

December 2016 Monthly Round-Up Newsletter

Five nominations for Suffolk County Council at 2017 LGC Awards

Suffolk County Council is up for four national awards at a glittering ceremony in London next year.

The County Council has received five nominations in four categories at the LGC Awards, which take place in Grosvenor House on March 8 2017. The awards are an annual event, which showcase the work of council staff who help their communities in new and innovative ways in times of uncertainty.

The council has received two nominations in the Children's Services category, which aims to recognise councils that adopt a strategic approach to the vital service area, and is also in the running for Partnership of the Year, which demonstrates councils working with other organisations to bring about service improvements and/or improved efficiency and Digital Council of the Year – which will go to the council that can show how it has transformed systematically its approach to technology to improve outcomes for residents and facilitate better collaboration between partner organisations.

The organisation has also received a nomination in the new Rising Star category – which aims to highlight local government's exceptional young officers and professionals who are currently not in corporate management team roles.

Suffolk County Council's nominations are:

Suffolk's 'Twos Count Here' Project (quality early learning for two year olds) – Children's Services

'Twos Count Here' is a bespoke project created by Suffolk County Council. The aim is to ensure eligible two year olds have high quality early learning experiences, supporting early years settings to meet the unique needs of increasing numbers of two-year-olds. It is a strengths based, time focused, reflective project which embodies Suffolk County Council's corporate values and beliefs as it's empowering, reflective and based on partnership working. The outcomes of the project have been significant and the needs of two-year-olds are now better understood and met, supporting them to make good progress. Practitioners report the project as being inspirational.

Signs of Safety and Wellbeing in Suffolk – a whole system implementation – Children's Services

Improving the impact of services with significantly diminishing resources is a common aspiration and challenge. Suffolk Children's Services can claim to have

done just that through an innovative and bold programme to implement a single practice framework across all of its services: Suffolk Signs of Safety and Wellbeing. Through implementing an ambitious and clearly articulated plan, the council has worked with partners to create a more positive and sustainable experience for children and families, fundamentally changing the role of services from the 'fixer' of problems to the stimulator of family-owned change.

Suffolk's Most Active County Partnership – Partnership of the Year

Suffolk's Most Active County Partnership is a unique collaboration of organisations that have come together to make a positive impact on physical activity levels in Suffolk. Guided by the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board, it is an innovative place-based intervention that is making a positive impact on activity levels by bringing added value to the good work that many organisations across the county are doing to engage people in physical activity. The partnership, which includes local and national partners, including local authorities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and private companies, is changing the face of physical activity within Suffolk.

Leading Change by Digital Customer Experience – Digital Council of the Year

Working in small agile teams Suffolk County Council re-imagined its website (going from a Society of Information Technology Management rated one-star website in 2014 to four-star in 2016). The County Council has taken this learning further and has been using agile project management techniques and user research to co-produce new services with the people who use them. The County Council is also developing its Customer Experience Platform, which is used to deliver a joined up Customer Experience across the Council. This will deliver a single view of a customer, single sign-on, visibility of customers across all services, customer portal and more targeted proactive demand management activities across a range of channels.

It is the second year running that Suffolk County Council has been shortlisted for Digital Council of the Year at the LGC Awards.

Suffolk Trading Standards' Christmas campaign, Rogue Elf,

Leading to Christmas Suffolk's Trading Standards teams raised awareness of the dangers of purchasing unsafe electrical gifts, with advice on how to avoid such products and where to report the sale of these products.

Every year around 70 deaths and 350,000 injuries in UK homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment and nearly nine out of ten electrical fires are caused by products, either through misuse or faults.

There is a risk that products purchased with the best intentions could also turn out to be dangerous. A product could be a cheap copy, of poor quality or made to look like a well-known brand. The increase in the popularity of online shopping makes it even easier for dodgy goods to slip through the net.

Suffolk Trading Standards officers put together some useful shopping tips that could stop consumers becoming victims of faulty goods. A 'Wanted' style poster with the crimes the Elf has committed, along with information on how to avoid and where to report sightings to were sent out and people were encouraged to become Consumer Champions.

Consumer Champions work Suffolk Trading Standards to protect and empower their local community, build resilience against rogue traders and make Suffolk a safer place to live. For more information on the scheme and how to join, visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/jointhefight

Terry Clements