



COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

CABINET MEMBERS' REPORT AND OUTSIDE BODIES REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT TO COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To receive the Cabinet Members' Report and the Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council, for information.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	All Wards in the District
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council

CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Craig Rivett – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development
Contact Details:	craig.rivett@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07831 370806

Covid Business Grants

Since April 2020 ESC has allocated almost £130m of Covid business grants to eligible businesses across the District. This has been a complex undertaking with 15 separate grants being administered and almost 30,000 separate payments being made (full details set out in the table below) and represents a great effort and teamwork between the Business Solutions, Finance and ED teams.

A further £88k worth of grants will shortly be allocated from the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to travel agent businesses who continue to suffer from restricted trading due to the restrictions on foreign travel. Of the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) there is just over £1m remaining which will fund ESC's ARG Business Recovery Programme.

Initial grant payment		Paid	Value
ARG	Initial discretionary grant	713	£617,026
LRSO 2020 Lockdown	Initial LRSO grant	2,964	£4,456,272
Wet led pubs	Christmas support payment	78	£78,000
LRSO (Sector)	1-4 November nightclubs	1	£533
Ongoing payments			
LRSO Tier 2 Dec 2020	(LRSO open 2/12/2020 to 25/12/2020)	1,813	£1,651,731
LRSO Tier 4 Dec 2020	(10 days 26/12/2020 to 4/1/2021)	2,979	£1,598,289
LRSO 2021 Lockdown 1	(42 days 5/1/2021 to 15/2/2021)	2,983	£6,726,429
LRSO Lump Sum	Closed Business Lockdown Payment	2,984	£13,277,800
LRSO 2021 Lockdown 2	(44 days 16/2/2021 to 31/3/2021)	2,966	£7,008,332
ARG January	(52 days 26/12/2020 to 15/2/2021)	721	£1,171,806
ARG Feb -March	(44 days 16/2/2021 to 31/3/2021)	719	£980,983
ARG Lump Sum	ARG version of CBLP	720	£1,881,500
ARG Hospitality Grant	One-off grant	451	£2,273,801
ARG Restart Grant	One-off grant	710	£919,000
ARG TOTAL	Discretionary pot		£7,844,116
LRSO/ARG grants issued from November 2020		20,802	£42,641,502
Restart Grant	RGCOG	2,576	£19,308,830
Restart Grant	RG - new applicants	107	£736,676

All Restart Grants since April 2021		2,683	£20,045,506
SBG 10K	April to September 2020	4,037	£40,370,000
RHL 10K	April to September 2020	912	£9,120,000
RHL 25K	April to September 2020	524	£13,100,000
Discretionary	April to September 2020	380	£3,866,250
SBG/RHL/DBG April to September 2020 TOTAL		5,853	£66,456,250
	GRAND TOTAL GRANTS ISSUED		£129,143,258

ARG Business Recovery Programme

The ED team are currently in discussions with NALEP to deliver ESC's ARG funded Business Recovery Programme as part of a Norfolk and Suffolk wide collaboration. The scheme will include other local authorities in the region that share the same aspirations for a grant programme that supports recovery and back to business grants.

The scheme will deliver the ambitions as set in the Cabinet paper in March 2021. The advantages of joining a wider scheme delivered by NALEP will allow businesses to also access the wider business support programmes offered by NALEP and the Growth Hub.

It is proposed that the scheme will be launched by the end of July and East Suffolk will be the first district in the region to launch the programme. The programme will be finalised in the next few weeks. All ARG allocations for each district will only be awarded to businesses within their district boundary.

Freeport East

Freeport East, a partnership of Hutchison Ports (operators of Felixstowe and Harwich ports), the County/ District Councils covering Felixstowe and Harwich (and Mid Suffolk), the Haven Gateway Partnership and the LEPs covering the same geography was established and successfully bid for Freeport status for a zone encompassing the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich in March 2021. It was one of only eight successful Freeport bids in England.

The Freeport East proposal focuses on this cluster's global trade connections, intermodal connections with the Midlands and North, strong links to the net zero energy generation/ use (including innovation links related the generation and use of hydrogen as a zero Carbon fuel), innovation via links to BT's Adastral Park and academia, regeneration to address coastal and urban deprivation and complementary programmes to promote inclusive growth.

The key areas of economic activity within Freeports will be based at the three main Tax and Customs sites and additional Customs only sites where tax, planning and business investment incentives apply. Each Freeport can propose up to three main Tax/ Customs sites and for Freeport East the chosen sites include Felixstowe Port's Logistics Park, Bathside Bay within Harwich International Port's demise and Gateway 14 owned by Mid Suffolk DC. These sites will be the main focus for economic growth; however, Freeport status will induce further growth within the surrounding area inside and outside of the Freeport. Economic modelling suggests Freeport East will create 13,500 additional jobs and lead to a GVA uplift of £16.6bn over the next 30 years.

ESC is the Lead Authority for Freeport East and as such the Council is the accountable body. As well as managing funds on behalf of the Freeport, providing the secretariat, being the main point of contact with MHCLG we will also be a permanent member of the governing board.

Since its designation Freeport East has been required by MHCLG to complete a number of initial tasks. These include submitting a draft permanent governance model, an initial implementation plan setting out the high level activities required against each of the projects/ sites identified within the bid document, a programme risk register and a draft budget setting out proposed expenditure against the Freeport Capacity Fund budget. In addition to the above a sub-group has also been established to develop a retained business rates policy, this will be an important document as it will guide the use of potentially £100ms of retained rates over 25 years. ESC's Cabinet will be required to approve this policy before it can be implemented.

The next phase of work is to produce an Outline Business Case and a Freeport East Project manager, Michael Cousens, has been appointed to co-ordinate this work. WSP consultants, who supported the original bid, will also provide technical support for the business case. A capacity fund of £300k has been made available by MHCLG to help fund the costs of the Outline and Full Business Cases. The deadline for completion of the OBC is 30 July or 15 September, the Freeport East partnership is aiming for the earlier deadline however, it is recognised this will be challenging.

People and Places – East Suffolk Town Revitalisation

Phase 2 of the Town Centre Revitalisation project is underway, the Economic Development team have now started working with 11 of the 12 towns in East Suffolk to create their individual action plans (the final town will begin next month). This brings together the issues/observations from the People and Places research and identifies suitable delivery actions and projects to take forward for East Suffolk Towns Initiative funding (each town has access to a grant of £10k) and other support measures.

