



## COUNCIL

Wednesday, 24 February 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
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Wards Affected:	All Wards in the District
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Cabinet Member:	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council
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## CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS TO COUNCIL

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Craig Rivett, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development
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### Economic Development

#### Kickstart Update

The Suffolk Gateway Partnership – A collaborative approach across the County to ensure high quality placements with a wrap around offer of support which includes Kickstart plus for those individuals that need additional help and support.

In February, Government removed the requirement for employers to apply via a Gateway organisation if they wanted under 30 placements. Up until this date Employers requiring less than 30 placements applied to the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce (SCoC), who acted as the main Gateway Organisation for Suffolk and put forward the applications to DWP in batches. Batches of applications are put forward every two/three weeks.

Despite the above government advice, SCoC have reported that there is an 80% rejection rate for Employers that apply without going via a Gateway.

Since the start of the process 7 batches have been put forward and decisions from the DWP on batches 6 and 7 are pending. To date there are 196 placements across Suffolk with confirmed funding and a further 145 are being assessed. Within East Suffolk 51 Kickstart placements have been offered across 30 businesses. The reasons as to why these have not yet been converted into placements include:

- Not yet live on JCP portal.
- Information with the Employer to look at Job description.
- Interview process.
- Candidate has received the information and has yet to apply.

Some placements have started, and breakdown is **2 x East Suffolk**, 2 x Mid Suffolk and 1 x West Suffolk with more interviews lined up next week with Employers.

**Store it Right** in Lowestoft commenced the first placement for East Suffolk on 27 January and a second applicant is due to start shortly.

The Gateway organisation is pulling together case studies and publicity via social media platforms. A Comms Statement was agreed between the Partners and this is located on East Suffolk Means Business website. ESC's HR team is raising the profile of the Kickstart offer internally.

## Covid Recovery Business Support Programme

ESC has allocated almost £90m worth of grants to over 6,000 businesses since the beginning of the pandemic. In the most recent wave of grants the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme was launched. Primarily aimed at businesses that don't qualify for mainstream grants this scheme also differed from previous grants in that it is profiled over 2 financial years to cover current and future lockdowns/ trading restrictions and can also be used to provide longer-term business support measures.

Based on feedback directly from businesses and business support agencies the ED team have developed a Covid Business Support programme. The proposed programme sets out the following support schemes:

- **Business start-up support:** providing an enhanced package of support above and beyond that which is currently offered across Norfolk and Suffolk. Critically this would include start-up grants which the current schemes don't provide. Enterprise agencies, who deliver the current schemes and the ED team have experienced a strong increase (around 50%) in business start-up enquires, this is a common trend during economic downturns.
- **Business recovery Grant scheme:** will use existing business support mechanisms but in addition will provide a local grant scheme that is 100% funded to aid businesses with recovery and future resilience.
- **Gigabit Voucher scheme:** Financial support for businesses to enable access to the new ultrafast fibre network, primarily in Lowestoft but also in other areas of the District where this network will exist i.e. the Kesgrave and Martlesham area.
- **Independent Retail Recovery Support Programme:** designed to provide specialist recovery support, business planning, finance, marketing guidance and networking opportunities for businesses in the independent retail sector. The support would be sector specific and include a mixture of workshops, one to one advice and networking/peer support opportunities. Reflects the severe impact restrictions have had on this sector and their importance for our high streets and visitor economy.

All these programmes will be aimed at start-ups and small/ medium-sized businesses. They will be complementary to the Council's existing, long-term and ambitious economic recovery programmes.

## Freeports

In 2020 the government launched the Freeports initiative. This involves the creation of 10 Freeports across the UK which contain Special Economic Zones (tax and customs sites) offering tax, customs and planning incentives in order generate new economic growth. The 3 key objectives for Freeports are:

