



**Appendix 1**

**Strategic Overview & Scrutiny**

**Annual Report**

**2017-2018**

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## **Foreword for O&S Annual Report**

The annual report highlights the main areas of activity undertaken by the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee during the previous year from May 2017 to April 2018 under the Chairmanship of Councillor Liz Harsant.

*'2017/18 has been an extremely busy year for members and you can see from this report the amount of meetings which have taken place.*

*We received our annual update from County Councillor Ladd on the Health Scrutiny Committee and he informed us that this would be his last report as he was no longer carrying on as the Chair. We would like to thank him for the time he has given us and Cllr Hugh Whittall as the representative for IBC. Crime and Police Matters were reported to us by Superintendent Kerry Cutler. We concluded our investigations on Migrants and Looked After Children, Mental Health Awareness which Cllr Pope presented and the notes of the meetings show the conclusions reached.*

*8 Task & Finish Group meetings took place during the year and you will see from the report the interesting and influential people that have attend our meetings and we are most grateful for their input which has helped form the actions we have listed.*

*I would particularly like to bring members attention to the investigations carried out regarding the Migrants and Looked After Children - Task & Finish Group when the arrangements made to house migrant and looked after children in Ipswich and the impact on housing and local hostels in the town was discussed. My thanks to Cliff James (SCC Parenting Services), Rebecca Carrera (Suffolk Refugee Support) and Allison Coleman (Suffolk Refugee Programme) for their input. This was led by Peter Whittall and we are most grateful for his help with this.*

*The Task & Finish Group looking at Mental Health Awareness continued for another year with a change of members and I would like to thank Cllr Hopgood for her input and her request for us to investigate this. My thanks to Alison Armstrong (Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust), Sue Gray (Suffolk MIND) and Suffolk County Councillor Tony Goldson who were able to offer helpful information.*

*Discussions about the Orwell Bridge Closures and Ipswich Park & Ride were both ongoing. The Committee have discussed these very thoroughly and my thanks to Cllr Gage and the former Councillor Debman for all their help with this.*

*This year saw the introduction of the Portfolio Holder Updates, referencing the Performance Dashboards and these had proved most successful for the Committee to understand service information.*

*I would like to thank all members of the Committee for their help and input, including Cllr Gage (as Deputy Chairman) and the Chairmen of the Task & Finish Groups. We sadly said goodbye to three Councillors whom I would like to thank personally for their help and input over the years they were involved: Jeanette Macartney, Hugh Whittall and George Debman. There has been support from the Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer and also other officers and visitors from external organisations who have added so much information to our investigations. Mostly I would like to thank Trisha Sutton for all the help she has given me over this year'.*

***Councillor Liz Harsant***

## Introduction

The annual report provides an overview of the scrutiny work carried out by Ipswich Borough Council from May 2017 to April 2018. It shows the investigations and recommendations made by councillors as part of scrutiny reviews to improve delivery of services to Ipswich people.

Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee (SOSC) scrutinises and reviews decisions or actions taken in respect of Executive and Non-Executive functions, including “call-in” of Executive decisions.

This year the SOSC continued to use a Work Programme proposal process whereby any Councillor could submit an item to be included on the Work Programme. Suggested topics were discussed by the Steering Group, which is made up of the lead councillors from each political party and relevant officers to prepare a scope of the work for the review to be carried out. Task & Finish Groups were appointed where appropriate to carry out reviews.

Summaries and recommendations of the reviews undertaken by the SOSC are shown later in this report. The Committee also receives updates on progress in implementing the recommendations of a review. This enables the effectiveness of review recommendations to be measured. Organisations or service areas that have been subject to scrutiny are invited to respond to any recommendations direct to SOSC.

<p><b>Strategic Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee Councillors:</b></p> <p>Cllr Glen Chisholm Cllr Shelly Darwin Cllr George Debman Cllr Sandra Gage Cllr Martin Goonan Cllr Tracy Grant Cllr Elizabeth Harsant Cllr Oliver Holmes Cllr Jeannette Macartney Cllr Richard Pope Cllr Jane Riley Cllr Colin Smart Cllr Hugh Whittall</p> <p><b>Substitutes:</b></p> <p>Cllr Hamil Clarke Cllr Stephen Connelly Cllr E Elavalakan Cllr Ian Fisher Cllr Peter Gardiner Cllr Stephen Ion Cllr Bill Knowles Cllr Adam Leeder Cllr Inga Lockington Cllr Eddie Phillips</p>	
<p><b>Scrutiny Support:</b></p> <p><b>Democratic Services Manager</b>    Ainsley Gilbert 01473 432510            ainsley.gilbert@ipswich.gov.uk</p> <p><b>Committee Services Officer</b>    Trisha Sutton 01473 432512            trisha.sutton@ipswich.gov.uk</p>	

**Scrutiny**

**2017-2018**

Annual report of the Health Scrutiny Committee	
<p><b>Key elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>How the emerging groups fit together</b></li> <li>➤ <b>The implications for Ipswich Borough Council</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome sought:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>To receive an update on the work of the Health Scrutiny Committee</b></li> </ul>

The Committee received the annual update from the Suffolk County Council (SCC) Health Scrutiny Committee.