Many of the interventions identified to date have mainly focused on physical and digital town marketing e.g. improved signage within the town centres, as well as digital platforms including town websites and social media tools. These types of initiatives are seen as vital particularly with the increase in day-trippers that many towns are experiencing and the rise in staycations over the next few months with the uncertainty over foreign travel. Grants have been approved for new towns signs and maps in Woodbridge, a Southwold Town App and events booking website and updates to the Visit Beccles website. Further applications are currently being developed and will be submitted for approval within the next few weeks.

Hydrogen Developments

The potential applications of hydrogen as a zero-carbon fuel alternative are growing and it is becoming increasingly important in the UK's target of achieving net zero by 2050. In East Suffolk a number of potential green hydrogen (hydrogen produced using a zero-carbon fuel source) developments are planned. These include the development of an electrolyser linked to the Sizewell B power station to produce green hydrogen to decarbonise the construction of the proposed Sizewell C development. The Port of Felixstowe also have ambitions to develop an electrolyser on their site to support the decarbonisation of their operations and ABP, at the Port of Lowestoft, are working with Scottish Power Renewables to explore how green hydrogen can support their net zero ambitions.

In addition, ESC is also exploring the use of green hydrogen within its vehicle fleet and potentially leisure centres as part of its objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The Council is also working with Hydrogen East and SCC to look at the potential for the use of green hydrogen to provide energy solutions for the PowerPark development in Lowestoft.

As a result of all the hydrogen development activity taking place within the district, the ED team have organised a forum of all the potential major producers and user in East Suffolk to discuss the potential for greater collaboration and how the East Suffolk economy can maximise the potential economic benefit of these proposed developments.

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 this pandemic. Most licensed premises have now reopened, albeit it with social distancing in place until the 19th July 2021 when we moved into step 4. The rules of social distancing were strict and included Group of 6, Table Service Only, face masks when not sitting and Track and Trace. Adherence to the Covid Regulations has been very good with limited exceptions. Where we have been aware of breaches then we have taken appropriate enforcement action including visits by Enforcement Officer and Police, with specific covid breaches being reported to Environmental Health who have had the power to issue fixed penalty notices. Night-clubs remained closed until we entered step 4 but have now been able to reopen. Taxis (hackney carriage and private hire) are continuing to operate but were subject to covid mitigation requirements such as mask wearing until the move into step 4.

In terms of numbers

- (a) In relation to alcohol and entertainment, in June 2020 there were 1003 licensed premises and clubs in East Suffolk and in June 2021 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 1021 Premises and Club Premises Licences issued in East Suffolk. This trend as continued through 2021 with a further 13 new premises licences and 5 variations granted. There are 2 applications waiting to go to hearing and 10 pending applications which are still in the consultation period, 1 licence has been surrendered.
- (b) In relation to taxis, there was a significant reduction in the number of licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicles in East Suffolk over 2020 and a small increase in the number of private hire operators. In June 2020, there were 108 licensed hackney carriage vehicles, 301 licensed private hire vehicles and 75 private hire operators in East Suffolk. In June 2021, there were 101 licensed hackney carriage vehicles, 293 licensed private hire vehicles and 79 private hire operators. It appears now that drivers are starting to return to the trade, with 394 vehicles now licensed and we have 11 live applications for new drivers.

- (c) In relation to gambling establishments in East Suffolk, in June 2020, there were 40 Gambling Premises Licences issued and by June 2021 there was a small reduction to 38 Gambling Premises Licences in East Suffolk.

In terms of festivals, members will be aware Latitude went ahead as a government test event between 22 and 25 July 2021. 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 Nearly Festival Oulton Broad has been provisionally rearranged for a date in August. Sadly, the Suffolk Show and Harvest Moon Festival Beccles Quay have both been cancelled. It is hoped that they will return next year.

Licensees in East Suffolk have had to be very resilient over the last year as Covid-19 has severely impacted their businesses with a significant drop in income through loss of custom coupled with an increase in expenditure to make their premises Covid secure during those periods when they have been able to be open and trade. East Suffolk Council has been able to provide some financial support to premises during this difficult time with grant funding of up to £25,000 per eligible business through the Additional Restrictions Grant. It is hoped that following our entry into step 4 the Licensees will, once again be able to recover their losses and grow their businesses 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.

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Norman Brooks – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport
Contact Details:	norman.brooks@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07824 821539

Civil Parking Enforcement

The 'Parking Services: Parking management and CPE' report considered by Cabinet 4 February 2020 identified several improvements necessary for the commencement of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) administration. CPE powers were delegated from 6 April 2020 and the following reports on the first year of CPE administration and related parking services operations. Of course, service delivery was affected by protocols controlling the spread of the coronavirus, but significant progress has been made and continues to be so.

Due to Coronavirus protocols, initially the Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) patrols were limited to identifying non-compliance (illegal parking) with on-street kerb-space management regulations installed for road user safety and traffic movement reasons. The CEO team issued warning notices from 06/05/2020 and the first on-street Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) (parking fine) was served 25/05/2020. The first off-street parking place (car park) PCN was served 04/12/2020. In the year to date, the CEOs have:

- patrolled more than 182,000 streets and off-street parking places.
- started nearly 69,000 observations (necessary prior to many PCN servings).
- served nearly 20,000 PCNs.

- improved or achieved the compliance of parking management regulations – previously there were many instances of illegal parking practices because there was little or no enforcement.
- patrolled using new electric vehicles saving approximately 23.3 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide at the tailpipe.

Unfortunately, our CEOs experienced at least 146 cases of verbal abuse and 10 physical assaults of these 19 have been investigated by police. Police support, addressing CEO abuse, has been robust and they have given many verbal warnings to offenders, issued a community resolution order, and in one case of assault by (spitting), the offender was given a suspended sentence and made to pay £100 compensation.

There have also been many positive interventions by CEOs to protect members of the public and interventions have included calling the emergency services when an older person was seen falling over, a crime was taking place, and one CEO intervened when a younger lady was found taking many pills and ensured her safety until medical support arrived. One CEO took action to protect an older gentleman from assault which resulted in the CEO being spat on by the offender – the offender was convicted of assault by beating and given 21 days imprisonment and £100 compensation had to be paid to the CEO. Another CEO found a potentially drunk driver asleep in their vehicle with empty beer cans in their lap and the window down, the police operator gave the CEO permission to confiscate the vehicle keys until a police officer could attend. This incident concluded with the driver being found guilty of intoxication and was served a 22-month driving ban and a £220 fine.

The CEOs are sometimes accused of being rude and using bad practices and we take all such claims very seriously and any complaints are thoroughly investigated by our supervisors and managers. If any lessons need to be learnt, they are and action is taken; however, with the benefit of the body-worn cameras, the facts are available and at least 95% of the time, the CEO has not been drawn into conflict and has behaved professionally and appropriately.

