

## **DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

### **1) SMOKING BAN**

From 1<sup>st</sup> July almost all enclosed public places and work places became smoke free. The introduction of the Health Act 2006 & the associated legislation signified a major advance in public health legislation and sought to protect public and employees from exposure to second hand smoke. There is a range of local services to help people give up smoking. (Further information: 01473 704315/ 08001690169) Those who fail to comply with these statutory requirements will face a fine/prosecution. Suffolk Coastal held a series of briefings to advise employers and employees of the new requirements.

### **2) KEEPING PUBS SAFE AND LEGAL**

A new partnership has been developed (Suffolk Coastal Licensing Partnership) to ensure that all pubs, clubs and other licensed premises are safe and legal. This new partnership has been prompted by the new Licensing Laws which passed much of the responsibilities of controlling licensed premises onto Councils. This partnership consists of licensing team council representatives, members of the fire service, trading standards, environmental protection, food safety and the police.

### **3) GRANTS TO CUT CARBON FOOTPRINT**

From 29<sup>th</sup> May 2007 national funding has been made available for residents who plan to make homes more energy self-sufficient. (Low Carbon Building Programme). Grants will help to support solar, wind and water powered systems, for wood pellets, wood fuelled boiler systems and can be worth up to £2500/ 50% of cost of installation for some types of renewables.

For further information please refer to [www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home/](http://www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home/) or call 0800512012. (Measures are also available for businesses, schools and community organisations etc...)

### **4) COUNCIL PLEDGES TO CUT CARBON EMISSIONS**

Suffolk Coastal District Council has joined CRed Partnership on Climate Change to encourage behavioural changes towards environmental issues. SCDC initiated a Green Pledge Day where a consultation session was held at the Council Chambers to provide an opportunity to communicate with the public to review ways in which the council and the district as a whole could be greener. CReds objectives include; raising awareness of environmental impacts, promoting behavioural change and providing advice to help reduce energy

demand and impact on climate change. (Further information/to make a village pledge: 08000288938 / [www.cred-uk.org/Suffolk](http://www.cred-uk.org/Suffolk))

## **5) PARHAM WIND TURBINES**

Formal planning permission was provided by SCDC in July 2006 hence construction is due to commence in January 2008. This development will be housed at Parham airfield; will consist of 6 wind turbines with a capacity of 2 MW. It is estimated to generate over 20 million units of electricity per annum which equates to the provision of the energy needs for over 4000 houses.

## **6) SIZEWELL C**

21<sup>st</sup> May- Government announced plans to significantly change and shorten consultation debate and planning time for decisions relating to Sizewell C application and potentially remove the option for a local decision. Suffolk Coastal District Council believes that the local community and council should have their say and are thus campaigning for wider consultation.

## **7) OUTDOOR PLAYING SPACE FUNDING SCHEME- BEALINGS VILLAGE HALL TRUST**

On 13<sup>th</sup> June 07 documentation concerning this development was sent to me for my approval/ to voice any concerns or issues that may arise as a direct result of this planning application. I was given a 2 week deadline to respond to this proposal as part of planning protocol more than a decision-maker status. Some of the villages within the Witnesham Ward in close proximity to this development were previously informed; however as a representative I felt it necessary to raise awareness both of this development and of the possibilities available to the villages within the Witnesham Ward. In line with supplementary planning guidance 15-outdoor playing space, parishes are now able to apply for funding under this scheme for the improvement of play facilities and sports grounds. (For further information: contact Jennie Catling on (01394) 444321 / [jennie.catling@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:jennie.catling@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) as she will be able to provide full & comprehensive advice and guidance)

## **8) ANNUAL DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING- 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 07**

Cllr Cliff Cocker was announced the new Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year. Discussions progressed concerning measures to streamline council operation.

## **9) SUFFOLK COASTAL TEEN VOICE**

The first ever district-wide forum for young people is now up and running, and Suffolk Coastal Teen Voices (SCTV) aims to put everyone in the picture about

what young people really want. SCTV is assisted by Keri Mohan and anyone wanting more information or wishing to join can contact her by emailing [keri.mohan@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:keri.mohan@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or texting her on 07795 092255.

## **10) IPSWICH UNITARY PROPOSAL**

Ipswich is currently governed by a two tier Council system. Ipswich Borough Council fulfils District council functions such as refuse collection, housing and planning and Suffolk County council provides services such as education and social services. In April 2006 the Borough council commenced public discussion regarding the idea of turning the borough into a unitary authority. Ipswich, Norwich, Exeter and Oxford have united to campaign for unitary status an opportunity provided by the October 2006 Local Government White Paper. In March 2007 Ipswich was short-listed however consultation has to take place before the decision to be made in July. Hence a Unitary proposal briefing took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 07 at the Suffolk District Coastal Council chamber. This meeting outlined the Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council perspectives. A presentation was given by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive who sought member's views concerning the bid and representatives from parish councils within the Ipswich fringe area were also invited to attend and contribute. As a result of this consultation period an 8 page official response to the Department of Communities and Local Government has been drawn up outlining the core arguments from SCDC. In summary Ipswich Borough Council's bid for unitary status cannot be supported by our district council as it would not help to meet the problems and challenges facing our local communities and their respective councils. The core concerns are:

- The impact on efficiency of county services including potential increased costs to the tax payer
- Re-organisation costs- usually considerably greater than estimates due to redundancies, contract compensations, increased pay rates etc...
- Whether Ipswich population is large enough to sustain a Unitary status
- Performance dip- as with any major reorganisation it usually takes 2/3 years for performance levels to recover and advance
- The impact on existing partnerships, shared services and pathfinder initiatives where local communities across the county have been working together to create economies of scale
- The future risk of Ipswich subsuming fringe areas.

‘At this Council we believe that the way forward is working in partnership to deliver modernised services in a business-like way. Suffolk Coastal has recognised that councils have to change and evolve and that a 21<sup>st</sup> century solution is required to effectively address the problems and challenges facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Councils and the communities we serve’ – CLLR HERRING, LEADER OF SCDC