At the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on **31 August 2017**, Councillor Michael Ladd (SCC) addressed the Committee as the Chair of the SCC Health Scrutiny Committee for 2017/18 and it was noted that Cllr Hugh Whittall was the representative from Ipswich Borough Council. The Committee comprised of 7 representatives from the District and Borough Councils and 5 members of Suffolk County Council.

Councillor Ladd updated the Committee on the matters which had been dealt with during the last five Health Scrutiny Committee meetings which were the provision of GP services at Hopton and Stanton, a partnership between Ipswich and Colchester Hospital's NHS Trust and the provision of Emotional Wellbeing Services to Children and Young People. Suffolk County Council had formed a Task & Finish Group to consider the winter pressures on health care and Public Health Suffolk had given a presentation about the Sustainable Transformation Plan. Also discussed at the meetings had been how the CCG's were working together, to ensure that the appropriate Primary Care infrastructure enabled communities in new developments to be sustainable and encourage more integrated working. An informal workshop session had been held in November 2017 to consider the scope and focus of a scrutiny review to improve support for children's emotional health and wellbeing in Suffolk and several Councillors from IBC had attended.

Councillors asked questions about how the extra precept money for social care had been spent, how the extended access to primary care from NHS England would benefit residents, about the delayed discharge from hospitals and how the CCG were expecting to save £13m?

Suffolk County Councillor Ladd encouraged suggestions for future meetings from the Committee and suggested that Suffolk County Councillor Tony Goldson (Cabinet Member for Health) be invited to a future Overview & Scrutiny Committee to give further details about delayed discharged from hospitals.

[Committee Minute No 15 – 31 August 2017](#)

<p><b>Scrutiny: Annual Report of the Write off of Bad Debts – 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017</b></p>	
<p><b>Key Elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Under the Council’s financial regulations, which came into effect from 1 April 2009, certain officers were authorised to write-off bad debts up to a certain limit.</li> <li>➤ To advise the Committee of the exercise of the power in the financial period 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome sought:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ That the Committee notes the write off of bad debts for the financial period 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017.</li> </ul>

The Head of Finance & Revenues presented this report on **28 September 2017** and the details of the write-off of bad debts were attached at Appendix A to report Ref No: OS/17/06. He reported that the debts for 2016/17 were less than those which had been reported in previous years.

Several amendments were made to the report and it was confirmed that within the report, the number of cases related to the number of occurrences. The Officers were commended for the report and the work undertaken.

**It was Resolved:**

**that the sums written-off, under Financial Standing Orders, in the period of 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017 amounting to £1,118,130 be noted.**

[Committee Minute No 23 – 28 September 2017](#)

<b>Scrutiny: S106 Developer Contributions</b>	
<b>Key elements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>To discuss whether S106 Developer Contributions were spent in accordance with planning conditions and to time.</b></li> </ul>	<b>Outcome sought:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>To ensure that the Council had met the requirements of IBC planning.</b></li> </ul>

In response to Proposal Form No: 21 discussed at the meeting on 6 July 2017, it had been agreed to invite the Operations Manager, Planning & Development to a future meeting to set out the evidence available about how effectively Developer Contributions had been used.

**On 23 November 2017**, the Operations Manager, Planning and Development, Councillor Jones (as the Portfolio Holder for Planning) and Neil McManus the Development Contributions Manager of Suffolk County Council attended to discuss S106 Developer Contributions. A detailed breakdown was supplied by the Finance Team at IBC and it was acknowledged that the Corporate Management Team received regular updates. Of the £2m currently held, £1.3m of contributions were for Suffolk County Council to disburse. Some contributions were historic, for use over a long period of time, with a small amount which remained to be allocated.

Mr McManus managed the S106 contributions from start to finish, worked closely with the Development Team at IBC to co-ordinate trigger points of infrastructure contributions and no money had yet had to be returned to a developer.