The Notice Processing Officers (NPOs) have:

- sent nearly 11,000 pieces of PCN related correspondence;
- administered nearly 2,500 permits;
- dealt with more than 3,000 'appeals'; and
- assisted many residents and businesses via approximately 10,000 telephone calls.

Digital parking service delivery

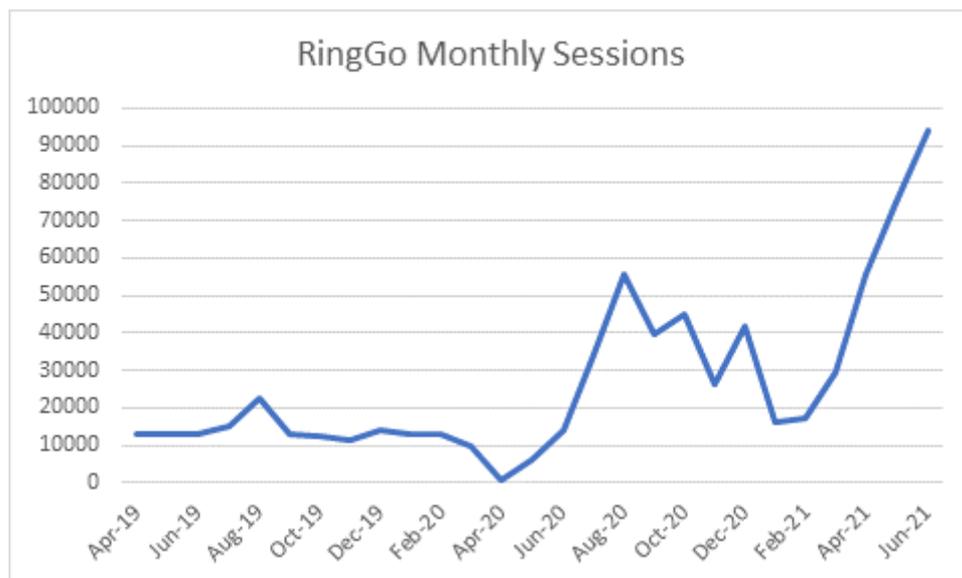
In accordance with the Strategic Plan, parking management and enforcement services are delivered via digital solutions. CPE administration is managed by a product named Taranto. It is configured with nearly 1,200 streets comprising more than 7,100 kerb-space management regulations (e.g. yellow lines and parking bays), and 75 demand managed parking places (car parks). Taranto interfaces with the DVLA, Traffic Enforcement Centre, Anglia Revenue Partnership, RingGo, and very soon, Flowbird's pay-and-display back-office system.

More than 95% of PCN and permit related customer transactions were via the Taranto solution. This is a significant improvement on the previous car park Excess Charge Notice process administered by Norse, and the permits and special parking arrangements administered by Norse, the council, Suffolk County Council, and others, which were almost entirely paper-based solutions involving at least eight full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The new parking services operation is delivered by only four FTEs and they are administering a more extensive service than the previous one which (predominantly) covered only the enforcement of regulations in the council's off-street parking places.

The RingGo service, provided by ParkNow, has been operating in East Suffolk since 2012 with about 3.5% of off-street parking sessions registered each year. In summer 2019, the council and ParkNow began working together to set-up a convenient and resilient cashless parking service for East Suffolk. ParkNow supported the council with rebranding and relaunching the RingGo service from April 2020. Despite the difficult period with Coronavirus management protocols, parking sessions via RingGo have grown at a phenomenal rate. In January 2020, East Suffolk had less than 13,000 RingGo transactions, but there were more than 90,000 sessions completed in June 2021.

In 2019, the RingGo service administered about 150,000 parking sessions, but close to 300,000 in 2020, and more than 200,000 in the first quarter of 2021/22 bearing in mind the fact that we were in lockdown. This growth showcases the enormous demand the enhanced parking experience afforded by the RingGo service, as well as being a convenient, touch-free way to pay for parking sessions. This not only supports the direction of East Suffolk’s service expectations for residents and visitors, but it has a superb knock-on effect for the environment, drastically reducing the council’s need to collect cash from its pay-and-display machines which significantly reduces our carbon footprint.

In 2020/21, there were 676,109 parking sessions recorded in the council’s off-street parking places by both the pay-and-display machines and RingGo this represents a significant reduction to the 3,000,000 typically observed in the years before the Coronavirus pandemic. Of the 20/21 figures 46.6% were recorded via RingGo, but this equated to 55.1% of the total parking revenue. The chart below illustrates the growth in RingGo usage to pay for parking sessions.



The February 2020 Cabinet report also discussed a simplified ticket structure, and the tables below illustrate Cabinet’s resolution of the same continues to benefit many retail and leisure businesses operating nearby, despite many not being open through much of the Coronavirus pandemic. The information by town illustrates there are now good proportions of RingGo usage across the whole district when compared with 2018/19 suggesting there is increasing desire by drivers for digital service interaction.

	30-minute	2-hour	4-hour	Daily	Coach
No. of parking sessions	80380	409178	127694	59905	69
Ticket proportion	11.89%	60.52%	18.89%	8.86%	0.01%
RingGo penetration	50.03%	38.93%	54.92%	77.25%	100.00%

	Ticket sales: Machine & RingGo	Ticket sales: RingGo penetration	Revenue: RingGo penetration
Aldeburgh	33238	73.2%	55.5%
Beccles	44328	34.8%	40.1%
Bungay	30102	23.7%	42.8%
Felixstowe	94320	54.9%	59.4%
Framlingham	3312	42.9%	39.2%
Halesworth	37196	37.3%	48.5%
Kirkley	9279	39.2%	45.5%
Leiston	4205	33.4%	50.7%
Lowestoft	159399	31.4%	37.7%
Oulton Broad	18978	61.2%	53.5%
Saxmundham	3793	50.4%	61.1%
Sizewell	14694	42.7%	9.3%
Southwold	51291	78.4%	86.2%
Thorpeness	7146	70.4%	78.6%
Wickham Market	5698	31.8%	36.9%
Woodbridge	159130	49.7%	53.9%
Total and averages	676,109	46.6%	55.1%

OSPA on-street parking management schemes

As part of the process for delegating CPE powers, the county council awarded the council with £220.7k to deliver parking management schemes in Framlingham, South Lowestoft (and Kirkley), and Southwold. The schemes have been designed and liaison with county council officers, the local district councillors and town councils is taking place prior to public consultation scheduled for August/September 2021.

