

Annual Report 2017/ 2018

Botesdale Parish Council

By County Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division, Suffolk

Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07714-597980 Twitter: @jesstfleming

State of the County – As Districts and Boroughs in Suffolk redefine themselves and merge or move, the County Council cannot remain unaffected and must work with its partners to be as efficient as possible in managing public funds. The year ahead may see debate over changes at County level as well with the prospect of another look at unitary possibilities.

The Council has initiated several large projects over the past year with help from Government funding, these include The Orwell Crossings in Ipswich (below); the Lowestoft Third River Crossing; planning approval for The Hold records repository in Ipswich; upgrades(2 new roundabouts) to the A140 near Eye; and potentially A12 upgrades near Fornham and Stratford St Andrew.



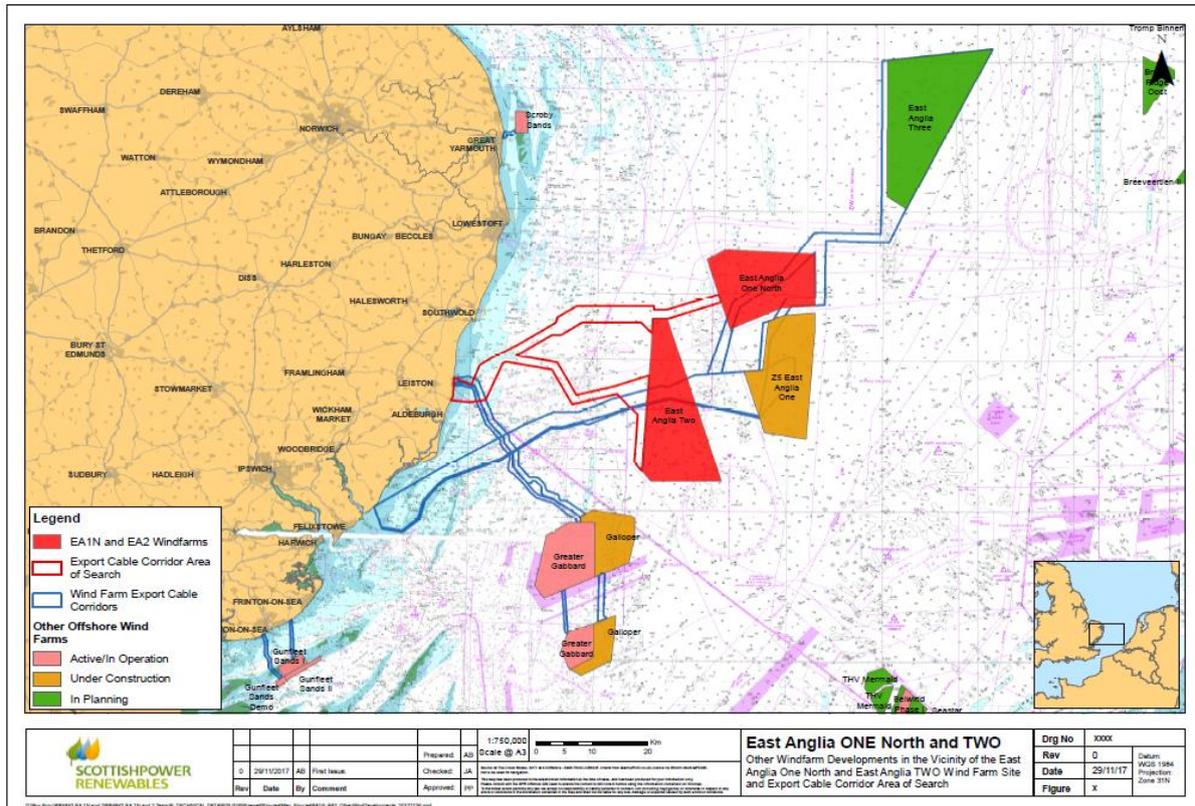
Highways - Suffolk Highways has established its regional customer service centres at Rougham, Halesworth and Ipswich and the reporting system is now widely used for road and drainage issues. More money has been allocated to pothole repair during 2018 given the hard winter and large number of potholes and defects that need attention.