Councillors asked whether residents had any say about what the contributions were spent on, if less money would be received should Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) agreements be in place and whether the developer contributions represented value for money. It was suggested that more specific ward specific information be disseminated through the Area Committees for public comment on spending decisions.

Discussion took place around the Marginal Viability funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the Ipswich Garden Suburb, S106 contributions for primary school places and library contributions being for books and resources only.

[Committee Minute 40 – 23 November 2017](#)

<p><b>Key elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Budget Proposals Presentation</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome sought:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>The Committee were asked to make observations on the general savings and investment proposals.</b></li> </ul>
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On **4 January 2018** the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee received a presentation on the Budget Proposals 2018/19 and Councillors David Ellesmere, as the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Martin Cook were in attendance. The budget proposals were in line with the council’s Corporate Plan ‘Building a Better Ipswich’ which had been adopted by Council in March 2017, which set out the direction of travel with the 3 continuing core aims; to protect front line Council services, build quality and affordable homes and bring new jobs and investment to Ipswich.

With 2018/19 being the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 4 year settlement, proposals to meet any ‘gap’ had been provided by the Chief Executive and it was reported that consultation would take place from 29 January 2018 onwards with the report being submitted to Council on 21 February 2018.

Councillors asked questions about the risk of being reliant on income streams from Ipswich Borough Assets, when details about the business rate pilot would be known and what ‘Big Ticket’ savings had been made? Information on other methods of increasing revenue were discussed, as were the No 37 shuttle bus and the financial support received from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP).

Councillor Ellesmere explained how the ‘free of charge’ brown bin service and the ‘Out of Hours’ Noise Nuisance Service were proud achievements, where management and investment in areas suggested by residents continued to recognise where front line services had been protected and Value for Money had been achieved.

[Committee Minute No 49 – 4 January 2018](#)

<p><b>Scrutiny: Annual Report on Crime and Police Matters</b></p>	
<p><b>Key elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Annual Review of the Crime and Disorder Functions under the Crime and Disorder (Overview &amp; Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>That the Committee be informed of the work being undertaken by the Area Commander for the Southern Area.</b></li> </ul>

The Area Commander for the Southern Area (Superintendent Kerry Cutler) attended the meeting on **1 February 2017** to give a verbal update on her work. Councillor Ross attended in his role as Portfolio Holder for Community Protection and Customer Services and the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership.

Supt Cutler reported present Officer numbers and that the demand on Police time had significantly increased over the last two years, with emergency calls to the Police Control Centre having increased by more than 14%. Incidents of ‘Hate Crime’ had also increased as had ‘knife crime’ and the county wide multi-agency Operation Velocity continued. Hidden Harm, missing persons and rough sleeping were discussed as were incidents of burglaries, robberies, prostitution and shoplifting. Body worn cameras aided arrests and crime prevention work, especially with business premises users and schools.

Discussion took place about the way knife crime was reported on social media, the criminal justice system and rehabilitation measures to prevent reoffending.

[Committee Minute No 56 – 1 February 2018](#)

<p><b>Scrutiny: Ipswich Park &amp; Ride Review</b></p>	
<p><b>Key Elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>To review whether the operating model of the Ipswich Park &amp; Ride Service by First Buses was being run in the best interests of the town.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>To see how the new Park &amp; Ride model compared to other Park &amp; Ride Services across the UK</b></li> </ul>

Following discussion of the Proposal Form: No 20 on 2 March 2017 about the Ipswich Park & Ride, it had been agreed that the service would be reviewed when the service had been taken over by First Buses. On **26 October 2017**, the Committee welcomed Aiden Dunn, the Assistant Director for Passenger Transport at Suffolk County Council and Steve Wickers and Dave Jordan the Managing Director and Marketing Manager at First Buses Group respectively. Also present were Councillor Smart, the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport, Michael Newsham the Integrated Transport Officer at IBC and Suffolk County Councillor Paul West, Cabinet Member for Ipswich. Sandy Martin MP also joined the meeting.

Having supplied the service for 4 months, the number of users and journeys were detailed as well as the type of ticket options available and the new blue branding which had been promoted across the sites, and the website. It was explained that the change to the route along West End Road had been made to ensure more reliability and consistency of times now an ‘every 15 minute’ service was offered, as the main threat to the service was congestion. Mr Wickers said that First Buses Group were working with partners to keep costs under control through volume growth and a marketing plan. Details of road improvements completed and those which remained were offered which would add to the quality of the service.

Councillors asked how the service would be promoted in the evenings and weekends in the run up to Christmas and whether modelling had taken place in respect of the availability of car park sites and on street parking? It was reported that there was a clear marketing plan which would be promoted by several means and a fare structure would be introduced to encourage seasonal users. It was the intention that the Park & Ride Service would become cost neutral or self funding although no direct comparisons had been made with other UK providers.