Residents and businesses beyond these areas may request parking management schemes via [Parking management schemes » East Suffolk Council](#), and applications will be considered and prioritised this autumn for design and consultation in 2022/23.

Transport East

Officers are working with the county council and Transport East in the development of a regional transport strategy. A draft for consultation is anticipated later this year.

Gull Wing, Lowestoft

Individuals may keep informed of this project via [Gull Wing Lowestoft \(gullwingbridge.co.uk\)](http://gullwingbridge.co.uk).

AT a recent stakeholder event, the Gull Wing team confirmed:



With project targets including:

- NEET job seekers / Long Term Unemployed = 8 positions / 416 person weeks
- Graduates / Education Leavers= 5 positions / 260 person weeks
- Work Experience = 90 person weeks
- Apprentices = 10 apprenticeships / 450 person weeks
- Kickstart / Kickstart + = 11 positions / 286 person weeks

This brings the project target to 1,502 person weeks, which is a metric used in the measurement of social value to ensure jobs created through the project are sustained for a specified period. The project group reports there will be a variety of roles advertised at all levels of the delivery team structure.

Good levels of community engagement to date is also reported using a variety of channels including press releases, newsletters, letter drops, as well as the website and social media, which appear to be the preferred channels of engagement for many.

Finally, upcoming works include:

- Occupation of site accommodation
- Commencement of land piling works
- Commencement of marine dredging and piling works
- Northern roadworks and utilities diversions
- Southern roundabout roadworks and utilities diversions

Strategic infrastructure projects

Officers are liaising with partner organisations including Transport East, Highways England, Suffolk County Council, Network Rail, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and others to influence the delivery projects improving connectivity for East Suffolk's community contributing to sustainable growth and economic development. Projects include:

- A12 and A14 corridor improvements – road and rail

- Ely area capacity enhancement - rail junction capacity
- East-West Rail beyond Ipswich station
- A47 improvements
- Freeport East
- ABP Lowestoft
- The Sizewell C project

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Letitia Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism
Contact Details:	letitia.smith@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07824 865973

Enabling Communities Strategy – our new, updated Strategy will be launched next month following approval by Cabinet in April.

Enabling Communities Budgets – just a reminder to all Councillors that there is now a new section on the ECB application form which asks Councillors to identify why Strategic Plan theme the project contributes to and how. Please ensure that these sections of the form are completed.

Covid Community Recovery Plan – the Covid Recovery Plan has been developed in response to needs identified during the work undertaken by the Communities Team (with support from a number of Councillors) to support the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals in the District who were shielding. Specific groups were identified who were felt to be particularly vulnerable including carers , people with dementia (and their carers), those with mental ill health, those who were financially vulnerable and those with disabilities including visual and hearing impairments. A range of projects have been developed by the Council, in partnership with organisations such as Suffolk Family Carers and the County Council, to support these groups, including a new small grants scheme called ‘Boost’, details of which are provided below.

Boost Grants - Boost offers grants between £250 and £5,000 to voluntary, community and social enterprise groups (VCSE) and Town/Parish Council who are seeking to deliver projects to tackle specific needs in East Suffolk. The four priorities that this grant scheme targets are;

- Groups, projects and activities that support people with **Dementia** and their carers
- Groups, projects and activities that support people with **Disabilities and Visual and/or Hearing impairments**
- Sustainable **Community Food projects**, for example community pantries, community allotments and cook and eat projects
- Community projects to help people get **Fit and Active**, for example. community sports, walks, activity classes, outdoor gym equipment etc.

Community Partnerships – our eight Community Partnerships continue to meet regularly and all partnership have reviewed (or are in the process of reviewing) their priorities for 2021/22. Most have agreed that the original priorities identified at the workshops in late 2019 are still relevant given the impact of the Pandemic on things like isolation and mental health and wellbeing. At the Board meeting on 7 June, four projects were funded – three focussing on helping people into employment and one aimed at developing a network of mental health peer ambassadors in schools. The focus on

the next Board meeting will be an update on the Transport Programme from the Task and Finish Group and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Current impact on visitor economy of CV19 – the tourism sector is now opening up and many hospitality businesses are operating reasonably well under COVID restrictions and experiencing the benefits of a largely 'staycation' population this year. Visitor numbers are up on 2020 but still way down on 2019. The main issues at the moment relate to recruitment and staff retention difficulties (Brexit and COVID related), and difficulties with food supply emerging due to the lack of HGV and other trained drivers which is being experienced across many business sectors this year.

Collaborative tourism marketing across the region/ tourism action zone opportunity – COVID-19 has brought together a number of key tourism stakeholders across Suffolk and East Anglia. A joint working group has been established which represents local authorities, Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) and key stakeholders resulting in a coordinated tourism recovery campaign programme to raise awareness of the East of England and attract visitors to our region.

There is also a parallel initiative to work regionally and therefore have a stronger voice with Visit England and national Government to ensure our area attracts funding and other benefits as part of the national COVID recovery framework. A national review of DMOs is also due to report this summer which should provide more certainty and security on the roles, remit and funding of DMOs in the future.

The Suffolk Coast DMO – the Suffolk Coast DMO has operated well during the COVID-19 pandemic and has proved an excellent information and advice conduit for local tourism businesses over the past 12 months. A new three-year agreement was confirmed earlier this year between ESC and the DMO to help them develop their offer and benefit to the local visitor economy. The DMO have been very active in responding to energy sector projects particularly Sizewell C and Scottish Power windfarm proposals both of which are currently going through the examination phase of the Development Consent Order process. The work they have undertaken has significantly strengthened our case for substantial mitigation funding to offset the potentially negative impact these developments may have on the East Suffolk visitor economy.

Energy development mitigation proposals – Economic Development and Tourism mitigation work is well underway in response to the major energy development proposals on the east Suffolk coast i.e. Sizewell C and East Anglia 1 North/ East Anglia Two offshore wind farm developments. Preparations for the forthcoming DCO examination hearings are progressing well with the Economic Development & Tourism hearing in relation to Sizewell C taking place on 9th July. A tourism mitigation fund proposal developed in with the tourism sector via the Suffolk Coast DMO has been produced and will provide the basis for securing significant funding to address the anticipated negative impacts of the proposed Sizewell C development.

ESC investment in tourism assets – ESC is investing significantly in its tourism assets as part of its commitment to strengthen and broaden the district's already significant visitor economy offer. This includes the construction of new £1.1m iconic Martello café/ restaurant in Felixstowe which is due to complete in August 2021 and open in early autumn. This has been the catalyst other ESC and private sector investments on the south seafront including the beach village/activity park, beach street, and pipeline plans for the Martello Tower and south seafront public realm.