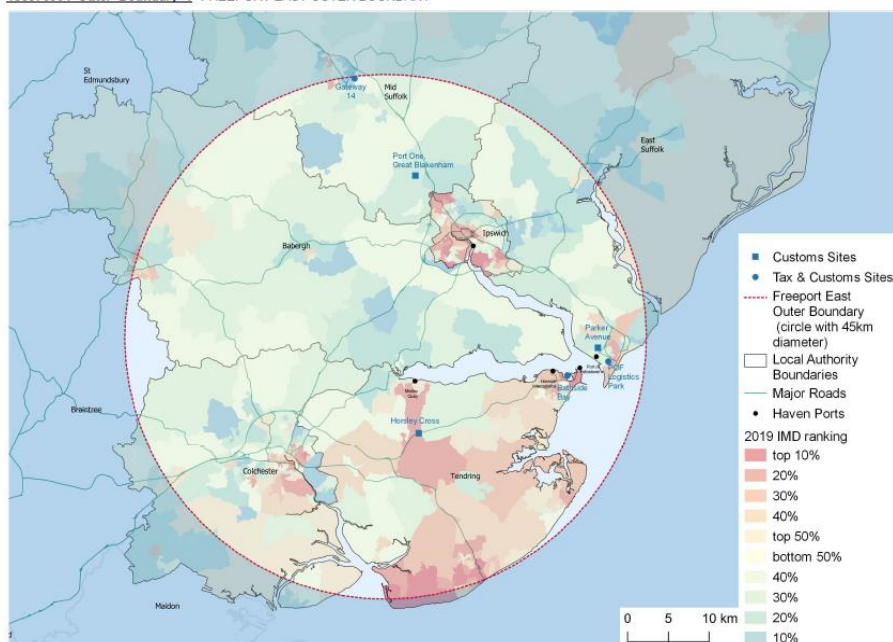
- To become national hubs for global trade and investment
- Promote regeneration and job creation
- Create hotbeds for innovation

The initiative is also a policy response to the economic opportunities afforded by Brexit, supports the 'Levelling Up' agenda and more latterly covid economic recovery.

Freeport East (FPE) was established to develop a bid for Freeport status abased around the two ports of Felixstowe and Harwich. The partnership includes Hutchison Ports (operators of both

ports), Harwich Haven Authority, the Haven Gateway Partnership ESC, Tendring DC and the two County Councils/ LEPs covering Suffolk and Essex. The Freeport area designated for the bid follows the government guidelines of being 45km in diameter and is shown below:

158376864\_Outer\_Boundary\_1-FREEPORT EAST OUTER BOUNDARY



The Freeport area extends into East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk, Babergh, Tendring and Colchester Council areas. The inclusion of the Tendring and Ipswich areas is important as they contain communities with significant deprivation, tackling economic deprivation and contributing to 'levelling up' agenda is a key objective of the Freeport initiative.

The FPE bid has proposed three tax sites that will be located at Felixstowe Logistics Park (at the Port of Felixstowe), Bathside Bay (Harwich International Port) and Gateway 14, a site owned by Mid Suffolk DC and adjacent to the A14. These three sites will be combined tax and customs sites and will be where all the tax, customs and planning benefits of Freeports will apply. These sites were chosen because:

- all closely interlinked & highly integrated with major national east-west trade routes & a global trade gateway
- Collectively large enough to have significant economic impact on surrounding area when developed, the 3 sites cover an area of 223ha
- In partial/ full ownership of a Council or the port operator. This simplicity of ownership enables full/ partial redevelopment within the 5 year timeframe and allows the business benefits to be fully realised demonstrating a good return on public investment.

There will also be four further Customs site, two of which will be adjacent to the Port of Felixstowe (PoF).

A strong bid has been developed which demonstrates how FPE will meet the government's key objectives:

- **Global Trading Gateway:** PoF already accounts for 40% of all UK's container traffic (busiest in UK) and has unrivalled international connections particularly with Asia. FP status provides basis for strengthening this position & accelerating growth
- **Innovation:** PoF currently Piloting a 5G network, strong R&D links with BT Adastral Park and the universities of Cambridge and Essex, strong links to zero Carbon energy

- **Regeneration:** Significant deprivation persists in coastal & inner urban areas of FPE, Freeport status will expand & deepen a range of higher-value economic activity, providing greater accessibility to higher skilled/paid jobs. Complementary progs will be developed to provide greater access to new jobs & upskill the existing workforce to ensure inclusive growth
- **Levelling Up:** FPE zone already supports high-value, globally competitive sectors across Midlands region. Freeport status will allow the zone to promote further high-value growth across central regions of UK.

It is anticipated that FPE will deliver significant and long-term economic growth, specifically it will generate GVA growth of £16.5bn over 30 years and create 13,500 new jobs.