Discussion took place about passenger data collected and how more detailed figures would be required before any meaningful data could be used for comparison.

[Committee Minute No 31 – 26 October 2017](#)

**Scrutiny: Notes - Task & Finish Group – Migrants and Looked After Children**

On **6 July 2017**, the Chair presented the notes of the Task & Finish Group – Migrants and Looked After Children and Councillor Meudec as Portfolio Holder for Communities, Ian Blofield as Head of Housing and Peter Whittall, Operations Manager, Housing Advice were in attendance.

The Chief Executive was asked to confirm whether an agreement existed, through the Suffolk Leaders Group that other authorities contribute to support the housing services offered by IBC.

The Chair drew attention to the actions put forward for recommendation to the Committee from the last Task & Finish meeting held on 21 March 2017 which were:

- That the Y:Cube scheme be investigated to provide additional accommodation
- Commissioning contracts for providers be extended to allow them to achieve more strategic sustainability
- Organisations providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) be more co-ordinated in the services they provided
- An advertising campaign be launched to promote more foster carers

It was suggested that the Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills be invited to the meeting in November 2017 to update on the service and to offer a response to the actions above.

On **23 November 2017**, Suffolk County Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills attended the meeting with Cliff James, SCC Parenting Services and IBC's Operations Manager, Housing Options.

Further information about the Y:Cube scheme was circulated and Mr James reported that a significant amount of accommodation had been provided for 16/17 year old unaccompanied asylum seekers prior to them turning 18 when they were granted the right to staying the country and from then on eligible to claim benefits. The current providers of accommodation were the Benjamin Foundation and the YMCA and SCC had volunteered to be part of a study which looked at how cost effective the services were. It was confirmed that 75% of children in care were currently not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET's).

Councillors asked what was being done to achieve strategic sustainability and to ensure that the studies for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students continued? The 'Staying Put' initiative was discussed and Mr James made reference to two key pieces of legislation coming forward; the Homelessness Reduction Act and the Children and Social Workers Act 2017. The importance of foster carers was recognised and a new advertising campaign had been rolled out which he encouraged Councillors to promote.

[Committee Minute No 7 - 6 July 2017](#)

[Committee Minute No 39 - 23 November 2017](#)

**Scrutiny: Orwell Bridge Closures Update**

At the meeting on **26 October 2017**, in response to a Task & Finish Group held on 30 August 2017 at which a letter from Highways England had been discussed, questions had been raised to be forwarded to Highways England. The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport and the Integrated Traffic Officer at IBC were in attendance. Also in attendance were James Jackson, Emergency Planning Manager at Highways England, Inspector Tim Lusher of the Norfolk & Suffolk Roads Policing Unit and Suffolk County Councillor West, the Cabinet Member for Ipswich.

Mr Jackson explained that at a summit meeting hosted by IBC in January 2017 with partner organisations, recommendations had been made and future commitments had been agreed. These were that communications had been put in place, a notification cascade had been implemented and a revised bridge closure protocol had been launched. An e-mail subscription service was available for notification of closure and the website capability had been updated to inform of unexpected closures. Future commitments included plans to improve signage and look at permanent engineering solutions to prevent suicide which included upgrading the Samaritan phones, build wind barriers and an automated closure system.

The bridge had been inspected as part of a 6 yearly inspection and was considered to be in a good state of repair and a feasibility study on wind protection would be completed.

Discussions took place about the speed at which any updates to the website could be made, whether any alternative diversion routes had been considered, any developments for a second Operation Stack area and the possibility of overhead highway gantries giving information well before entry into the County.

[Committee Minute No 32 – 26 October 2017](#)

**Scrutiny: Notes - Task & Finish Group – Mental Health Awareness**

At the meeting on **31 August 2017** the Chair expressed her thanks to Councillor Hopgood (in her absence) for submitting the proposal form for this Task & Finish Group and Councillor Pope submitted the notes of the meetings. Guests from both the public and voluntary sectors had been invited to attend and the main conclusion was that more signposting and training needed to be made available. Following the meetings of the Task & Finish Group, the action arising were:-

1. That training around mental health issues be provided to both Tenancy Support Officers and to the Customer Services Team at IBC.
2. Suffolk MIND (Jon Neal) be asked to present to Councillors prior to the Council meeting in September 2017.
3. 'Lifeworks' be further promoted to IBC employees and a further 'Time to Talk' day be held.
4. 'Wellbeing Champions' be considered among the staff at IBC.