As a reminder:

Report a defect/ pothole <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

To check on area roadworks - <https://roadworks.org/>

Planning – Suffolk County Council is statutory consultee on highways, flooding, education, and natural and historic environment, it also maintains traffic data and models flow and congestion. SCC continues to work with applicants and others to represent Suffolk's interests on major projects, such as Sizewell C, the Eye Airfield Gas Fired Power Plant (likely to go ahead in 2019 despite failing to obtain a contract in February), and Scottish Renewables' offshore wind farms (see below):



Anglia Three (green) received planning approval in 2017 with construction expected to commence in 2022. Anglia One, Two and One – North are at various stages of planning and construction. These projects all demand major supporting infrastructure such as power cables and grid connections.

Nationally the Government has issued several planning White Papers over the past year and recently proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (still time to comment, the consultation ends May 10th).

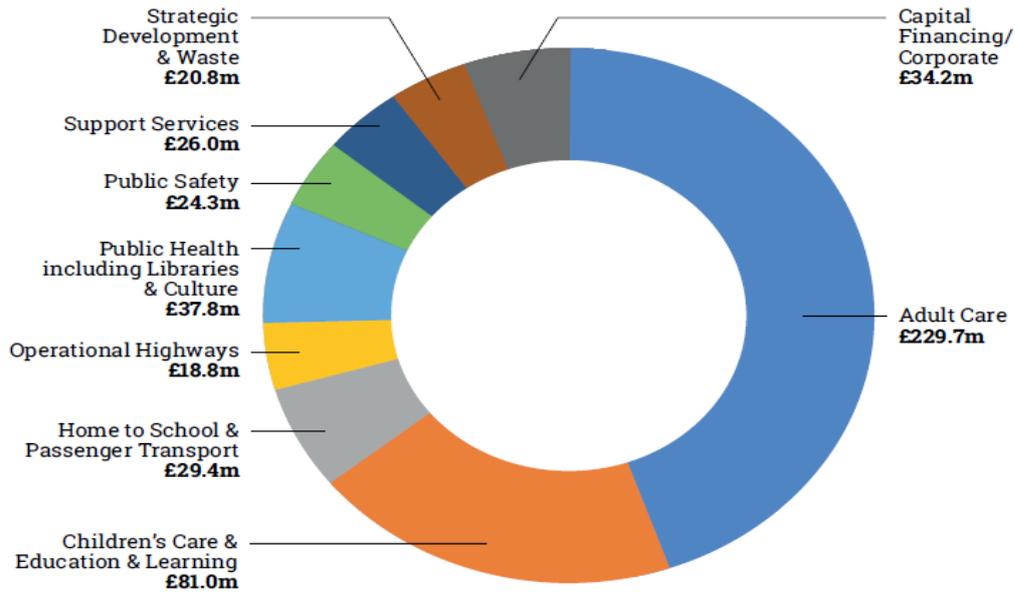
More locally, the County Council has advised and commented on planning applications in Botesdale, Rickinghall and the surrounding area. SCC offers an advisory role on Neighbourhood Planning such as the Rickinghall & Botesdale Neighbourhood Plan Group.

Education – Most people will have seen or responded to proposals to change the way Home to School Transport is organised in the County, the main change would be limited free transport to the nearest geographic school. The results of public consultation conducted earlier this year are under review, any changes would be proposed and decided upon this summer.

Council Budget Challenge – We are now a Business Rates Retention Pilot county with 100% retention being phased in over the next two years. Rates and Community Infrastructure Levy monies are collected by Districts so the County has to bid for the funds it needs to support growth. These ways of raising funds are fairly new and designed to replace the Revenue Support Grant over time.

The County Council needed to raise Council Tax this year to help pay for needed services, unfortunately the demands on services are increasing mainly for health and social care meaning other areas are squeezed. The graph shows how County funds are allocated:

Appendix 3



Our priorities of inclusive growth, health care and well-being, and efficient public services were agreed last June and guide decision making about funds and resources. If you have comments on the priorities or any of this report please get in touch as I would like to hear your views.

Thank you for your support and participation over the past year.