

Policy E-zine – July 2019

'Get Fit to Bid' diagnostic tool now live

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Suffolk Growth Programme Board are pleased to announce that the 'Get Fit to Bid' diagnostic tool is now live. The tool, which has been designed with input from procurement leads from across the Public Sector, including NHS, constabularies, higher education, and local authorities addresses some of the common barriers to procurement highlighted in an earlier survey of members.

The tool allows businesses to answer a series of questions which are necessary when getting ready to, or bidding for, public sector contracts. Each question provides a variety of answers and feedback is available based on the answer chosen. Ultimately, it has been designed to ensure businesses understand what bidding for public sector contracts can involve and the steps they need to take in order to successfully bid for contracts.

A further tranche of procurement training workshops will also take place across the winter of 2019/2020 due to the success of the last set of sessions.

[The diagnostic tool can be found here](#)

Ipswich Northern Route consultation launched

Suffolk County Council have now launched their consultation on the proposed Ipswich Northern Route. The consultation will last for 10 weeks and will gauge public support and identify the preferred route for a multi-million-pound bypass around the northern side of Ipswich. Three options have been put forward for the Ipswich Northern Route.

It is proposed that the new route would support economic growth and provide capacity for future car journeys. "By delivering more reliable journeys, additional cycling and walking facilities and a link to new houses and businesses, the project will enhance Suffolk as a great place to do business as an attractive place for people to live". Suffolk County Council are working with the local district councils to ensure the route supports the whole of Suffolk.

Further information on the consultation can be found at <https://ipswichnorthernroute.org.uk/>

A14 Campaign – "150 businesses backing £150m of improvements"

The 'No More A14 Delays' campaign is now reaching the final stages with an announcement expected in the autumn on the next Roads Investment Strategy. As part of this, Suffolk Chamber has gathered the support of 150 businesses from across Suffolk to back the campaign and have sent

letters to Government, relevant ministers, the Department for Transport and Highways England, these letters were accompanied with the [logos of 150 businesses](#). On top of this, Suffolk Chamber held a photoshoot and press interviews at CLAAS in Bury St Edmunds and received extensive coverage in the East Anglian Daily Times, as well as on the lunchtime and evening bulletins of BBC Look East. It is anticipated that an announcement on the roads chosen for investment will be made around the time of the budget in September/October.

[A copy of the A14 news article can be found here.](#)

EDF Energy announce a fourth round of consultation for Sizewell C

EDF Energy have announced that a fourth round of consultation will take place regarding the plans for the new nuclear power station at Sizewell. In light of comments received at the third stage, EDF have decided to hold a further round of consultation which will continue to develop the proposals shown at stage 3 specifically around freight and transport movements including development proposals.

The fourth stage of consultation will begin on the 18 July and run until 27 September 2019. As the consultation will focus on a limited set of issues and proposals, there will be fewer public exhibitions. The timetable of events is below:

TOWN/PARISH	VENUE	DATE/TIME
Leiston	Leiston United Church, High Street, Leiston IP16 4EL	23 July 2pm - 8pm
Yoxford	Village Hall, Old High Road, Yoxford IP17 3HN	24 July 1pm - 6pm
Wickham Market	Village Hall, High Street, Wickham Market IP13 0HE	25 July 12pm - 3pm
Hacheston	Village Hall, The Street, Hacheston IP13 0DW	25 July 5pm - 8pm
Woodbridge	Community Hall, Station Road, Woodbridge IP12 4AU	26 July 2pm - 8pm
Stratford St Andrew	Riverside Centre, Great Glemham Road, Stratford St Andrew IP17 1LL	27 July 10am - 4pm

Further information on the public consultation can be found by visiting <https://www.edfenergy.com/energy/nuclear-new-build-projects/sizewell-c/news-views/new-consultation-dates-announced>

Reminder to businesses to pay the annual data protection charge

All businesses that process personal data are required to pay an annual data protection charge to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) unless a relevant exemption applies. It is a legal requirement to pay the charge, and failure to do so could result in a fine, but it also makes good business sense as it could have an impact on business reputation.

There are three levels of charge payable:

- Micro organisations (including sole traders) pay £40
- Small and medium organisations pay £60, and
- Large organisations pay £2,900

In order to determine if payment is necessary, [a self-assessment tool](#) is available on the ICO website. It is also important to make sure you are paying the correct level charge – [the charge assessment tool](#) will indicate the level required to pay.

Suffolk Chamber & BCC engage with the Home Office

Businesses from across the land-based, manufacturing, logistics and recruitment sectors have taken full advantage of an opportunity to quiz senior Home Office officials about the Government's proposed approach to immigration once the UK leaves the European Union.

The discussion held at Suffolk Chamber, touched on the current EU Settlement Scheme which was felt to have been largely effective in making it as easy as possible for European Economic Area citizens, and their families living in the UK, to apply to guarantee their residency and other rights once the country had left the EU. The businesses present were concerned, however, about a number of provisions in the White Paper which they felt would do nothing to address growing staff and skills shortages being experienced in some sectors. Particular concern was raised about the proposed Temporary Worker route allowing workers from a number of specific countries to remain in the UK for up to 12 months after Brexit.