It was agreed that, in relation to staff at IBC, the promotion of 'Lifeworks' and a 'Time to Talk' day should be implemented by Officers for employees and Wellbeing 'Champions' would be considered. Suffolk MIND were to give a presentation to Councillors prior to Council on 20 September 2017.

The Emotional 'Wellbeing' Hub at Landmark House was to be set up as a single point of contact to give professional support across Ipswich and the Councillors agreed to promote the service when it was operational. Both a comprehensive training programme for staff of the Customer Services Centre and in Housing Services and an awareness/signposting session would be completed by December 2017. Quay Place also offered front line training to which several Councillors had attended. The Chief Executive agreed to refer the actions to the Corporate Management Team after Suffolk MIND had given their presentation to Council in September 2017.

[Committee Minute No 17 – 31 August 2017](#)

**Scrutiny: OS/17/02 End of Year Performance Dashboards**

On **6 July 2017** the Chief Operating Officer presented the performance dashboards across all portfolios for the year to 31 March 2017 and discussion took place about some areas where attention should be focussed. These were where Christchurch Mansion saw reduced visitors during the setting up of exhibitions or building work, the homelessness statistics which should be more critically measured and capacity issues in Legal Services which were being addressed by employing agency staff.

Each Portfolio Holder would be invited to give an annual update at future meetings with more detailed information.

[Committee Minute 9 – 6 July 2017](#)

**Portfolio Holder Updates**

**2017-2018**

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor A Ross	Portfolio Holder for Community Protection and Customer Services
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At the meeting on **6 July 2018**, Councillor Ross gave a summary of the areas of responsibility and main service challenges faced during the year as well as the achievements. The remit of his Portfolio also encompassed Licensing, Environmental Health and Emergency Planning. He introduced Ian Blofield, Head of Service and Janine Last, Operations Manager for Customer Services.

In respect of the 16,000 calls or messages received per month (which had well exceeded targets), services continued to improve to ensure residents enquiries were dealt with. Over 6,000 residents had signed up to 'My Ipswich' the 24 hour on-line access portal to report, request, apply or make payment service. The HEARS Alarm Service continued to grow and the uptake of HEARS was expected to increase further over the next year.

An 'Out of Hours' Environmental Health Service had been relaunched to respond better to noise nuisance and the standards of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) would be focussed on in the year ahead. IBC also supported the Eat Out, Eat Well award scheme.

At the recent Public Protection Working Group, CCTV had been discussed including discussion on whether the service could be expanded. It was reported that criteria had to be met before CCTV site locations were agreed and the Police guided IBC on where temporary CCTV cameras needed to be sited.

Discussion took place around the performance statistics for the Portfolio, in particular Performance Indicator LI190 – Overall Service Delivery – Customer Satisfaction. Due to the face to face service delivery being reduced to more on-line transactions the new target (from 96% to 85%) had been reflected in the customer satisfaction survey and as part of the Customer Management System was fully recorded and measured.

[Minute No:8 from 6 July 2017](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor N MacDonald	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health
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At the meeting on **31 August 2017**, Councillor MacDonald presented an update to the Committee and introduced Ian Blofield, Head of Housing and Community Services. He reported that funding had been made available for a Health & Wellbeing Project Officer to deliver the Dementia Friendly Council initiative by improving the staff awareness, buildings and services. The key milestones were circulated with the focus on completion by the end of March 2018.

Discussion took place about how buildings were made dementia friendly, with the signage, colours and wall hangings. Audits had been completed at the Customer Service Centre and Fore Street Pool and some work had already taken place in four of the sheltered home schemes in Ipswich.

The Council’s Housing Strategy had been published and was out to consultation with the priorities being; enabling building of all tenures, improving the quality of existing housing (especially private rental), meeting housing needs, preventing homelessness and rough sleeping and the challenge of an ageing population.

Councillors asked about the challenge to make the private rented sector more financially accessible and viable for people of all household sizes, the checking of fire partitions in the lofts of terraced housing and advice given to the residents of Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO’s).

[Minute No: 16 from 31 August 2017](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor S Meudec	Portfolio Holder for Communities
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At the meeting on **28 September 2017**, Councillor Meudec presented her Portfolio Holder update for Communities which included the Shared Revenues Partnership, Cemeteries, Corporate Support and Democratic Services. Health and Safety had also been added to her Portfolio and she reassured the Committee that a great deal of work was taking place to tackle the amber and red Performance Indicators. Also in attendance were the Operations Managers, Andrew Wilcock, Steve Kemp and Deborah Carr.

