

**Partnership Managers report on the ESP Forum  
at Trinity Park Conference Centre on 11 November 2016**

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**1. OVERVIEW**

The fourth East Suffolk Partnership Annual Forum took place at Trinity Park Conference Centre on Friday 11 November 2016.

The theme of this year's conference was 'the future of east Suffolk' and the event was aimed at helping build better partnership working in east Suffolk, allowing the delegates the opportunity to meet members of the East Suffolk Partnership Board and contribute to progress in developing a collaborative approach to working across east Suffolk.

The keynote speakers delivered their individual visions for East Suffolk from the public, voluntary, community and the business sector perspective. The key points were:

What is our vision? In some ways that hasn't changed. The underlying principles remain the same, but the challenges that we now face need us to be bolder, more innovative, more challenging of ourselves. We must build on our proud track record of being progressive, practical, innovative and ambitious. The rules have changed and our finances have changed fundamentally, and now we have to make our voice heard if we are to get the funding that we need. We need a strong case, a profile, and we need to work together to make that happen.

We have challenges that we must respond to, such as housing, growth, infrastructure, an ageing population, inward migration and health, care and support. We know we have a challenge in terms of the stewardship of our environment, our ever changing coastline, and achieving the balance needed between competing demands for growth, and change, and maintaining the quality of our amazing natural environment.

A clear and obvious opportunity is working with our communities, pursuing that enabling agenda even further, working through the issues that may get in the way. We need to provide our young people with opportunities, but equally what opportunities do they provide us with? The role of volunteers and communities to support each other and build capacity will increasingly be important – as will building civic pride.

We have a terrific cultural economy, but have we realised its full potential? Snape Maltings – its world class venues and activities rooted locally and regionally but with national and international impact. Many of us will realise that there is incredible value in art for the sake of art, in how it makes us think and feel and in how it entertains us, but we must also recognise that it has a big role in driving growth in East Suffolk.

There is still much to do, huge potential to be unleashed. We need to work together to unleash that potential and realise that vision, because we can't always do it alone. But if we do, will be to the benefit of our communities, our economy, and our own well being and quality of life.

There is a need for flexibility in our business models and a need to be pro-active in responding to changing times and future funding environments.

The key note session finished with a feel-good 1'30" show reel of recent East Anglian cultural activity with an East Suffolk soundtrack (Britten Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra).

**2. RESOURCES**

The annual Forum enjoys a good level of support and many individuals from a range of different organisations and communities were willing to offer support to make it a success.

The critical resources needed to make the event happen were:

- ESP funds for venue and catering.
- ESP funds to commission EELGA as event organisers.
- ESP Manager responsible for event development and management.
- District council officer time for market place supervision and communications support.
- Input from partners who delivered a total of 12 workshops and seminars.
- A range of organisations that provided 35 Market stall.

### 3. DELEGATE FEEDBACK

205 delegates were booked, of which 178 attended.

Delegates were sent a link to an online survey which asked them to rate how useful they had found the event overall, and in line with the aims of the ESP, also how useful the event was as an opportunity to *connect, influence and deliver*. The system for rating was from 1 to 4, 1 being 'Not useful' and 4 being 'Very useful'. The results are summarised below, and the full results can be found in Appendix 1.

70 respondents replied to the survey, which is a 42% response rate. Around 90% of the attendees judged the whole event as useful or very useful.

This is supported by the answers to the questions concerning future events. Again, over 90% would be keen to attend future ESP events. Similar numbers of attendees said they would encourage colleagues to attend future events.

#### Connect

Over 50% of people gave the event the highest possible score (4 out of 4) for the usefulness of the event for *connecting*. A further third gave it the second highest score. This aspect is clearly one of the strengths of the Forum which is recognised by the delegates.

#### Influence

Concerning the usefulness of the event for *influencing*, the majority of respondents (again around half) chose 3 out of 4, signifying that the event was 'quite useful'. A significant number also chose 2 and 4, showing that opinion was more divided on this aspect of the Forum.

#### Deliver

The most popular choice for the usefulness of the event for *delivering* was 3, although it was a much smaller majority (35%), with the number of people choosing 2 not far behind at 28%. 15% chose 1.

### 4. WORKSHOP and SEMINAR FEEDBACK

Workshop and Seminar facilitators were asked to feedback to help with shaping the ESP's future workstreams and priorities. They were asked to report back with any recurring or key issues that were raised and any actions that delegates took back to their own organisations, as well as issues that the ESP could address. The main issues that were recorded are summarised below.

- Productive feedback to inform the Community Safety Partnerships' (CSP's) action planning process and improved understanding of the CSP's work. Further work needed to agree how the CSPs can provide greater support and linkages to the ESP 5 key priority themes. CSP meeting will be held 10th January 2017 to pull this together.

- The 'Rural Matters' workshop identified some actions for the ESP to consider as priorities. These included learning from what is good and to have a central place to share this information, case studies etc.; Support wider understanding between project funding and sustainable funding; Lobby and support more services in to rural areas; provide a representative onto the health and wellbeing board advocating the needs for rural communities; support and develop more community volunteering and change makers; ensure that rural proofing is intrinsically included in equalities for services and funding; Support small, micro businesses to start up and or develop in rural areas.