Cabinet endorsed the FPE bid on 2<sup>nd</sup> February and the bid was submitted to government of 5 February. It is anticipated that an announcement on the successful bids will be made in the spring Budget on 2 March. If successful a business plan will be developed setting out the strategy for FPE with the intention of being operational before the end of 2021.

## Energy Projects

### NOA

National Grid Electricity Systems Operator published an updated Network Options Assessment (NOA) report in January 2021 which makes recommendations on which reinforcement projects should receive investment for the year ahead. The report examines the existing capacity of the transmission network against the growth in generation requirements and sets out different scenarios highlighting the electricity transmission infrastructure potentially required to connect 40GW of offshore wind to the onshore transmission network by 2030, whilst building towards facilitating the Government's wider Climate Change commitment of achieving net zero by 2050.

The NOA does not consider the full scope of requirements for meeting these political targets and some assumptions are made as part of the assessment process, however the options proposed within the report and their associated delivery timeframes represent an informed forecast view in relation to current planning and regulatory processes. The NOA provides guidance as to what types of reinforcements could provide economic benefits across the transmission network based on a range of future energy scenarios with a focus on network optimisation, as well as giving due consideration for future customer connection requirements to the transmission network.

A meeting was held between Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council and National Grid in February 2021 to discuss the report's findings. This highlighted that a lot depends on the future of the transmission network across the Eastern region with the proposed development of Sizewell C and potential future onshore connections for the proposed offshore wind farm energy projects and subsea interconnectors. NOA proposals should therefore be considered collectively rather than individually, otherwise it is unlikely that net zero by 2050 will be realised.

The report's recommendations include that the Bramford to Twinstead reinforcement project is to progress, as well as a link between Suffolk and Kent (SCD1). It also proposes a new dual transmission line from Norfolk to Bramford, and one from Bradwell to London. For further details a link to the National Grid ESO – NOA 2021 document is provided below (a summary is provided in Appendix A pp. 109 – 111, App B. p122, App C. p127 onwards):

<https://www.nationalgrideso.com/research-publications/network-options-assessment-noa>

## **National Grid Ventures**

National Grid Ventures hosted a briefing for ESC Cllrs on the evening of 22 February. This was to give an overview of the Nautilus and Eurolink interconnector projects they are proposing to land in East Suffolk and connect to the Grid in East Suffolk – potentially resulting in an extension to the National Grid substation at Friston if consented as part of the ScottishPower Renewables projects. The interconnectors are proposed for energy exchange purposes with Nautilus connecting the UK to Belgium and Eurolink connecting the UK to the Netherlands. Consultation with statutory bodies is expected 2021, with public consultation to follow.

## **ScottishPower Renewables**

The Development Consent Order hearings into the proposed East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two offshore windfarms are continuing. The expected end of the examination period is in April. There have been a large number of Issue Specific Hearings, with additional hearings just been added to take place in March. There have been a number of improvements sought by ESC throughout the process and some of these have been achieved:

New mitigation and compensation for project wide impacts:

- Socio-economic clarification note addressing Councils concerns regarding cumulative impacts of the projects with Sizewell C on the labour force and demands for accommodation;
- Provided two air quality clarification notes to address the Council's air quality concerns;
- Committed to a skills, education and economic development memorandum of understanding (MoU). There has been similar for previous offshore wind farms by SPR and we have been pleased with the benefits and results that have been brought to the region through investment in skills and education. This MOU will include reference to best endeavours to site the operations and maintenance base in or around Lowestoft;
- agreed a tourism fund of £150,000. To be used by East Suffolk Council in consultation with the Suffolk Coastal Destination Management Organisation to support marketing campaigns during construction and boost tourism;
- agreed a traffic light solution to the A1094/A12 Friday Street junction to improve road safety;
- agreed either a commitment to Euro VI HGV at a minimum percentage or a contribution to the monitoring and mitigation fund directly linked to the AQMA at Stratford St Andrew;
- proposing a memorandum of understanding signed by SPR and East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council to collaborate on projects to support ambitious aims to improve biodiversity and drive the decarbonisation of energy used in homes and travel. The detail is still being developed collaboratively a contribution of £250,000 per project will be provided to enable the co-signatories and their agents to deliver projects within the communities neighbouring the onshore aspects of the projects;
- the applicant has reduced the proposed footprint of the onshore substation sites and the finished ground levels of the onshore substation sites; and
- the applicant has reduced the noise level that they will be constructing these substations to operate at. However, although the reduction is noted by the Council it does not allay our concerns with regards to potential impacts on residential amenity arising from noise from the substations.