In respect of Community Engagement and Democratic Services, 30 Area Committees had been held, £198k of funding had been allocated with match funding of £239k being attained.

The Shared Revenues Partnership, created in 2011 had delivered £37m of savings by working with Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils. Explanation of the increase in the Performance Indicator which detailed that staff shortages had occurred, this had now been dealt with and that the checking the accuracy of claims indicator actually showed a decrease since August 2017. The challenge was to adapt to legislative and policy changes. On-line claims submission would further be encouraged as it avoided the wait times for letters to be sent as documents could simply be uploaded.

Councillors asked questions about two rate avoidance cases and refresher training being offered to staff and expressed their concern about the preparations being undertaken prior to the implementation of Universal Credit. It was suggested that a Proposal Form about the implementation of Universal Credit be submitted.

The number of Public Health funerals had increased as this responsibility remained with the local authority and thanks was recorded for the Memorial Garden at the Cemetery, dedicated to babies who had been stillborn or died at the time of their birth, to enable residents to pay their respects. Discussion then took place about the commercial aspect of the business.

[Minute No: 25 from 28 September 2017](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor P Smart	Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport
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At the meeting on **26 October 2017**, Councillor P Smart presented an update for Environment & Transport which included Waste and Fleet, Parks and Transport (public transport and parking policy). The Operations Manager, Parks and Bereavement, Lisa Stannard was in attendance.

Councillors asked about the recycling target rates being stable, shared bin areas and the promotion of and income from hiring the parks out commercially. Ms Stannard said that the events programme brought pressures on the service but this was under discussion. The Chief Executive reported that the indicators were predominantly County wide and landfill had reduced overall. Councillor Pope said that more should be done to promote the recycling of TetraPaks. Councillor P Smart said that education in schools was key to forming good habits about recycling from an early age.

Concern was expressed about bio-diverse areas in the public parks restricting the park user areas or masking crime incidents but these would be reviewed next year. The Environment Working Group were also looking at this problem.

The Performance Indicator LI 089 – the % of allotments available was also discussed.

[Minute No: 33 from 26 October 2017](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor C Jones	Portfolio Holder for Development
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At the meeting on **23 November 2017**, Councillor Jones presented an update on her Portfolio for Development and Martyn Fulcher, Head of Development, James Fairclough, Head of Culture & Environment and James Steward of the Museums Service were in attendance.

There had been a Joint Museums Service with Colchester since 2000, with joint governance arrangements and a shared agreement but with individual services. The Museums Service were developing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for which £3m had been retained in the last budget. Visitor numbers at all venues had increased since last year and advertising channels were being reviewed, along with improved contact with schools, to offer exciting events as numbers peaked when big exhibitions were held. In respect of future income at venues, other revenue streams were discussed e.g. Christchurch Mansion as a wedding venue, gift shops, tea rooms and corporate hire.

The Development side of the Portfolio comprised of Planning Policy, Building Control and Development Management. IBC had been acknowledged as a high performing service within a Planning Advisory Service document. The Local Plan had been adopted and would now be constantly reviewed and updated. Building control had taken part in joint working with East Suffolk Council and 90% of development management had been dealt with by Officers within the time limit set by the performance indicators.

The major applications; Birketts, the Buttermarket and dealing with the St Clements and Tooks Bakery applications had been handled well and 100% of the major applications had been approved by the Planning and Development Committee in the last 3 years. This was accredited to the excellent work undertaken by the Planning Department. The Ipswich Garden Suburb would remain a major site application to be completed over the next 25 years due to the multiple ownership, infrastructure and education issues identified within the Supplementary Planning Documents.

Discussion took place about Performance Indicator LI 105 - % of appeals allowed against the authority’s decision to refuse planning applications and LI 2014 - % of repairs and maintenance budget spend by end of year (cumulative).

[Minute No: 41 from 23 November 2017](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor M Cook	Portfolio Holder for Resources
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At the meeting on **4 January 2018**, Councillor M Cook presented this update on the Resources Portfolio and reported that a new HR system was in the process of being implemented which would run alongside the current Agresso finance system. A restructure of the Procurement system had been undertaken as part of a ‘Big Ticket’ savings item and improvements to the management of procurement would follow.

The EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) were due to come into force from 25 May 2018, which had put a burden on the IT service and the Council. Agile working, with more portable and mobile devices, had allowed more homeworking and the space used in Grafton House to be reduced.

Discussion took place about Performance Indicator LI 023 – the number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE (cumulative) and LI 384 - % of Apprenticeship posts that were currently occupied.

