Latitude with the Deputy Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety and officers from Licensing Services who were there to monitor compliance with the Premises Licence and carry out enforcement checks on site. The Suffolk Show returned after a year's absence and enjoyed good attendance figures, as did local carnivals.

Licensees in East Suffolk have had to be very resilient over the last year as the global financial difficulties have severely impacted their businesses with a significant drop in income through loss of custom coupled with an increase in expenditure. East Suffolk Council will do whatever it can to enable these businesses to grow in East Suffolk in East

Suffolk where the hospitality sector and night-time economy are of great importance to everyone who lives, works in and visits East Suffolk.

Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports

Greenways Countryside Project	
Representative:	Councillor Mark Newton
Contact Details:	mark.newton@easstsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07788 456641

This report covers a small part of the work of the Greenways Countryside Project during the 2021-2022 financial year. More information about any of the sites we work at can be obtained on request from the Greenways Project team.

The Project

The project is a long-standing partnership between three local authorities (Ipswich Borough, Babergh and east Suffolk Council) and the wider community. It looks after around 50 nature reserves and green spaces around the project area. About nine of these sites are in east Suffolk and include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and County Wildlife Sites (CWS). The project also looks after several ponds, green spaces and woods in east Suffolk which do not have an official designation.

Project Funding

The project continues to suffer from the withdrawal of funds by Suffolk County Council in March 2018 and continues to seek extra funding. Last financial year, despite considerable income generation work, Ipswich Borough Council has met any shortfall in the project's budget. There are currently no unallocated reserves. Ring fenced reserves cover possible future staff redundancy (approx. £28k) and vehicle replacement (approx. £33k). The total cost of the project for the year is around £110,000, of which the three remaining partners contribute around £35,000. The remaining (larger part) of the budget is generated from external income by the Project team by carrying out work for the partners, Parish Councils, schools, householder associations, developers, private landowners and third sector organisations. We also seek grants and other contributions wherever possible and have some minor sales income. The need to generate income inevitably means that some work the project has traditionally done can no longer be achieved. As partner contributions have not increased to match inflation for many years, whilst real costs are escalating fast, the income generation target increases sharply each year - inevitably meaning more work for the small Project team and volunteers, which in turn leads to changes in the way we have to operate. In recent years this has meant that many of our traditional activities have had to be stopped or reduced in order to accommodate the new (income generating) work. Contributions from Parish Councils and other local community organisations have become critical to our future, as are grants and other sources of income. If more funds cannot be found, the project may well have to reduce its activities or increasingly charge for its work.

The Role and Value of Volunteers

Since the Covid pandemic lockdowns and other restrictions, the way we work with volunteers has changed to some degree in parallel with our need to be slightly more

'business-like'. However, the role of volunteers has not been diminished, in fact the importance of our volunteers has inevitably increased as the workload has risen. The Project has just 2 staff members, compared with approximately 6 'full-time equivalents' in the form of volunteers. The number of volunteer days worked per year has decreased since Covid, somewhat inevitably, but our practical productivity has increased. Volunteers help us with everything from practical site-based management work to producing this magazine! Volunteers are central to the public events that we run and work tirelessly to create thousands of 'wildlife homes' - bug homes, bird boxes and hedgehog houses - usually in kit form to be assembled by children and families at events.

The Nature Reserves and Green Spaces

Most of the sites we help to look after are fully open to the public to come and enjoy in lots of ways. Thus, we need to maintain and improve the visitor infrastructure just as much as we have to maintain and improve the wildlife habitats on each site. Autumn and winter are our busiest times with most of the habitat management work carried out in these short months whilst much wildlife is dormant or less active. Spring and summer tend to be focussed on people! Keeping paths clear, repairing and building new paths, bridges and boardwalks, installing signs and information boards, and inevitably, picking litter! In this year, we worked on 45 different sites carrying out an extraordinarily broad range of activities. Here are three examples of our work in east Suffolk:

Rushmere St Andrew:

The project has continued to look after the Sandlings and Mill Stream Local Nature reserves in Rushmere St Andrew – working closely with Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council. This relationship is extremely important as the Parish can access funds for improvement works in the reserves, and Greenways can then deliver the work to help us reach our large income generation target. Routine work has included maintenance of paths, seats, signage and regular litter picking of the Jubilee Walk Route, along with annual meadow management, coppicing of scrub to maintain ideal bird nesting habitat, and scrub removal to keep the meadow and wetland areas open.