Jane Gratton, Head of People Policy at the British Chamber of Commerce said:

“When businesses are unable to recruit skills and labour at a local or national level, the UK's new immigration system must allow them to access non-UK workers quickly and cost effectively. While companies are investing more in homegrown skills, they will continue to need access to migrant skills, at all levels, for the foreseeable future in order to thrive. Salary thresholds and visa restrictions must reflect economic realities. It is vital that the Migration Advisory Committee's review into the salary threshold takes into account the needs of different sectors and regions”.

[The full article can be found here.](#)

Online reviews and endorsements – have you thought about it?

Online reviews are a great way for potential customers to find out more about your business – research from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) estimates more than half of UK adults use online reviews. But if these reviews aren't genuine, customers can be misled. The CMA has taken action in this sector to protect consumers from fake reviews. Read our advice for businesses to help ensure you are giving your customers the full picture when it comes to reviews:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-reviews-and-endorsements-advice-for-businesses>

Similarly, influencer marketing has become a widely-used tool by many brands. Earlier this year, 16 celebrities pledged to be clearer with how they label their endorsements as a result of CMA action. And audiences are looking at social media endorsements with increasing scrutiny – so compliance is important to protect your reputation and stay on the right side of the law. The CMA has published a guide that explains to influencers, and those working with them, what consumer protection law means for social media endorsements: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-media-endorsements-guide-for-influencers/social-media-endorsements-being-transparent-with-your-followers>.

Growth Hub is now five years old

Over 8,000 Norfolk and Suffolk businesses have been supported by the New Anglia Growth Hub since it was launched in 2014.

Managed on behalf of New Anglia LEP, by Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, the Growth Hub was set up to provide free face-to-face business advice and signposting support. Since then, its team of expert advisers has engaged with thousands of businesses across the two counties, delivering more than 40,000 hours of support and helping to create over 2,700 jobs.

Included in that support, the programme has helped hundreds of companies gain access to over £28m of grants, with many businesses supported by their two key funds – the Small Grant Scheme, and Growing Business Fund – provided by the New Anglia LEP and funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Government’s Growth Deal.

[Further information on the Growth Hub can be found here.](#)

Government sets net zero carbon emissions by 2050 target in law

A new legally binding target to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 has been put into law. This will end the UK’s contribution to global warming altogether by 2050 – in line with recommendations made by independent experts at the Committee on Climate Change.

The UK is one of the first major economies to legislate for net zero emissions, and, in setting this target, the UK can call on other countries to increase their ambitions. As part of this, the Government has set out strong frameworks for transitioning to a low carbon economy in the latest Clean Growth Strategy and Industrial Strategy Grand Challenge to maximise the opportunities of clean growth for UK industry.

[Further details on the announcement is available here](#)

Norwich in 90 & Greater Anglia's record-equalling punctuality

Monday 20 May saw the launch of Greater Anglia's Norwich in 90 and Ipswich in 60 services. Local stakeholders, including MPs, local authorities and business groups joined Greater Anglia for a highly successful launch event which saw the first train arrive in London two minutes early.

The new services heralded the start of a transformation for train services in our region, which will see not just faster services on some routes, but also the complete replacement of the existing train fleet with brand-new state of the art trains.

Further to the new improvements in journey times, Greater Anglia have achieved just under 94% of trains running on time in May – the best performance for six years and following on from 93% in April and 91% in March.

As part of this success, Greater Anglia have joined up with Network Rail to launch the 'Every Second Counts' campaign to tackle every aspect of delays, and as a result, more trains have been running on time each month.

[More information about Greater Anglia and their plans can be found here](#)

Tourism Sector Deal published

At the end of June, the Prime Minister announced the UK's first ever [tourism sector deal](#), reaffirming the UK's global role as a key player in the industry.

The deal will revolutionise the way data is used by the sector, through the creation of a new Tourism Data Hub. The hub will collate regularly updated data showing the latest trends and spends, allowing businesses to better target overseas visitors.

The deal will also support the creation of an additional 10,000 apprenticeships for people building their careers in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Last year, around 38 million people visited the UK, contributing £23 billion to the local economy. By 2025 experts predict that there will be an additional 9 million visitors to the UK. The new deal commits to building an additional 130,000 hotel rooms to respond to the increased demand for infrastructure.

Broadband coverage expanding across Suffolk

Suffolk County Council are developing plans in order to deliver Better Broadband to 98% of Suffolk premises by 2020. As part of this, Suffolk County Council are now intending to procure further coverage, capable of delivering download speeds of at least 30Mbps, in the remaining areas within the county where such broadband is currently available.

At present, 94% of Suffolk residents and businesses have access to Superfast Broadband and they are on track to meet the target of 98% Superfast Broadband coverage before the end of 2020. This means that over 348,000 properties containing both residents and businesses across Suffolk are able to benefit from the improved speeds and reliability.

To find out if you can get connected to Superfast Broadband, please visit <https://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/can-you-connect>

Easton & Otley College update

Easton & Otley College is announcing a dynamic new collaboration which is set to secure the long-term future of land-based education in the region. Subject to public consultation and legal and financial due diligence, it is hoped that from January 2020 Easton & Otley College will see its Easton Campus becoming part of City College Norwich, and its Otley Campus joining Suffolk New College.

The College has spent the past two years working closely alongside business leaders, community organisations, leaders in the agriculture and farming sector, MPs and local councils to secure the future of land-based provision, determined to rise to the challenges which the sector has been facing. The move marks the start of an exciting new era of co-operation to serve the needs of the growing food and agriculture sector that is one of the biggest employers in the East.

[You can find more information and details on the College's website.](#)