
Council



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title:	Leader's Statement	
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Leader's Statement

1. I hope you were all able to enjoy at least some of the summer. But I also wanted to recognise that during this traditional holiday period many councillors and staff have continued to work hard and deliver the high quality services our communities need and deserve.

Single Council

2. Today we will be debating a possible new chapter in transforming local government in West Suffolk. Before we do, I just wanted to reflect and applaud the hard work that councillors from all parties at both authorities as well as staff have put in, in considering this issue. This is all about doing our best for the communities we serve and listening to them and I am sure that guiding principle will be at the heart of the debate today.

Tour of Britain

3. I do not need to remind anyone here what a great place St Edmundsbury is. But, it was good to see West Suffolk as the backdrop to the Tour of Britain. It was a great chance to showcase our area and the pictures were beamed nationally and internationally; but it was also good to see the crowds lining the streets and I hope this encourages, together with the work we do with our leisure, health and highway partners, to get more people on their bikes and enjoying exercise generally.

Bury St Edmunds and Beyond

4. Tourism continues to increase in St Edmundsbury and West Suffolk and the launch of Bury St Edmunds and Beyond will no doubt both modernise our marketing and further boost tourism in our area which is so important to our local economy.

Masterplan

5. During the summer period the next phase of the Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan involved a six week campaign to make people aware of, and encourage them to have their say on, the draft. We are now going through the feedback received and making changes to that draft based on those comments for councillors to consider before Christmas. A huge thank you to all those who responded and helped the campaign.

Our Markets

6. The various initiatives that are going on to support our local markets are very welcome. These of course are vital for our local communities but are also part of our work encouraging business in our area. The whole of West Suffolk took part in Love Your Local Market campaign, encouraging schools and communities to get involved. We are working hard in Haverhill this year with additional events to attract more people and traders. This included the World Market in April followed by the Community Market, monthly craft and gift markets and a new start up scheme for new traders – (As well as the third beer festival on the Market Square.)
7. Since we last met there has also been not one but two markets at Clare with hundreds visiting the newly reinstated event. This was a result of listening to our residents, working with partners and the community and helping to make it happen. If you have not visited yet I am sure our Mayor, Councillor Clements, and local ward member as well as portfolio holder Councillor Pugh, who were at the opening and involved in the reinstatement, will encourage you to. It is held on the third Saturday of every month.
8. We have also had a farmers' market in Bury as part of our work to promote the Traverse Area and Suffolk produce; and the Friday Food Fest showcased the tasty food and drink offered by our regular street market.

Eastern Relief Road

9. I am delighted to see the Eastern Relief Road opening. This is a multi-million pound investment in transport by us, Suffolk County Council and the New Anglia LEP to help deliver and support much needed homes, jobs, leisure and education facilities. It is also a clear sign of an innovative Council, working with partners to unlock and manage growth to bring investment and benefits to our communities. While at the same time supporting current businesses such as Treatt and encouraging new ones to grow.

West Suffolk Business Festival

10. Next month sees our very own West Suffolk Business Festival. This is the eastern region's leading business festival returns with a first class collection of events for anyone in business, or anyone wanting to make their mark in the business world. It is the seventh year we have organised and sponsored the event which goes from strength to strength and is supported by many local businesses and organisations. Good luck and thanks to all those who are taking part in the Bury Free Press Business Awards, which are run as part of the festival, and especially those competing in the Award for Innovation which we are sponsoring.

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders

11. Work is progressing well with Suffolk public leaders, who meet monthly, across the County in producing the Suffolk Delivery Plan. This underpins our work to secure the best possible infrastructure and funding to support growth, skills, housing and jobs in a planned and co-ordinated way. We are also working closely with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners on the Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk which will further complement our work. In addition we are strengthening ties with both the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership as well as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as part of the opportunities being in the Cambridge sub-region brings.

Blooming Marvellous

12. Just as the committee papers went to press we heard Bury in Bloom were the overall winners at Anglia in Bloom 2017. Overall our council was involved in helping win or were nominated for seven awards including the best in the eastern region. Well done to all involved, this is a great reminder of not only the pride and professionalism that everyone has in keeping our area looking so great. But also the ancillary benefits helps local business and tourism and also good parks are fundamental for our families, the environment as well as physical and mental health.