A small task group is being convened to look at these and other issues around hidden needs in rural areas and will report back to the Board at its meeting in March. There were a number of ideas from the customer insight, channel shift and digital inclusion digital inclusion workshop – including a major piece of work to do around digital inclusion linked to poverty reduction, that will be included in these discussions.

- The ESP has used its communication channels to help promote the consultation on the proposed merger of the district councils and encouraged as many people as possible to send in their views.
- Key points to take forward from the workshop looking at improving career opportunities for young people and helping meet the recruitment challenge for local business included: We need to reduce the barriers young people may face, and educate employers of their evolving skills; Provide opportunities for young people to get on the career ladder such as work experience; Continue to develop careers advice from the employer angle; Develop ways of supporting young people with LLDD to have fair access to opportunities; Showcase more of what Suffolk has to offer to young people so social mobility is encouraged but talent remains in the area; Give people the confidence that we can be change champions and showcase good work

Lowestoft College said would be happy to be part of any working group moving forward and they are already part of the solutions being developed by the East Suffolk Skills Group.

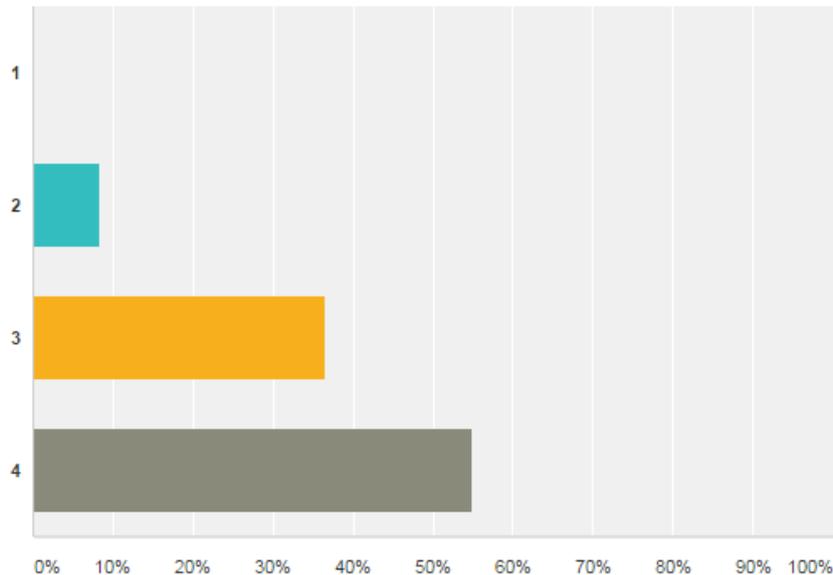
- The role of the ESP to help promote the importance of good communication planning in managing reputation risk and also communications planning
- University of Suffolk reported back from there session that through the workshop they had certainly got the leads to follow up with individually as well as praise for the Hidden Needs report and a definite appetite to join their business networks.

## APPENDIX 1

1. How useful was the event for **connecting**? (1 – Not useful, 4 – Very useful)

For example:

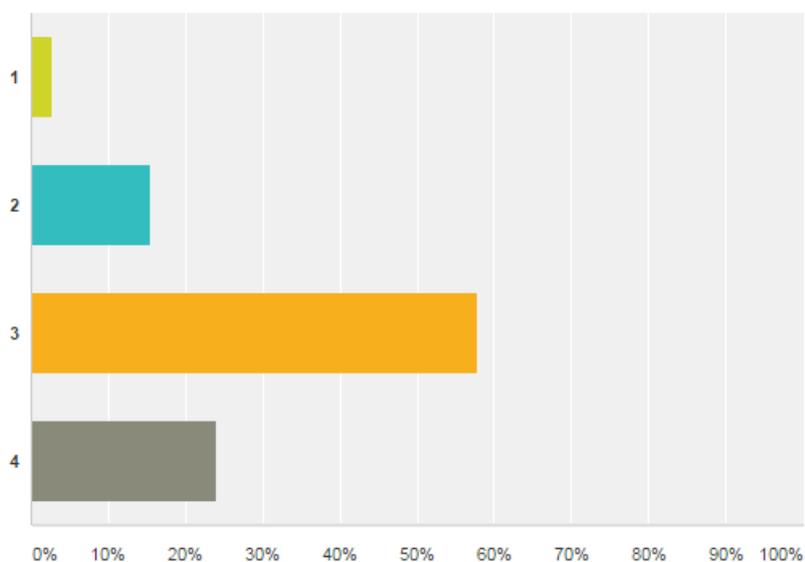
- I had valuable conversations with people I would not normally meet in everyday work
- I exchanged details with useful contacts who I may work with in the future
- I found the mix of delegates were largely the 'right people' for me to meet



2. How useful was the event for **influencing**? (1 – Not useful, 4 – Very useful)

For example:

