

Parish Report October 2006

Councillor

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County Council to sign Climate Change Declaration

I am pleased to report that the County Council has agreed to proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrat and Independent Group to sign up to 'The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change', a national declaration which commits the council to playing its part in tackling climate change.

The declaration was originally launched in October 2000 at a conference in Nottingham with 200 leaders, chief executives and senior managers of UK local government. To mark the fifth anniversary of the declaration it was re-launched in December 2005 at the Second National Councils Climate Conference. Currently 130 councils have signed the Declaration or its equivalent, including Norfolk County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council from the East of England area.

Rainfall levels are increasing in some areas and decreasing in others, temperatures are increasing all across the UK. If the polar ice caps continue to melt then Suffolk will face serious issues with rising sea levels in the future. The scale of the challenge posed by climate change means that all sectors of the community have to be involved to reduce emissions and adapt to changes in climate. Local Authorities in particular have a crucial role to play in responding to this challenge by acting as community leaders and by managing their estates in a sustainable way. I am very pleased that the County Council is leading the way on this issue.

Panel hears early results from Suffolk's School Organisation Review

The panel leading the review of school organisation in Suffolk has heard the interim results from the consultation that began in May. People taking part were asked whether Suffolk should change the way schools are organised.

It has been reported that a small majority of people who have taken part in the consultation have indicated they are in favour of change. Three quarters of those who want change have said they would prefer a countywide move to two tier schools.

The panel will have all the evidence gathered by November and will look at three main factors - raising standards among pupils, affordability and sustainability of any new system proposed.

The consultation period ended on 30th September 2006 and the full results are now being gathered together. I will keep you updated as new information and results arise.

Have your say on the County Council budget

Residents in Suffolk can have their say on what the budget priorities should be for Suffolk County Council in 2007/08 at this year's budget roadshows.

The County Council is responsible for spending £800 million on behalf of the people in Suffolk and the roadshows, which will run throughout the next four weeks at seven different locations across the county, give you the chance to let your views be known. Visitors will be able to take part in the 'voting poles' where they can have their say on their top three priorities.

The roadshows are in the following locations:

- Saturday 23 October (10am - 2pm) in Lowestoft on London Road North
- Saturday 30 September (10am-2pm) in Felixstowe outside Nationwide Building Society
- Thursday 5 October (10am - 12noon) in Stowmarket in the CSD Centre
- Saturday 7 October (10am - 2pm) in Newmarket outside Marks and Spencers
- Thursday 12 October (10am - 2pm) in Sudbury in North Street outside Clinton Cards
- Monday 16 October (10am - 2pm) in Ipswich on the Cornhill
- Saturday 21 October (10am - 2pm) Bury St Edmunds outside HSBC

Visitors will also be able to talk with council officers about council services and speak with a cabinet member. Cabinet members make the key decisions on the budget and council services.

People who can't make the roadshows can still have their say by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk or you may discuss any issues, concerns or views you have with me.

'Get Real' campaign on school lunches

The 'Get Real' campaign is Suffolk's approach to the Government's recent introduction of improved nutritional standards in all high schools. Suffolk County Council have been working closely with schools to develop the catering service, to make sure the new standards are met.

To officially launch 'Get Real', well-known champion of high quality food in Suffolk, Ugur Vata (owner of the Gallery restaurant in Ipswich), marked the start of the campaign, which is taking place in high schools around the county.

As part of the promotion, pupils are being invited to take part in an online competition. Not only will they learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle, they will also be in with a chance of winning a range of exciting prizes.

There are several reasons why food based standards are being introduced to lunches. Firstly, they will define types of foods, some of which are no longer allowed, or

restricted. For example, foods high in fat, sugar and salt can be replaced with healthier options.

These standards will also ensure that certain types of more nourishing foods are served more frequently.

For more information on the 'Get Real' campaign, please visit:

www.myschoollunch.co.uk/suffolk