

Leaders Report

1. **Grenfell Tower** – All Suffolk Public Sector Leaders have written a joint letter to all owners of high rise buildings within Suffolk encouraging them to review the safety of their buildings and also advising them of the support available to them to do this.

To date 45 high rise buildings (those over 18m in height) have been identified, of which 14 over 8 stories are residential, with a further 13 between 5 and 8 stories being residential.

A review of the Emergency Plan is also being carried out at both a County and District/Borough level.

2. **LGA Conference.** I attended this year's conference which was held in Birmingham. A few thoughts:

Devolution - The Secretary of State has indicated that he is open to any bids that are forthcoming, but at the same time, I think it is pretty clear that the Government will be concentrating on Brexit over the next few years, so think it highly unlikely that time will be found for the necessary primary legislation.

Business Rate retention – as we know, this wasn't included in the Queens Speech, and as a result, the LGA are submitting written proposals to the Secretary of State on how this issue can be taken once the current 4 year fixed settlement ends.

Health and Social Care integration – lot of talk about this, but general mood was to work with the Health and Well-being Board and get on and do it.

Housing – I attended a session on addressing the barriers to Housing presented by the Housing Finance Institute and will send a link to the presentation to Members.

3. **2016/17 – Joint End of Year Report:** I am pleased to launch the publication of the end of year report for the last year. It not only shows what we have achieved as a Council, but it also carries a number of (video) endorsements from some of our community groups. Copies will be made available to Members. Over the past year we have been working hard to reduce our costs and effectively make best use of all our resources, to deliver the high quality services our communities are entitled to expect. We are proud of the achievements we have made throughout the year. We have built our first council homes for a generation giving local people much needed affordable homes. We have created a new legal partnership with our colleagues in West Suffolk providing better and more resilient legal services. Our Shared Revenues Partnership has continued to provide high quality benefits administration and advice with continuing value for money. We have developed a new Capital Investment Strategy which will allow us to invest to generate regular and safe forms of income which will be reinvested to preserve and enhance our essential services.
4. Appointment of Strategic Director: By the time you read this, we hope to have appointed a new Strategic Director. A very strong field of candidates were interviewed, and I hope to be able to advise Members of the successful candidate at tonight's meeting.

5. **Suffolk County Council** – Deborah Cadman has resigned as Chief Executive of the County Council and will be taking up the role of Chief Executive at the newly created West Midlands Combined Authority. A process has been implemented for her replacement and it is anticipated that the new CEx will be appointed in early September.

Councillor Nick Gowrley
Leader, Mid Suffolk District Council