Councillors asked about the risk of loss of local specialist knowledge, how staff were ergonomically protected when hot desking and the package of support available to employees who might be suffering from stress as identified by the Task & Finish Group for Mental Health Awareness.

[Minute No: 50 from 4 January 2018](#)

Portfolio Holder Update – Councillor D Ellesmere	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
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At the meeting on **1 February 2018**, Councillor D Ellesmere presented an update on Property and Economic Portfolio and gave a brief outline of commercial development in line with the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities. The former Malt House site and the regeneration of the Waterfront site were mentioned and Councillor Ellesmere stated that the Economic Development Strategy had recently been published and would be submitted to Executive for approval.

In relation to LI 429 – Ipswich Market: Total income from Trader Fees (£) the total would likely remain under budget as traders had been offered discounts for moving to the new temporary location. The publicity for advertising the move of the market to Princes Street was commended.

It was reported that the Ipswich Town Centre and Waterfront Public Realm Strategy (SPD) was proceeding, following the ‘Call for Ideas’ consultation and a list of suggestions to improve the surroundings had been made available.

The search for land availability for new homes to be built would continue and discussion took place about budget overruns, longer projects being considered to keep costs down and management experience.

[Minute No: 57 from 1 February 2018](#)

**Task & Finish Groups**

**2017-2018**

**Task & Finish Group: Universal Credit**

**Key Elements**

- **Was IBC prepared to support households through the change to Universal Credit**
- **To discuss the impact of Universal Credit changes in Ipswich and the services needed to support claimants**
- **To identify any gaps in service and consider the Universal Credit project plan**

**Councillors:**  
**Martin Goonan (Lead Councillor)**  
**Liz Harsant**  
**Tracy Grant**  
**Richard Pope**  
**Glen Chisholm**  
**Stephen Ion**  
**Sandra Gage**

**Officers:**  
**Amy Mayes**  
**Vicky Moseley**  
**Bridie Green**  
**John Chance**  
**Karen Brynand**  
**Deborah Carr**  
**Joanne Cherrington**

At the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny meeting held on 26 October 2017, a proposal form had been submitted about how prepared IBC were to support households through the implementation of Universal Credit. The aim was to identify any gaps in service and consider the Universal Credit Project Plan.

Meetings took place on **29 November 2017** and **29 January 2018** and discussion took place about the complex calculations needed to assess Universal Credit, which charities could offer support and how the changes would be publicised. A Corporate Project Team had been set up and a Communications Plan would be put in place.

Representatives from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) and the Job Centre attended the meeting on 29 January 2018 and discussion took place about the provision at the Customer Services Centre, data security, survey responses and the Communications Plan.

It was agreed to hold a further Task & Finish Group in June 2018 after the implementation of Universal Credit had taken place.

**Task & Finish Group: Mental Health Awareness**

**Key Elements**

- **To raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing in our communities, by breaking down barriers and becoming compassionate about tragedies caused by the stigma.**
- **To address societal apathy towards the treatment of the illness and the lack of education about the complexity of the disorder.**
- **To address the lack of treatment resources and approaches.**

**Councillors:**

**Richard Pope  
Jeanette Macartney  
Liz Harsant  
Tracy Grant**

**Officer:**

**Peter Whittall**

Following the meetings held in 2016 and early 2017, two further meetings had been held during the municipal year 2017/18 on **28 June 2017** and **25 July 2017**.

On **28 June 2017**, following a recap on the findings of the previous meetings, in respect of IBC it was agreed that training based around mental health issues be offered to the Customer Services Team, Suffolk MIND be asked to present to Councillors prior to Council in September 2017, 'Lifeworks' be promoted to staff and another 'Time to Talk' day be held. Crisis line contact numbers were also to be made available on the IBC website. It was also agreed that Mr Peter Devlin (SCC Director of Operations for Mental Health & Early Disabilities) be invited to attend a meeting of the Task & Finish Group.

At the meeting held on **25 July 2017**, Mr Peter Devlin had attended and explained that he was responsible for the commissioning budgets across a huge range of services and he was employed to align the delivery of operational services of both Suffolk County Council and the Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust. All services would be aligned by 2020 when individual plans, with shared data would be established for each person. An Information Sharing Agreement existed across relevant organisations to ensure compliance and to achieve an effective service. Self-referral to the Suffolk Wellbeing Service was available as well as through the GP route.

Mr Devlin said that an Emotional Wellbeing Hub was to be set up at Landmark House to give guidance and co-ordinate support through a professional helpline offering advice, and a consultation service.

The actions as a result of this meeting were discussed at the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on **31 August 2017** and were detailed at **Page 13** of this report.