In Lowestoft ESC has also been investing heavily in new and existing assets to support the visitor economy. These include the Ness Park project which has seen almost £1.4m invested to create a new landscaped park in the town, Jubilee Terrace – £2.3m investment in cliff stabilisation works and

eventual redevelopment of outdated beach huts into new contemporary beach chalets and East Point Pavilion - £1.3m redevelopment/ reimagining of a tired and inefficient building into a contemporary food and beverage and music and performance venue.

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Stephen Burroughes – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Services and Operational Partnerships
Contact Details:	stephen.burroughes@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07783 357940

Customer Services

The customer experience team have begun implementing a wide and varied programme of feedback. Covid had delayed this work, the team has been focussing on online access (e-forms) feedback live and going well. The mailbox contact feedback to go live in July, further work will be rolled out to understand all access channels. Further customer access survey work to go out to start a programme of 'virtual community' engagement.

The 'contact us' service which has been live since Feb 2021 is performing well despite some minor teething problems, but overall good progress; implemented to support a data led approach to capture all our comments, compliments and complaints and to focus on 'lessons learned' to ensure continuous business improvement. We are currently looking at this data (and other customer service data) and how this should be regularly be reported to ensure customer intelligence insight gathered is utilised to make organisational service improvements.

Following the easing and full removal of Covid restrictions from 19 July, we are looking to reopen the Marina Customer Service Centre in Lowestoft hopefully with a difference. Work is underway to trial a 'digital reception' so using our digital champions to support customers and help access services online. We are hoping to achieve a mini-revamp to promote channel shift in approach to customer access, so better placed service terminals, less like a traditional customer service bank of desks, investigating kiosk / scanning equipment; longer term look to utilise as a community base, as well as supporting broader tourism and economic regeneration work so watch this space.

Commercial Partnerships

East Suffolk's leisure centres have now been open continuously since the government ended the 3rd lockdown on 12 April, with further activities allowed following further lifting of restrictions on 17 May. The council's new operator for Waterlane and Waveney Valley Leisure Centres, Everyone Active, commenced their new contract from 1st February with Places Leisure, who operate our facilities in the south of the district. Due to significant restrictions remaining in place this has limited the activities available and the number of customers able to use these facilities and has limited secondary spend, thus impacting on business recovery. However, the operators are rebuilding their membership base and early reports are providing really positive growth during April, May and June with swimming performing far better than expected.

As we approach 19th July and the removal of most restrictions, operators are awaiting further government advice so they can implement and adapt as required and update all their risk assessments.

Current projections are that following the removal of restrictions in July, pre Covid performance is predicted to gather pace and return to norms from April/May 2022. Both our operators plan to keep

Covid plans in place such as 2m floor markings, reception screens and increased cleaning regimes to provide confidence for our customers as they return to engaging with the full range of activities. Pre-booking arrangements will also be retained in some areas as this has proved to be an excellent management tool during the pandemic.

East Suffolk Council is using a new contract management framework to monitor the performance of both operators. This will provide a clear basis on which to identify opportunities for improvement and closely monitor performance.

East Suffolk Council is working with Norse to identify areas for business improvement. It is anticipated that these will bring considerable benefits to residents and to the council by improving service efficiency. The work includes reduce the amounts of contamination in our refuse bins, increase the efficiency of waste collections and reviewing schedules, identify areas for developing digital work programmes to allow more detailed data capture and access to information by residents. In addition the council has been working with Norse to gather further information around specific service delivery costs and to identify areas for service improvement and increased efficiency.

ICT & Digital Transformation

The team gave an update to the Strategic Plan Delivery Board at the end of June detailing the progress made during the last 12 months. We were the very first item presented to the board at its inaugural meeting in 2020 and despite the challenges of the pandemic, a huge amount of work has been delivered, not least upgrading the council's platforms via Office 365, enabling excellent online working and public engagement providing greater transparency and reinforcing the council's commitment to digital transformation.

The digital themes we are following are:

Digital by Default: We have a digital vision for everything we do, without excluding those who cannot access digital technology. We will ensure we have a robust, modern and safe digital environment in which to do business.

Lean & Efficient Streamlined Services: We will make our processes lean and efficient, through a culture of continuous improvement, using digital solutions to optimise the way we work.

The Effective use of Data: We will be data-led in our decision making and the way we manage services, ensuring we are delivering evidence-based targeted solutions in everything we do.

Skills & Training: We will improve the knowledge and skills of our workforce, partners, residents and businesses by investing in the skills we need to realise the full potential of the digital world.

District Wide Digital Infrastructure: We will champion better connectivity for everyone in the district, eradicating not-spots in broadband and mobile availability to enable staff, residents, businesses and visitors to access digital services when they need them.

Gigabit broadband infrastructure – Lowestoft project: CityFibre experienced contractor issues during 2020 and the majority of 2021 has been spent appointing a new contractor (Pod-Trak) and rectifying the outgoing contractor's works. However, CityFibre has:

- Completed the public sector network comprising fire and police stations, libraries and county, district, and town council buildings.
- Delivered service to 2,000 of the 31,600 planned properties.
- Appointed Air Broadband as internet service provider with others to follow including at least one large national provider.

The Lowestoft project is planned for completion by late summer 2022.

Cabinet Members:	<p>Councillor Stephen Burroughes – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Services and Operational Partnerships</p> <p>Councillor Letitia Smith – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism</p>
Contact Details:	<p>stephen.burroughes@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07783 357940</p> <p>letitia.smith@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07824 865973</p>

Current leisure centre recovery progress from CV19

All of East Suffolk Council's leisure centres have now been open since the Government ended the third lockdown on 12 April, with further activities allowed following further lifting of restrictions on 17 May.

The Council's new leisure operator for Waterlane and Waveney Valley Leisure Centres commenced their new contract from 1 February with Places Leisure, who operate the facilities in the south overseeing the buildings until the reopening on 12 April. There is however, still restrictions in place and this limits the activities available, the number of customers allowed to use the facilities and secondary spend, thus limiting the business recovery. However, the leisure operators are rebuilding their membership base and reporting positive growth in doing so in both April and May with swimming particularly performing better than expected.

Whilst the outcome of the Governments announcements on 19 July will be key to rebuilding business with the proposed lifting of restrictions and allowing more activities and customers to use the leisure centres, the Council's operators are awaiting the full Government guidance so that they can implement and adapt as required and update their risk assessments accordingly. All of the leisure centres have had Government visits to undertake checks and all passed without problem on their COVID 19 arrangements.

