

Suffolk County Council Annual Report 2017

County Councillor for Upper Gipping

Speed Indicator Devices (SID)

Speed indicator devices have been deployed this year in Old Newton, as well as Cotton/Bacton Haughley, as well as other units in Thorndon and Wetheringsett. These units are becoming very useful not only for speed deterrence but for capturing data regarding numbers of vehicles as well as times and amount of speeding vehicles. The data has helped us prove how many vehicles for instance travel along the B1113 near Finbows yard (3900 per day) and identify some of the most extreme speeders, the fastest speed recorded to date was 97mph at Finbows yard B1113, once all villages that wish to take part are up and running, a meeting of all of the volunteer operators will be arranged, so we can compare experiences and best practice in operating the data capture and software package.

Devolution

This year saw an inordinate amount of time dedicated to the ever-changing devolution proposals for Suffolk, meetings with government took place, we went from Suffolk with Norfolk Cambridge and Peterborough to Suffolk with just Norfolk, but all this work did not secure any deal with many councils voting against the proposal as they felt it was not true devolution and did not deliver enough for their areas.

Budget

The County Council once again agreed its annual capital & revenue budgets, once again savings identified will become a challenge, I do not believe anyone agrees that the £1000, 000.00 savings so far on the highways outsourcing has not caused noticeable concerns.

This year we are forecasting a 48.7 million pound shortfall even after programming savings from contracts of £5,000,000.00 as well as reducing locality budgets for councillors.

One area where the expenditure to go up is in adult social care, and the Council took the government sanctioned 2% rise in council purely for Adult Social care.

Broadband

Suffolk County Council worked through its second contract with BT to deliver high speed Broadband, This year saw new infrastructure in Haughley Green, Occold, Cotton & Bacton as well as the outlying areas of Old Newton.

www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com.

Housing Company

The County Council this year formed A Housing Company, to help with future land uses such as Chilton fields in Sudbury, it also brought about tension with the district council over new homes bonus, as we are sought to renegotiate the split between County and District regarding this budget. Although St Edmundsbury Council is a district partner in this venture, the door is left open to other councils to join in the future. To date the company has not built or bought a single house.

Highways

This year brought into sharp focus the difficulty in bringing forward Highways works that use the Local highways budget, there has been interminable delays in progressing some of the works communities wish to have, I had a look into the budget lines of these works for all County Councillors, our experience locally is born out throughout the County, with more than £1,00,000.00 of this £600,000.0 per annum budget remaining uncommitted or unallocated. The County Council agreed to shrink the budget for highways by a further £ 300,000.00 per year in the budget.

Lawn farm featured a lot this year, The Highways reporting tool was used extensively this year, although some jobs mysteriously disappear from the system