**Task & Finish Group: Orwell Bridge Closures**

**Key Elements**

- **To obtain a clear understanding of the circumstances that lead to the closure of the Orwell Bridge, the impact this has on Ipswich and to gain evidence that everything possible was done to avoid closure of the bridge.**

**Councillors:**

**George Debman  
Sandra Gage**

**Officers:**

**Michael Newsham (Integrated Transport Officer)**

A Task & Finish Group was held on **30 August 2017** to discuss a letter which had been received in response to a summit meeting, held in January 2017 when a number of commitments had been made to issues to minimise the likelihood and impact of closures of the Orwell Bridge. They were the following:-

- Significant progress had been made with a dedicated Orwell Bridge webpage (currently under testing) which was shortly to go live, which included the latest travel news and allowed users to subscribe to updates.
- A new communication strategy had been produced, circulated and tested and closures would be communicated to a wider audience. This was used successfully during Storm Doris in January 2017.
- Electronic messages to advertise bridge closures were being set more widely across the network.
- The new Orwell Bridge Closure Protocol would be tested before being launched in September 2017.

The Group raised the following questions to be asked of the Highways Agency

- Had there been an increase in the amount of HGV's using the A14 and crossing the Orwell Bridge?
- Were any statistics available from either; the Highways Agency, Suffolk County Council or the Police, about the amount or type of incidents which had occurred on the Orwell Bridge or slip roads since the O & S meeting in October 2016?
- How would the Orwell Bridge webpage be promoted?
- When would the feasibility studies be available for the proposal for wind protection, suicide protection and the proposed traffic segregation of high sided vehicles?
- Was the multi-agency exercise to test the new Orwell Bridge Closure Protocol successful?
- Had the proposed new communications Protocol worked, especially for the haulage industry?
- Was the haulage industry now receiving the information they needed on bridge closures?
- Would better diversion signs be put in place, in more appropriate places, to avoid HGV's finding other routes through town?

The responses to these questions were discussed at the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on **26 October 2017** and were detailed at **Page 12** of this report.

<p><b>Task &amp; Finish Group: The Impact of Road Closures in Ipswich</b></p>	
<p><b>Key Elements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>What was the impact on Ipswich when roads were closed for events such as half marathons etc.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillors;</b>  <b>George Debman</b>  <b>Sandra Gage</b>  <b>Oliver Holmes</b>  <b>Richard Pope</b></p> <p><b>Officers:</b>  <b>Mark Whiting (Operations Manager, Commercial Development)</b></p>

On 23 November 2018 a proposal form had been submitted and it had been agreed to set up a Task & Finish Group to respond to the issues raised. 3 meetings of the Task & Finish Group had been held on **8 January 2018**, **7 February 2018** and **20 February 2018**.

On **8 January 2018**, the advantages and disadvantages of holding events were discussed and the lessons learnt from previous events included the early removal of road cones, that rolling roads blocks be used and better traffic management be used to minimise any risk of disruption to residents. As the safety of the runners and public was paramount Mr Whiting assured the Group that (as the Deputy Chair of the Safety Advisory Group) there were stringent processes in place with full safety records. Diversion of bus routes was also discussed.

On **7 February 2018**, Sophie Alexander for Ipswich Central attended and reported that a meeting was due to take place in March 2018 to inform businesses about the routes and the changes to the bus services. It was suggested that information about the road closures should be presented at the Area Committees which would be an ideal opportunity to disseminate information to both residents and businesses.

On **20 February 2018**, Renee Fox, Network Assurance Manager at Suffolk County Council attended and Mr Whiting informed the Group that the Area Committee Chairs had agreed that the road closure information and changes to bus routes would be reported to the Area Committees. It was also Suffolk County Council who had the responsibility for events taking place, communication was discussed and it was confirmed that the timing of events were specific to tide times.

**Actions:**

1. That area specific information about road closures and changes to bus routes be presented at the Central, South East and North East Area Committees when available (to June or July Committees).
2. That Suffolk County Council undertake a review of the application process with all interested parties, to ensure a standardised approach of each type of event and the referral of applications to the Safety Advisory Group be recommended by May 2018.
3. That communications via Councillors, press, letters and websites be prepared well in advance of events taking place and be widespread to the outer areas of Ipswich.
4. That the organisers of the Great East Run be requested to prepare a critical review after the 2018 event had taken place.

# Joint Scrutiny

2017-2018

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**No Joint Scrutiny meetings had been held during 2017/18.**

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**2017/18**

**Call-In**

**No call-ins had taken place during 2017/18.**