The operators estimate that if full re-opening is allowed in July, reaching pre-COVID performance is likely to be May/June 2022.

Both operators plan to keep certain visible aspects in place for the time being, such as reception screens and signs and the increased rigorous cleaning protocols, in order to encourage members who may have some concerns to feel safe to return and customer expectations remaining high.

Leisure Development

The draft Playing Pitch, Built Facility, Open Space and Play strategies have now been completed by consultant KKP. Consultation with Sport England and other key national governing bodies and clubs is now taking place and it is expected that the East Suffolk Leisure Strategy that these documents will support, will be provided in draft format in August and will be presented to Cabinet for adoption later this year.

The refurbishment work undertaken over the winter at Waterlane Leisure Centre is complete and has been well received by members.

Felixstowe Sports Hubs – Progress on the Felixstowe Sports Hubs continues. The Felixstowe and Corinthians Cricket Club have started playing their 3rd team matches at the former Deben High School in Felixstowe and this has enabled the Felixstowe Rugby Club to now have full use of Coronation Park.

First Light Festival

First Light Festival ran some low-key events over the summer solstice, which were appropriate for the existing covid restrictions. These included collaborations with local schools, artists and groups such as the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

East Suffolk Council is working with the Arts Council to identify long-term funding for the First Light festival – further updates to follow in the Autumn.

Outside Bodies Representatives Reports

Felixstowe Forward Sponsor Group	
Representative:	Councillor Steve Gallant
Contact Details:	steve.gallant@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07860 478192

Felixstowe Forward concluded its 6-year programme in March 2021 with an agreement that staff would remain in post until the end of December 2021 to progress four key enabling outcomes.

1. Felixstowe BID

After months of preparation, and delays owing to Covid, Felixstowe businesses voted yes to a Business Improvement District in November 2020. This outcome will realise an investment by businesses of £700k over the next 5 years to deliver projects against three priorities – Local and Visitor Marketing, Access and Wayfinding, and Business Support in Felixstowe.

October / November was a challenging time to go to ballot coinciding with the announcement of local COVID restrictions. The BID Task Group felt strongly that the businesses a) would need the support of a BID in any COVID recovery and b) that a successful ballot outcome would position Felixstowe favourably to take advantage of any potential coastal/town funding that might be forthcoming in 2021/2022.

Sheline Gledhill was appointed as BID Manager at the end of May 2021. An induction programme and hand over is nearing completion. The BID has already had a number of positive meetings with East Suffolk officers to align the BID aims and objectives with initiatives such as SMART Towns etc. Over the next few months, the Felixstowe Forward team will continue to support the BID where appropriate.

The outcome of a BID was fundamental to the enabling role of Felixstowe Forward. As a result, the Economic Development and Regeneration Team have a constituted and mandated Felixstowe BID Co Ltd for business engagement, messaging, and programme roll out.

2. Visit Felixstowe

The brand 'Visit Felixstowe – Great Days by the Sea' has been established through Felixstowe Forward with a dedicated website www.visitfelixstowe.org.uk and associated social media. It has been proactive in promoting key COVID related messaging and running successful campaigns such as 'Stay home - let us bring Felixstowe to you', '50 things to do after lockdown' and continuing to support local businesses with its regular 'Town Talk' and 'Felixstowe Foodies' weekly round ups.

As part of COVID business re-opening and welcome back the team has facilitated over 70 business zoom interviews between The Mayor of Felixstowe, Cllr Mark Jepson, and business owners. These have been well received by all concerned.

Over the summer Felixstowe BID Co Ltd will consider managing Visit Felixstowe in the future. If successful, this will also be an enabled outcome leaving a lasting legacy of an established brand and a sustainable future for Visit Felixstowe.

3. Events

Events on East Suffolk Council land continue to be managed by Clare Baker and Jenni Cook within the Economic Development and Regeneration team. Unsurprisingly, work has been about managing cancellations and disappointment in 2020/2021. More recently it is managing expectations throughout the staged lifting of restrictions. It is encouraging to see enquiries coming in and confirmation from event organisers of their intentions in 2022.

Work is about to commence on developing a digital application process using the 'Apply4' App. This will significantly streamline the application process for East Suffolk Council and reduce costs, be more user friendly for event organisers, and manage communication with consultees better.

It is anticipated Apply 4 will be piloted between now and the end of the year in preparation for 2022.

4. Landguard Partnership

The final strand of work is focused on Landguard Partnership and the interests of the partners – East Suffolk Council, Landguard Fort, Landguard Nature Reserve, Felixstowe Museum, Felixstowe Town Council, Landguard Fort Trust, Harwich Haven Authority, English Heritage and Landguard Bird Observatory (LBO)

In 2020 The Partnership decided to set up the 'Landguard Charitable Trust' bringing all the partners together under a constituted body.

A designate Board chaired by David Gledhill, has been formed to progress the Landguard Charitable Trust.

Key Ongoing work

- Business Planning

- Staffing Review
- Discussions over East Suffolk Council interests

It is expected that the new Trust will be formally constituted and registered with the Charities Commission in the Autumn.

When this work is concluded it represents the final piece of enabling work of Felixstowe Forward.

Community Safety Partnerships	
Representative:	Councillor Mark Jepson
Contact Details:	mark.jepson@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07825 720601

The East Suffolk Community Safety Partnership continues to meet quarterly to monitor progress against the Community Safety Action plan.

The Community Safety priorities are:

- Violence against women, girls, men, and boys
- PREVENT
- Modern Day Slavery
- Criminal Exploitation
- ASB
- Hate Crime

So far this year the East Suffolk Community Safety Partnership has supported and been involved in the following:

- A successful social media campaign run by Coastal Action Against Abuse (CAAA) at Easter called 'Walking on Eggshells' to raise awareness of Domestic Violence. A further campaign is being developed to run in the summer.
- A commitment to support Suffolk Police with the development of the 'Go Bags' initiative. These bags will be available for anyone identified as a victim of modern-day slavery and will provide immediate support then the individual is moved to a safe place and referrals to other services are made. The bags will contain a mobile phone, sanitary items (which we have offered to replenish via our Period Poverty scheme), wash bag, £5 for immediate spends, a food bank voucher and mobile phone top up.
- The first annual HOPE awards held following Hate Crime Awareness week 2020. These awards are an opportunity to recognise the achievements of young people in their local community. 55 out of 100 schools across Suffolk took part this year with 113 nominations across 13 categories. Whilst the awards event itself has had to be planned virtually this year the aim is for schools to host this on a rotational basis across the county.
- Planning for the national ASB Awareness Week (19th-25th July 2021) is currently underway with Communities Officers working closely with Environmental Protection, Housing, Registered Social Landlords and Suffolk Police to coordinate engagement events across the district. The Suffolk focus this year will be on promoting the community trigger.
- Partners have been involved in developing a multi-agency action plan to identify and respond to potential risks associated with the development of Sizewell C. This localised plan will run

alongside and inform a wider action plan that will sit within and be overseen by the CSP. Many projects and initiatives will be expanded but additional considerations, resources and focus have been identified to acknowledge the increase in population throughout the duration of the build.

