

BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EAST SUFFOLK

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 An introductory report to the new East Suffolk Partnership (ESP) Board setting out the background to the establishment of the ESP which is based on the merger of the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP).

2. BACKGROUND**2.1 Local Strategic Partnerships**

Following the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000 Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils together with other key organisations with a stake in their districts led to the establishment of a Local Strategic Partnership ('LSP') for each area. This fulfilled their statutory roles with regard to promoting and improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their respective areas. The principle mechanism to achieve this was through the development and delivery of a Sustainable Community Strategy for each LSP which was adopted by each relevant Council.

- 2.2 The LSPs brought together public, private, voluntary and community interests to establish and deliver the vision contained in the two Sustainable Community Strategies. Both LSPs have developed during this time, especially through the excellent collaborative work of their various working groups and the Annual Forums, to gain a reputation for making a real difference to the lives of local communities and residents.

- 2.3 Critically the LSPs have been funded during this time through Performance Reward Grant ('PRG'), which was allocated to each LSP from Government, through Suffolk County Council. The PRG was used to employ a dedicated LSP Manager for each LSP and fund various projects.

2.4 The Localism agenda

The Coalition Government has been promoting and developing the interconnected agendas of public sector reform, and Localism. These have fundamentally altered the framework and background within which local government and the wider public sector operate and have changed the landscape for the voluntary and community sector as well as opportunities for local businesses. These national changes, some of which are listed below, have critically also impacted upon the nature and purpose of LSPs.

- The abolition of Local Area Agreements and Comprehensive Area Assessments
- The government's intention to remove the statutory requirement to have a Sustainable Community Strategy
- The end of PRG funding (Suffolk Coastal has a fully funded programme until 31 March 2013 but Waveney LSP has allocated all remaining PRG funds and made their LSP Manager redundant during 2011)
- The creation of business led Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Abolishing PCTs and Strategic Health Authorities, replaced by GP consortia
- The creation of Health and Wellbeing Boards

- The broader Open Public Services agenda
- Extensive Housing and Welfare reforms
- Replacing Police Authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners and Police Crime Panels

2.5 **East Suffolk Partnership**

As a result of these national reforms and the wider partnership between Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils, including the recent adoption of revised Council Business Plans, both Waveney LSP and Suffolk Coastal LSP decided to jointly consider the creation of a new East Suffolk Partnership. The development of this concept has been lead by the Leaders of Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils together with the Leader of Suffolk County Council with support from key individuals from partner organisations.

2.6 Following a joint meeting of the two LSPs, the concept of a wider collaboration covering East Suffolk has now been fully developed to replace the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney LSPs. Whilst reflecting the new environment in which partners are operating, this is designed to build upon the good work of the previous LSPs, as listed below:

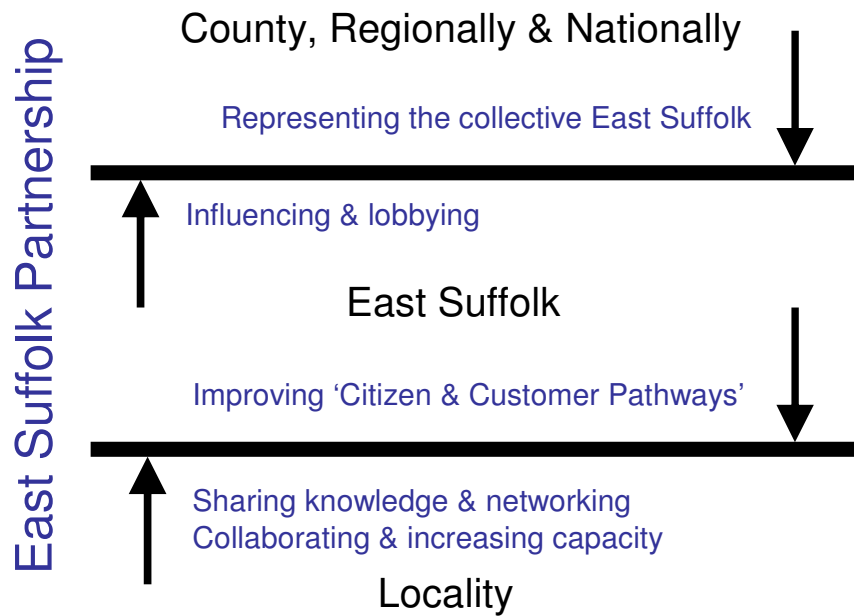
- Energy, enthusiasm and contributions from a wide range of key partners
- Effective theme based Working Groups
- Annual Partnership Forums
- ‘Conversations, Collaborations & Capacity’ Think Tank event
- Relationship building and partnership working
- Avoiding silos and duplication
- Cutting across organisational and geographic boundaries
- Increasing networking, collaboration and capacity
- Track record and understanding of success
- True local delivery – ‘bottom up localism’

2.7 At the same time the changed environment, as set out above, will enable an East Suffolk Partnership (‘ESP’) to operate even more effectively than the previous LSPs. It has therefore been designed to:

- Prioritise localities
- Be flexible – not confined by a Sustainable Community Strategy, joint priorities or separate action plans
- Operate at multiple structured and unstructured layers
- Be able to proactively interact with other ‘systems’
- Avoid being hierarchical or bureaucratic

2.8 The graphic below highlights the key elements and benefits of how the ESP can operate at different geographical levels. The key benefits will be:

- Providing a more powerful lobbying ‘voice’ for east Suffolk;
- Utilising new funding streams to support delivery of projects and initiatives;
- Retaining the strengths of the existing locality and themed approaches.



2.9 The locality role of the East Suffolk Partnership will therefore be to:

- Identify and meet locality needs recognising that there are different communities of interest within East Suffolk.
- Through partnership working optimise use of limited resources, avoid duplication and access specialist skills.
- Share information and expertise to ensure consistent approach to community profiles.
- Enable delivery of those services/projects where collectively an identified need is not already being met.
- Support local communities in developing and implementing their local community aspirations.
- Build community resilience and capacity.
- Provide the locality representation/interface in respect of Health and Wellbeing Boards, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Authority Locality meetings and Suffolk County Council Our Place Initiative etc.

2.10 Key working groups will ensure active engagement in delivery within the East Suffolk Partnership. These will include a focus on:

- Access to Services
- Voluntary Sector Resources Network
- Community Safety Partnership
- Greenprint Forum
- Economy, Skills and Enterprise
- Healthier Lives for All
- Young People
- Housing

2.11 These groups will bring together practitioners and experts in their fields from across Waveney and Suffolk Coastal to ensure that the priorities for the area are being delivered.

- 2.12 The partnership landscape within Suffolk is complex (see Appendix A) and therefore the ESP needs to focus on where it can make a difference because a priority gap exists rather than duplicating the work of an existing partnership or network

3. FINANCE, LEGAL CONTROLS AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils and Suffolk County Council have agreed to direct funding through the New Homes Bonus to the new partnership to provide a project delivery budget and to cover the cost of employing a Partnership Manager. This funding is outlined in a separate report to the Board.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There was a broad consensus that the creation of an East Suffolk Partnership is the right way forward at a joint meeting of representatives of the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney LSPs on 30 September 2011.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Whilst this report is primarily for ESP Board member information it is important to note the background when considering other items on this agenda relating to resource and governance issues.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The ESP Board are asked to note the background report

7. APPENDICES:

Appendix A:

'Spheres of Influence' diagram showing the context in which an East Suffolk Partnership will operate.