

## Suffolk Business Board, Chairs Update, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025

### National picture:

**Modern Industrial Strategy:** Launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> June as a 10-year growth blueprint under the “Plan for Change” aimed at revitalising the nation's economy and securing long-term prosperity. A separate board paper provides further details.

**Trade Strategy:** Unveiled 25–26 June, the UK Trade Strategy aims to make Britain the “most connected nation in the world”. It prioritises services and digital trade, faster sector-specific deals, stronger trade-defence tools, and expanded export finance. Major tools include the Single Trade Window, Ricardo Fund, a boost in UKEF capacity (from £60bn to £80bn).

The Business Board Network has facilitated several **meetings with ministers and Business Board Chairs**. The latest was with Minister Alex Norris, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (MHCLG). See additional document B for the follow-up letter sent to the minister.

### In Suffolk:

#### ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

Four **Suffolk Economy Grants** have been offered, ranging from £9,000 to £100,000 totalling £205,874. Together these will leverage £5.94 in private investment for every £1 of grant totalling over £1.22 million. Projects span from advanced machinery in AME to digital learning systems for the construction supply chain, supporting productivity gains, economic wellbeing and clean growth ambitions.

#### TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The inaugural meeting of the **Skills, Employment and Lifelong Development Advisory Board (SELDA)** was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, bringing together key leaders from the skills and employment system. The group will convene three times a year and will serve as a leadership community for other forums and boards, including the Suffolk Business Board, to engage with. Several members of the Business Board, including Marek, Leanne, John, and Alan (as a deputy), are also part of SELDA, ensuring a strong connection between the two groups.

‘**Get Suffolk Working**’ will be published in September, ahead of the next Business Board meeting. This plan will complement the Suffolk Economic Strategy – focused on enhancing the way in which Suffolk residents are supported to become economically active and be part of the workforce. It has been discussed at the SELDA Board, the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board and will be signed off by DWP and the Integrated Care Boards, and Suffolk County Council.

As Chair of the Suffolk Business Board, Mark has signed letters of support for colleges bidding to become the regional ‘**Technical Excellence College**’ for Construction.

#### DRIVING ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION

On 10<sup>th</sup> July, the **Space East Board** held a workshop and dinner, chaired by the new Chair, Paul Febvre. The event saw strong engagement from local authority and industry representatives, with the UK Space Agency and Catapult also in attendance.

The **UK Space Agency has increased its funding to Space East** by £100K, demonstrating its commitment and opportunity in our region's space sector. This additional funding will support activity including, commercialisation of the UoS Quantum Optical Discovery Lab at Adastral Park and strategic activity with the Ox-Cam Corridor.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July, at the **2025 UK Space Conference**, Space East, Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, and the Westcott **Space Cluster signed an MOU**. Facilitated with support from the Satellite Applications Catapult, this strategic agreement unites three of the UK's leading regional space clusters to drive innovation, investment, and skills development across the Ox-Cam Corridor.

#### CREATING PRIDE IN PLACE

**Suffolk Adult Learner Awards 2025** held on the 26<sup>th</sup> June. Thank you to Leanne Gittins for representing the Board and presenting an award on behalf of Suffolk Economy.

The **East Anglian Times Suffolk Business Awards** took place on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Suffolk Business Board sponsored the best Small Business Award, which was presented by Doug Field. The award was won by Reboot Education, who provide an offsite alternative provision for children in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. [East Anglian Daily Times Business Awards | Home](#)

Business Board members and officers held **meetings with MPs** Jess Assato, Jenny Riddell Carpenter and James Cartlidge. Continuing efforts to highlight Suffolk's strengths and opportunities, reinforcing the Business Board's growth ambitions.

Suffolk Economy joined in **turning Suffolk pink** to celebrate Ed Sheeran's homecoming. An iconic moment that showcased the strengths of our cultural economy, boosted local pride, and delivered a real economic uplift across Ipswich and the visitor economy.