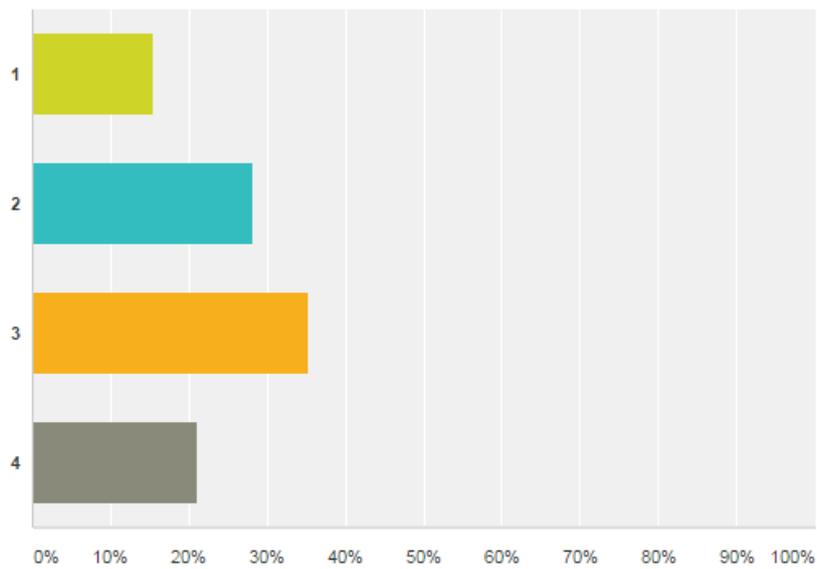
- I gathered helpful information and/ or learned about some of the key challenges and opportunities in East Suffolk
- I raised the profile of my organisation/ community/ business
- I participated in workshop discussions and/ or influenced people's thinking on issues that are important to me



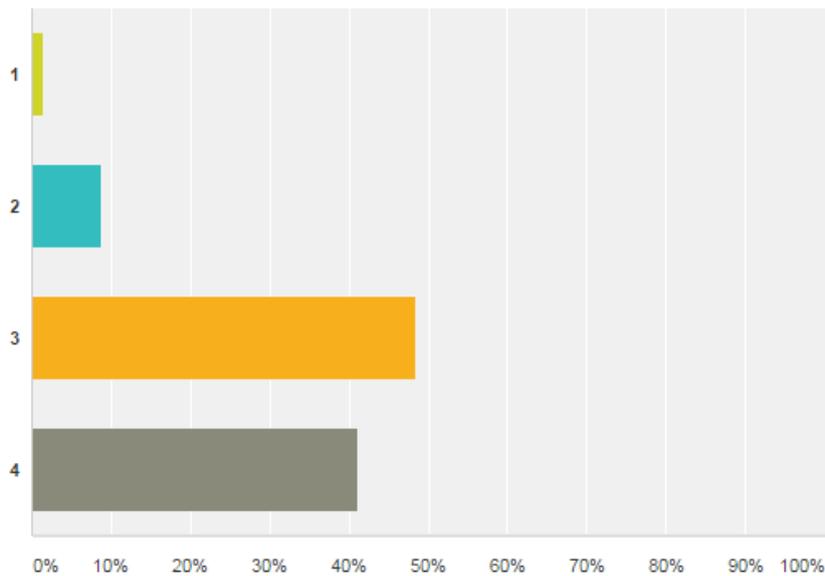
3. How useful was the event for impacting the way you work (**delivering**)? (1 – Not useful, 4 – Very useful)

For example:

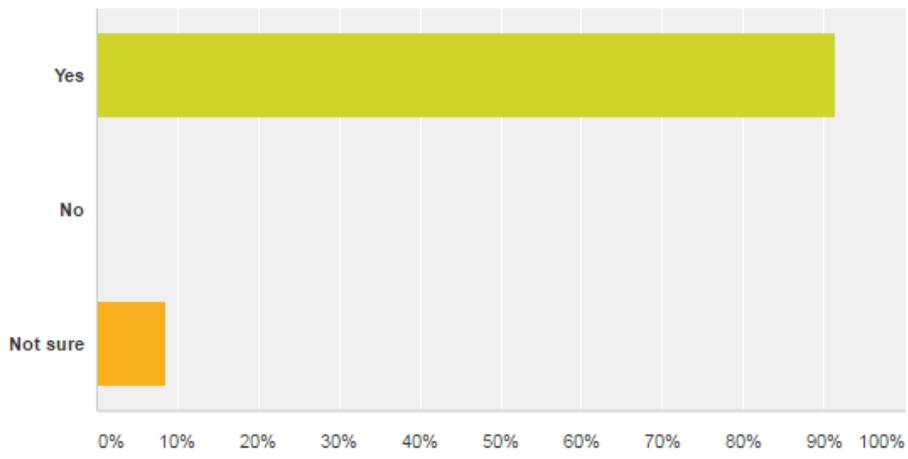
- It will encourage me to work differently/ smarter
- It will help me to work in partnership
- It will support me to reduce duplication of effort



4. How useful was the event to you overall? (1 – Not useful, 4 – Very useful)



5. Would you be keen to attend future ESP events?



6. Would you encourage your colleagues to attend future ESP events?

