APPENDIX B

COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Key issues raised during consultation

- **Issue 1**: Partners and residents said that in the consultation draft of the strategy, it felt like a good number of the statements were high level aspirations or were too general. They also said it was hard for local people to see how we would make some of this happen and there was interest in knowing more about the specific things we were going to do on the big issues; people wanted to see more detail on what, how and when we would do things to meet these commitments. Their comments were also a reflection that people felt that it would be really challenging to do some of this work.

  Our response: The strategy provides greater clarity about the approaches that we will be taking. It will be underpinned by a delivery plan which will provide further detail.

- **Issue 2**: Key partners including Suffolk County Council have welcomed our commitment to a Communities Strategy and are keen to work with us to further develop our approach, especially in relation to place based and asset based working.

  Our response: We are keen to collaborate with partners from all sectors to develop our approach, share learning and build delivery plans.

- **Issue 3**: The need for the strategy to be relevant to the work of the Councils as a whole, not just the Communities Team, in order to provide more effective and coherent engagement with communities across a range of issue.

  Our response: The strategy makes clear that the approaches are relevant across a range of service areas and signals a reinvigorated approach to locality working.

- **Issue 4**: That in encouraging communities to help themselves there is a need for effective support from the Councils, for example by providing "clear points of contact" and "sufficient support" for the voluntary and community sector to build their capacity to be able to take on greater responsibilities where they wish to do so.

  Our response: The strategy provides more detail on what can be expected from the Councils but also makes clear that we are keen for ongoing dialogue in order to inform our delivery planning and fully develop our enabling approach.

- **Issue 5**: Managing the risks to those that are less able to help themselves. This includes "increasing digitisation leading to some people becoming increasingly isolated" and addressing the suggestion that "those who are most vulnerable, the most isolated, the most in need of support, suffer even more as you step back from funding." Respondents also highlighted the need to ensure that we hear and engage with harder to reach groups.

  Our response: The strategy provides more information on our approach to addressing need, which will be further developed through delivery planning.

- **Issue 6**: It is not clear the extent to which communities would want to take on the delivery of specific services, but some possible areas have been suggested. These include services such as grass cutting, grounds maintenance, highways repairs, dog wardens, play area maintenance and community transport as well as community delivered approaches to addressing loneliness. Respondents also highlighted the need to help develop the capacity of communities to respond to challenges and opportunities.

  Our response: We understand that some communities are well advanced in their thinking, flagging up opportunities such as the provision of PCSO's across a number of parishes, whilst others do not have the desire or the capacity to consider taking on additional service delivery. Our approach makes clear how we will pilot approaches working to develop and share the practice of the more advanced and build the capacity of others, again sharing the learning.

- **Issue 7**: Some areas have been identified as missing or potentially needing greater coverage e.g. community safety and rural transport.

  Our response: The strategy makes clear how we are addressing our community safety commitments. The issue of rural isolation and rural transport and other missing areas will be the subject of further dialogue to inform delivery planning.

- **Issue 8:** A number of respondents also commented that we are not good at listening and taking the views of communities into account. The predominant examples cited in the survey were in relation to planning matters where there is a perception, we do not support local ambitions, or we ignore the views from Parish Councils.

  Our response: The strategy outlines both our revitalised approach to locality working and our recently developed organisation values which we believe will help to drive a more effective and collaborative approach to our engagement with communities.