



A busy and eventful year at Suffolk County Council.

Here is a short snapshot and flavour of the previous 12 months.

Councillor Matthew Hicks takes the helm at Suffolk County Council

On 24 May 2018, Councillor Mathew Hicks was elected as the new leader of Suffolk County Council. Councillor Hicks has promised a new era of working in partnership and listening.

On 12 July, it was announced that Suffolk's 2017 Public Health Report won third place in the Association of Directors of Public Health Annual Report Competition, from 54 UK entries.

On 24 July 2018, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet approved a plan to invest £6million into upgrading Suffolk's recycling centres.

The plan has earmarked £3m for the Foxhall Recycling Centre – Suffolk's busiest with 20% of all recycling waste in the county – and £1m for Haverhill for "urgent improvements".

Suffolk's tourism trade has seen its biggest boom for a decade, with the visitor economy reaching the £2 billion mark for the first time. Interim figures released on 8 August 2018 by Visit Suffolk showed that tourism grew by at least five per cent in 2017, more than double the year before.

Superfast broadband coverage continues to grow

On 24 August 2018, it was confirmed that 98% superfast broadband coverage will be achieved in 2020.

By November 2018, the construction of The Hold building was well underway. The Hold will deliver a new home for the majority of Suffolk's unique archival collections, as well as state-of-the-art public facilities including seminar rooms and a 200-seat auditorium.

Sport and Physical Activity worth £270m a year to the Suffolk economy

A report published on 18 December 2018 revealed the importance of the Sport and Physical Activity sector to the Suffolk economy.

January 2019 saw Suffolk Highways celebrating road repair success following a £300,000 investment in Nu-phalt Thermal Patching technology. The investment, which has been funded from the extra £9.67 million received from central government in the autumn, has aided the county's Highways teams to carry out more effective, longer-lasting repairs to Suffolk's road surface.

Over the month of January, Suffolk Highways deployed three thermal road repair machines which repaired approximately 1,700 potholes county-wide.

Department for Education recognises outstanding performance by Suffolk students

On 24 January 2019, the Department for Education published revised GCSE and A Level results.

GCSE

Suffolk has risen in national league tables for students in the county achieving the standard GCSE pass in English and Maths.

Department for Education figures confirm that 1% more students in Suffolk are achieving the expected standards in English and Maths at GCSE compared with last year.

A highlight of January was the announcement that Suffolk has won a grant of £4.4 million from the Government for a pioneering project to develop “smart” street lighting. The project will see streetlights adapted in a range of innovative ways, including being equipped with wind vanes and solar panels to generate rather than consume energy

Suffolk County Council 2019/20 budget approved

On 14 February 2019, Suffolk County Council concluded its budget setting process for this coming financial year (2019/2020).

From 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, Suffolk County Council will spend almost £10 million a week across all its services following approval of this budget of £519.3 million.

Over the period 2011-12 to 2018-19 the Council has made over £260 million of savings in response to reductions in funding from Central Government and increasing demand for services. For 2019/20 the Council has proposed a range of savings totalling around £13 million.

In February 2019, it was confirmed that Suffolk will host the opening stage of the 2019 OVO Energy Women’s Tour on Monday 10 June 2019. This is the fifth time that the race has visited our county.

Suffolk successful in winning £1.725 million in extra funding for business broadband roll out

On 1 March 2019, it was announced that Suffolk County Council, working in partnership with West Suffolk Council, East Suffolk Council of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney, and Babergh and Mid Suffolk district councils has been successful in securing £1.725 million from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

Councillor Steve Wiles