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The Budget

The funding for the budget comes from a number of sources including council tax, government grants as well as specific grants, fees and charges. Central government's focus on reducing the deficit has meant a reduction in local government funding over the past few years.

Budget setting is conducted through a process of consultation and open meetings. Every year in the Autumn, the cabinet considers budgets for their particular area of responsibility and recommends appropriate capital and revenue budgets to Full Council. Papers and minutes from the full council and council committees can be found on the [Suffolk Committee Minutes](#) website

We have promised to protect hard working residents with a promise of 0% rise in council tax during this administration. This means that savings have had to be found from across all areas of the County Council. We set detailed financial targets for all of our services and we monitor spend against those targets throughout the year.

We are also re-designing the way that we deliver services through a series of transformation programmes. Protecting front line services and ensuring we maintain the quality and effectiveness for Suffolk Residents.

In the last three years we have made over £100m of savings. We have done this by cutting waste, reducing management and staffing levels. This has allowed us to protect front line services for Suffolk. However we are now facing an even bigger budget gap. We have to save another £120 million in the next three years and, while we have made every effort to get more from every pound we spend, we will be faced with making increasingly tough decisions.

One of the key things you told us was to reduce bureaucracy, waste, management and the back office. That's why we have:

- implemented a jobs freeze across the organisation that saw a number of people leave our employment without being replaced
- reduced our management structure saving over £2 million
- reduced back office costs
- frozen councillor allowances
- ensured services are commissioned in the most effective way, such as joint venture arrangements and lower cost contracts
- made more efficient use of the office space we have at our key centres working with partners to use space efficiently
- worked closely with our partners across Suffolk to reduce duplication
- maximised opportunities to bring in external income

You can find out more about our budget, how it is spent, and the savings we have made on our council tax page.

Locality Budget

Funds of £10,000 were allocated for 2016 together with a balance of £7,608.50 c/f from 2015 gave a total balance of £17,608.50 for the year 2016/17 from Locality Budget for Melford Ward, which includes Long Melford, Glemsford, Hartest, Lawshall, Boxted, groups based in Sudbury area serving these parishes. Funds have been distributed throughout the year as detailed below;

Long Melford: Scouts & Guides improved storage building, Community Association provided new heaters in the Old School, Heritage Centre hired equipment to carry out a geographical survey, Christmas Fayre, Football club made improvements to the snack bar and Open Spaces purchased a wood chipper.

Lawshall: Supported the Mother and Toddler group, pre-school, archives group and development of a local neighbourhood plan

Hartest: Used funds to refurbish the school swimming pool, drainage improvements and provision of a Rural Coffee Caravan.

Stansted: Used funds to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday and to help with refurbishment of the Community Centre.

Boxted: Received funds to support the Development of Heritage Orchard, Willow Sanctuary, Tree Nursery and Home Farm Projects

Glemsford: Used funds to provide casing for a defibrillator and to provide 'Summer Play Days'

Sudbury: Groups in Sudbury that support local parishes received funds to the Rotary Club, Citizens Advice Bureau, Sudbury Carnival and mini rugby camp.

Other groups that offer support to the area who received funding were Stour Valley Vineyard Church, UpBeat heart support, Suffolk Rape Crisis, The wool towns association, Suffolk Young Farmers, Alton Rowing Club of 2012 and Fruit and pledge initiative

Further commitments have been made to support Melford movies, Suffolk coalition of disabled people, All Saints Church Lawshall, Lawshall mother and toddler group, Long Melford parish council and Long Melford Football Club.

As in previous years the locality budget has been used to support many groups and organisations as they offer a diverse range of activities, facilities and services within the communities of Melford Ward.

Suffolk County Council Campaigns

Throughout the year Suffolk County Council has promoted and supported several campaigns in order to promote wellbeing, community caring and awareness and responsibility for the environment. These campaigns include:

Safe and Seen Campaign:

The Safe and Seen in Suffolk – Road Safety “reflector” campaign was launched in partnership with Radio Suffolk, Public Health, and Suffolk Roadsafte, to coincide with the clocks changing on 30th October.

The campaign saw over 12,000 badge reflectors given to primary school aged children, which can be worn on their coats or backpacks to reflect the beam of vehicles in darker conditions to ensure that children are seen as they walk with friends and parents. Suffolk County Council’s Road Safety Team and Public Health Team invested £9,550 into the campaign to deliver enough reflectors to benefit over 60 primary schools across the county. The campaign was officially launched at the Suffolk Show by Cllr James Finch and BBC Radio Suffolk at the beginning of June.

White Ribbon Campaign:

White Ribbon is an international as well as national campaign aimed to stop domestic abuse against women – it calls for men to condemn such violence and for supporters to show their commitment by wearing a white ribbon. The campaign runs every year from 25th November to 10th December.

Women might be the primary victims of this type of assault but the Campaign encourages men to take a share of the responsibility in putting an end to abuse.

Suffolk County Council Localities and Partnership Specialist Team works with the Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership and with Suffolk Constabulary in support of White Ribbon Day. Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership has pledged to tackle violence against women and men by raising awareness of this issue with staff and partner organisations, and taking action to encourage victims to seek help. We have a long tradition of supporting local domestic abuse forums in each District and Borough and supporting specialist domestic abuse agencies in their work with victims.

Suicide Prevention Strategy:

The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William, gave his support to a strategy launched by a number of organisations in Suffolk to prevent suicides.

The strategy, Suffolk Lives Matter, details how services across the county are working to reduce the number of suicides. In Suffolk, 8.7 people per 100,000 died by suicide each year, compared with 8.9 per 100,000 in England as a whole.

Suicide is the third most frequent cause of death in males aged 15-49 in the county and male suicide rates are nearly three times higher than female rates in Suffolk.

While no single organisation is responsible for preventing suicide, a range of professionals from the voluntary and charity sector, clinical commissioning groups, local councils, police, HealthWatch Suffolk, the coroner's office and mental health services all play a crucial role.

Suffolk County Council has taken the lead on the new, joint plan.

Thank you

As always I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to the very many people who help and support me in the role of County Councilor including Parish Councils, District Councillors and Parish Clerks to name but a few.

Volunteers in the form of groups or individuals continue to contribute immensely to our communities with their dedication and commitment to service, and on behalf of everyone I extend a sincere vote of thanks to each and every one of them, they really do make an amazing difference!

Finally, 2017 will see elections for Suffolk County Council, it is my intention to stand once again and if successful I hope to continue serving Melford Ward