- The CSP funded Child Criminal Exploitation training events hosted by Junior Smart, St Giles Trust. These were open to CSP members and wider statutory organisations and the voluntary sector and focussed on spotting the signs of exploitation, the impact of COVID on the vulnerability of young people and how to intervene / respond to concerns.

Other highlights:

- ESCSP have updated the Suffolk **PREVENT** Self-Assessment. There are areas for development which will be working on with the community safety team at SCC.
- Local Town Pastor schemes resumed patrols at the end of June
- **Crucial Crew +** - Conversations are currently taking place with providers regarding the opportunity to record interactive scenarios for schools to deliver. This is now being developed into a county wide resource and has generated interest from the University of Suffolk who have offered to help with filming and editing etc.
- **Suffolk Family Focus** will be expanding into the North of the district with the recruitment of an additional Family Intervention Officer for a 2 year post. SFF has successfully supported some of the most chaotic families in the district providing intensive support for sustainable change. We have also recruited a fixed term Early Intervention Officer to support the delivery of a project in Aldeburgh, Leiston & Saxmundham with the aim of providing wrap around support that addresses financial difficulties, access to employment and raising aspirations, and encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- **ASB Transformation role** – The ESC Communities team has recently recruited an ASB transformation coordinator who will be responsible for aligning ASB practice across the team, ensuring our policies and procedures are up to date, upskilling and coaching team members and enhancing partnership working.

Anglia Revenue & Benefits Partnership Joint Committee	
Representative:	Councillor Maurice Cook
Contact Details:	maurice.cook@eastssuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07737 752279

Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) meeting 22nd June 2021

Cllr David Ambrose Smith, East Cambridgeshire District Council was elected Chairman for the coming year.

Cllr Janet French, Fenland District Council was elected Vice Chairman for the coming year.

Following the announcement that Mr Paul Corney was to retire from his position of Head of ARP, I am delighted to report that Mr Adrian Mills, currently Strategic Manager Billing and Benefits) is to take up the position of Head of ARP upon Paul's retirement.

ARP 20/21 Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register

Paul Corney, Head of ARP presented the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register.

The pandemic had significantly impacted the services but was continuing to lessen and considerable progress had been made on the Service Delivery Plan.

The ARP are seeing significant success in 2020/21 and have achieved the following;

- Housing Benefit new claims and changes are meeting targets in 21/22 even though Covid has affected levels of work and enquiries
- The suite of forms and other functionality is available to all customer teams using Capita customer contact software to sign customers up to e-services and the number of those using e-services continues to rise.
- The further recovery work jointly funded by County Councils secured recovery of £680k even though covid led to suspension of courts which has reduced the recovery in 2020/21, the achievement is commendable considering the circumstances. Recovery in 2021/22 is expected to reach the levels seen in previous years
- The Fraud teams work, also jointly funded by the County Councils, identified over £2.3 Million in fraud and error last year even with the restrictions caused by Covid. The team are on target to achieve similar values in 21/22.

The Digital work stream has progressed with the automation of new claims and changes in circumstances growing steadily, to such a degree that when we saw the significant increase in Universal Credit Data Service reports of changes in circumstances we were able to automate approximately 50% resulting

20/21 PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Adrian Mills, Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) presented the reports.

He was pleased to report that all partner authorities combined for 2020/2021 were on target; however, the Council Tax collection rates for Breckland, East Suffolk and Fenland DCs were behind target, due to the magistrate's courts not being open at the time and therefore reducing the amount that could have been collected.

The Enforcement Team had also recently taken on the collection of parking fines for East and West Suffolk Council's and were due to receive its first cases shortly.

With effect from March 2020, all recovery actions were temporarily suspended until the summer and therefore the amount collected through these actions had been less than in the last financial year. Income of £680K in total had been received this financial year compared to £1.37M last year.

The 3 March 2021 budget, the Government announced that retail, hospitality and leisure relief would be extended into the 2021/22 financial year but from 1 July 2021 would be reduced to 66%. Revised bills would be issued in June 2021 to reduce the rate relief to 66%.

For Council Tax, the Team had completed 17.5% more documents this year compared to last year yet outstanding work had been below the highest levels it reached the previous year.

The Council Tax Support Hardship Fund awards were issued to every qualifying working age customer by the end of July 2020 and have continued to award a payment to every entitled new working age Council Tax Support customer who made a claim throughout the year. Expenditure had been closely monitored to ensure the fund for each Council had not been overspent.

Targets had been achieved for both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance, despite the increased demand attributed to COVID-19. Throughout the year the Team had seen significant increases in claims and had increased by approximately a third on 2019/2020. In April 2020, the Local Council Tax Support schemes changed for all partners to include a 'tolerance rule' which was applied to monthly Universal Credit Data Share (UCDS) records from DWP.

The new rule meant that changes in Universal Credit of under £15.00 per week were ignored by the software system and were automatically processed. An average of just under 4000 UCDS records had been received weekly from the DWP and 53% of these had been fully automated. The introduction of the 'tolerance' rule had reduced the number of Council Tax Support re-assessments resulting from DWP UCDS records by 32%, which was in line with the results of modelling undertaken for the consultation. This in turn had reduced the number of Council Tax adjustment notices, contact and refund requests and allowed customers more flexibility to manage their own payments.

The COVID 19 Track & Trace Self Isolation payment scheme had been extended by 3 months to 30 June 2021.

For 2021/22 all targets combined for all partner councils were on target except for Council Tax collections for Breckland and Business Rates collections for East Cambridgeshire DC.

For enforcement, £426K had been collected in April compared to £304k at the same point last year.

The Government had announced that they would fund further discretionary rate relief to businesses, further guidance was awaited. In respect of benefits, performance had been achieved despite the increased demand attributed to Covid-19.

WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

DWP were yet to publish a review of the CAB Help to Claim service but had confirmed that the CAB arrangement would continue into the 2021-2022 year, with a review underway for provision from 2022.

Members were informed that the Harrogate pilot had recommenced, the Pensioner Benefit would remain until at least 2025 and the £20 per week uplift for Universal Credit had been extended until September 2021.

ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE Q4 2020-21

Each of the partner Councils provided full year financial information against budget for the ARP. The information had been collated to provide an overall financial performance report, to provide information to Joint Committee on the out-turn against budget.

The final out-turn for 2021 had increased slightly with an overspend against budget of £551K – detailed information relating to this overspend was available to members.

The overspend was mainly due to the delay to enforcement work during the pandemic and that updates would be provided in the quarterly financial reports for the current year. Nevertheless, the Partnership was in a much better place than many other authorities and hopefully all would be back to normal in the next 12 months.

The overspend would be allocated in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement which set out the variation in shares between each authority. The percentage shares were based on the enforcement caseloads and number of properties as per the Agreement.

The Landguard Partnership	
Representative:	Councillor Stuart Bird
Contact Details:	stuart.bird@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 01394 275128

LANDGUARD PARTNERSHIP MEETING 28 MAY 2021

Fiona Brunning was welcomed as the new representative from the Harwich Haven Authority.

FORT

The Fort opened on 21 May. It will be hosting a Suffolk Music event this year.

MUSEUM

This will be opening on 30 May. It is planned to install a Trim Trail and a Lego Trail.

FERRY

The ferry has been repaired after damage in 2020. Operations recommenced in April. The beach landing at Felixstowe is depleting, causing damage to the bottom of boat. It is unable to land at low tide, discussions are ongoing for solutions.

NATURE RESERVE

The Ranger, Leonie Washington has reported incidents of seals on the beach being distressed by inconsiderate behaviour by people. Other anti-social behaviour continuing – rifle shooting, drinking, littering, vandalism.

CAFÉ AND KIOSK

The Café has reported a slow return after lockdown, a better Summer is anticipated.

CAR PARK

Ticket machines were installed in November 2020 and charging started in December. The first 4 months yielded £8175, not a representative figure as it was winter period and lockdown was in force. Estimate for a full effective year is £50,000. The Partnership still has to pay the £15,000 machines installation cost and £5000 annual management fee.

BUDGET

Reserves are down, costs incurred have included those for the damaged boardwalk removal, café repairs, and £10,000 for Trust setup costs. Felixstowe Town Council have increased their annual contribution to £5000, 2021 will see the last £25,000 annual s106 payment from the Port of Felixstowe. The café rental income this year will be £43500.

TRUST

Negotiations are ongoing for the formation of the Trust, which is due to be incorporated in September 2021, and will then take over from the Partnership. The Trust does have to be ratified by the Charity Commission. The Shadow Board (which will become the Trust Board) has been appointed, with David Gledhill as Chairman Designate, and 5 other Trustees.

AGREED

Purchase of 120 chairs for the Fort, which will be available for use by other Partners, cost £1628.

NEXT MEETING 24 September 2021

Haven Gateway Partnership	
Representative:	Councillor Craig Rivett
Contact Details:	craig.rivett@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07831 370806

The Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) was originally formed to represent the economic sub-region of south Suffolk and north Essex with a particular focus on the ports and logistics sector which is very significant to the economy of this area. The sub-region contains 4 ports (including the Port of Felixstowe) and is home to many businesses in the wider logistics sector. HGP is a forum for the private (includes Hutchison Ports and BT Adastral Park from East Suffolk) and public sectors (local authorities and academia) with the objective of promoting economic growth through investment in existing and growth sectors.

Freeport East

During 2020/21 the partnership provided the initial co-ordination for the establishment of the Freeport East partnership. The HGP executive were heavily involved in supporting the successful bid for Freeport status and provided the initial secretariat facilities before this was transferred to ESC as the Lead Authority for Freeport East. The partnership continues to be an active member in the development of the Outline Business Case and the chair of HGP, George Keiffer, is also the interim chair of Freeport East.

Project Delivery

HGP continues to deliver a number of business support initiatives across the Haven Gateway sub-region. These include:

TALE (Transport and Logistics Efficiencies) which is an EU funded programme to assist small and medium sized businesses to exploit their logistics data to improve profitability and reduce costs. The programme has so far supported almost 300 businesses and awarded £1.9m in grant funding.

iConstruct: an EU funded programme which links SMEs to new opportunities in the construction sector. Construction will continue to be a huge growth sector in the sub-region due to the amount of infrastructure and housing development taking place over the next few years/ decades and often SMEs don't get an opportunity to fully access construction sector supply chains. iConstruct provides a network for SMEs to be aware of and access these. The programme also works with larger companies to help develop their supply chains by connecting them with local SMEs. To date 120 SMEs and 24 larger companies from across the sub-region are in the iConstruct network. The initiative also includes an events programme and during 2021 events have included the Lower Thames Crossing and the Sizewell C development to highlight supply chain opportunities.

Vision Refresh

HGP partners have agreed it is now time to refresh the partnership's vision and objectives ahead of a reorganisation of the partnership's executive team. The impact of Covid on the sub-regional economy and developments such as Freeport East mean that such a review is timely especially in light of new national and regional economic growth strategies being implemented. The refresh will take place over the summer of 2021 resulting in an updated vision and objectives which will inform changes to the HGP executive.

Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland Drainage Board	
Representative:	Councillor Keith Patience
Contact Details:	keith.patience@eastsoffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07711 933972

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING

Standing Orders

The meeting agreed the proposed changes to the Board's Standing Orders that had been drafted and approved by Defra, permitting IDBs to hold lawful virtual and hybrid public meetings permanently, beyond 7 May 2021 with an immediate effect.

Removal of Land at Diss from Rating: the board agreed to write off arrears of £6.56 from the parcel of Land at Diss.

Chairman's Allowance: the board agreed that the Chief Executive should seek approval from the Secretary of State for Defra to pay a Chairman's Allowance of up to £3,500 per annum to the Board's Chairman.

Health, Safety and Welfare Performance Report

The Health, Safety and Welfare Performance Report was considered in detail and approved.

Arising there from - the recommendation from the Project Engineer to move the Health and Safety contract for the Board from 'Foley and Baugh' to 'Cope Safety Management' was unanimously supported.

Environmental Report

The Environmental Report was considered in detail and approved

Engineering and Operations Report

The Engineering and Operations Report, (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

Environmental Report

The Environmental Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved.

The Environmental Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved.

Financial Report for Year Ending 31 March 2021

The Financial Report was considered in detail and approved

Material Changes to The Risk Register

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to add a new risk to the Risk Register that the invasive species Floating Pennywort was present in both Pevensy and the Broadland area, bringing with it a significant financial burden to those Boards. Although it had not been found in any of the Board's drains yet, there was a risk that this could happen.

APPENDICES – None

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None