However, there are some areas where we maintain a different opinion to the applicant, these differences are being heard by the Examining Authority through hearings and written submissions. Noise is one of these areas.

## **EDF Energy**

The Sizewell C application for Development Consent Order is currently with the Planning Inspectorate. The details of timescales for the Examination period should have been received by this meeting. Expectation is that the 6-month examination period will run from April – September. Technical officers are assessing the submission along with the change submission that went into the Inspectorate in January. This assessment will inform our Local Impact Report and Written Representation to the Planning Inspectorate which will be required to be submitted during the early stages of the Examination.

## **Assets**

### **Jubilee Stabilisation**

This project is currently under construction phase with completion due at the end of May. The piles are in with the concrete base and back fill complete. Demolition of remainder of the chalets is progressing. Still to complete is the geogrid to the resulting banking, soil nailing and the final hydro-seeding. The works are currently within budget and timescales and we not expecting any significant changes.

### **Disabled Beach Access**

An engineer's inspection was due to be carried out on 12 February but due to the bad weather conditions, this has been rearranged. The engineer will inspect and calculate if the boardwalk can be anchored to the existing groyne structure. If it can this will avoid separately piling for the boardwalk which would make the project financially unviable. The inspection and calculations are key and once we have these we can design the boardwalk following these recommendations.

### **EPP Repurposing**

This project is progressing in line with the concept presented to Cabinet last year. Designs have been worked up with planning applications for internal and external changes approved together with an advertising application achieving consent. Demolition contractors are due to complete works by 31 March. The project team appointed Quarterbridge in December to provide specialist advice relating to the Management Agreement and operation of the building and this is being finalised with the proposed operator, First Light CIC. A paper to outline the commercial operating agreement is being brought to Cabinet in April to outline the agreement terms. Project completion is anticipated to be late summer. This is later than initially expected due to Covid restrictions and the project team's decision to appoint Quarterbridge to provide specialist advice relating to the Food Hall use.

### **The Kitchen @ Martello**

See further attachment for details and photographs of progress.

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I attended the Greenprint Steering Group Meeting, where I gave an update on East Suffolk projects. I explained that although our outreach programs have been suspended, the work continues with regards to the formation and implementation of policy.

The environment is very much at the heart of this Council.

We discussed the upcoming March Conference focusing on biodiversity. A number of speakers will present about national initiatives but also local ideas, so we can all be part of the narrative and all make changes in our behaviour.

Waste collections have been under a degree of strain from the bad weather but on the whole residents have been understanding. Always, our top priority is the safety of Norse Operatives and our provision of an efficient and consistent service.

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Mary Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
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On February 11th, the Government produced its 'Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all' Policy Paper. This paper sets out legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill, many of which build on the NHS's recommendations in its Long Term Plan, but they are also founded in the Covid challenge and response. The main structural changes are that NHS England and NHS Improvement will become a new body at the national level and at local level there will be a statutory Integrated Care System. These will be made up of an ICS NHS Body and a separate ICS Health and Care Partnership, bringing together the NHS, local government and partners. The ICS NHS body will be responsible for the day to day running of the ICS, while the ICS Health and Care Partnership will bring together systems to support integration and develop a plan to address the systems' health, public health, and social care needs. The latter will work alongside the pre-existing Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Local health partners are working incredibly hard to sustain the Covid response in our communities, GP practices and hospitals and to roll out the vaccination programme, whilst trying to safeguard the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and support people to manage long term conditions at home and ensure that general population health does not decline. I am proud that as a Council we have supported that in a number of ways – from finding sites for community testing and vaccinations to locating furniture for vaccination centres and helping people to get to their vaccination centre, on



top of all the support that is being provided to the CEV group working with our amazing community groups and Town and Parish Councils.

## Outside Bodies Representatives Reports

There were no Outside Bodies Representatives Reports on this occasion.

APPENDICES	
Appendix A	Further details about The Kitchen @ Martello

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None
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