Martlesham:

The project has also been carrying out considerable site management work in Martlesham, both on the Common (near Tesco beside the A12) and of the Heath (Western Corridor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)), on behalf of the Parish Council and Martlesham Heath Householders respectively. These are two vitally important remnants of the once widespread Sandlings Heath that stretched from Ipswich to Kessingland. Heathland needs a substantial amount of routine maintenance to ensure the habitat remains open and light, favouring the often rare and vulnerable species that have adapted to this habitat over thousands of years.

Kesgrave and Grundisburgh:

The project has also continued to work with Kesgrave Town Council and Grundisburgh Parish Council to manage their wildflower areas with our volunteers using our specialist mowing equipment.

Local Wildlife News

Finally, the project produces a magazine, "Local Wildlife News". Hopefully all Councillors will have found a PDF copy of this in their inboxes.

Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland Internal Drainage Board	
Representative:	Councillor Peter Byatt
Contact Details:	peter.byatt@easstsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07979841475

A new Vice-Chairman was elected – Ben Blower – until 2024 . Peter Cargill was nominated to serve temporarily on the Consortium Management Committee.

A pot of £10,000 – £15,000 is to be established to fulfil the Board's Statutory duty to conserve and enhance the natural environment, delivering biodiversity net gains when undertaking operations. A question was raised as to how these funds would be spent. The Environmental Manager agreed to prepare a report detailing a breakdown of spend on each project to bring to the Board.

Differential Rating Sub-Districts – currently 37 – proposed that consideration be given to reducing to 2 to simplify management – one District for 'gravitational areas' and one for 'pumped areas.'

Reports from the Capital Works Programme, Project Delivery, Operations, Environment and Sustainable Development were approved. Details on IDB Web-page.

An application has been approved to create two new habitat shelves at Finningham Beck.

The Internal Audit Report was approved and 'substantial assurance' was welcomed by the Board.

Auditors were appointed for 2022/23 from Fenland District Council.

The Financial Report and reconciliation to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was approved, with no matters arising.

It was agreed that the rising costs of energy and fuel costs would be added to the Risks Register.

Next meeting 31st January 2023

East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board	
Representative:	Councillor Peter Byatt
Contact Details:	peter.byatt@easstsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07979841475

The Health and Safety Review was confirmed as having taken place. Details on the IDB Web-page.

The Capital Works Programme Update was approved. Details on the IDB Web-page.

Operations Report - A member asked about the monitoring of the condition of tidal hinges as part of regular maintenance and if proactive replacement should be undertaken. The Area Manager agreed to review this.

A Member asked about the issues with flooding at Ufford Bridge. The Area Manager referred the Board to the report previously circulated the with proposals to alleviate flooding in Ufford. It was agreed that the Area Manager and the Operations Manager should investigate the proposed solutions in more detail and begin liaising with the Environment Agency, Highways, Suffolk County Council, etc regarding contributions (financial/in-kind) with an in-principle agreement that the Board would meet the estimated cost of £45,000 .

Environmental Report – the Area Manager reported that the planned re-introduction of wild beaver colonies to sites in England could impact IDB systems. He also commented that new Legislation came into effect on 1st October 2022 to protect beavers. In addition the Environmental Manager is already working to obtain a licence to permit mitigating activities, if needed, should any colonies be established in the ES IDB.

A Member agreed the need to draw up a Carbon Reduction Plan and asked what the Board were already doing to reduce carbon use. The Finance and Rating Manager confirmed that Water Maintenance Alliance (WMA) Consortium had already been looking at this, and also assessing the main costs, particularly for Pumping Stations. The Chief Executive confirmed that the new office building would feature solar panels. The Programme Manager added that the WMA was one of the first to produce a Carbon Reduction Strategy.

Sustainable Development Report – Details on the IDB Web-page.

The Audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2021/2022 was approved. There were no matters raised by the External Auditor. Details on the IDB Web-page.

Financial Report – the Finance and Rating Manager advised that she would be contacting all Pump Attendants to take meter readings monthly, backed up by photographic evidence, to ensure an clear measure of KWH usage. This would help to better forecast usage and costs, but mostly to ensure that bills received from Anglia Farmers (AF) were accurate, given previous issues with AF and their electricity suppliers

The Finance Manager reported a small amount of drainage rate payments outstanding.

It was queried who would pay for the Deputy Chief Executive post. The Finance and Rating Manager confirmed that this post would largely be funded by the Bedford Group of IDBs and that there would be no financial detriment to the WMA Boards.

There was discussion about the Full Risk Register. Three items were added to the Register :

- The risk of power cuts enforced by the National Grid
- The risk of the re-introduction of Beavers into our IDB area
- The risk of increasing electricity costs

Business Plan Policy – no items raised. Details on IDB Web-page.

Next meeting – 6th February 2023

Appendices

Appendices:
None.

Background reference papers:
None.