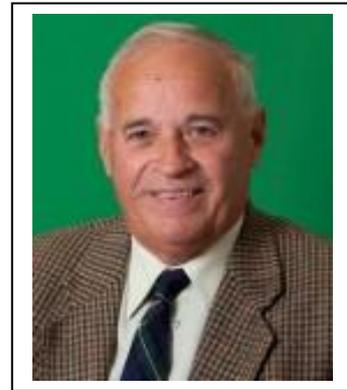


Parish Report April 2023

Councillor

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Information Updates

For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis, visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving

For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email: refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk or ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

SEND Report: Update

The Government's assessment of the SEND services progress in Suffolk has been described as 'reassuring' after adopting all recommendations given in the Council's damning report back in 2021.

In November 2021, a report into SCC's SEND services found failings and inadequacies linked to a lack of engagement with parents/guardians, a failure to meet targets, and a lack of effective training in staff. This comes as recent news from SCC said they have hired a Special Advisor for SEND Services, to support existing improvements. We will ensure via the Education Scrutiny Committee that this process is rigorously tested.

Homes for Ukraine: SCC to commit to more Money

Suffolk County Council has announced additional financial support for household homing Ukrainian refugees. Those who have homed a Ukrainian refugee for a minimum of 6 months will receive an additional £150 per month (in addition to the £350 monthly payment, which will rise to £500 after guests have stayed 12 months).

However, once the £500 monthly payment has been received, the council will stop its additional funding. For more information, please visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/ukraine

GLI Motion Voted In: New Chamber Recommit to Net Zero

At Full Council, the GLI Group proposed a motion for SCC to recommit to its declaration to be Net Zero by 2030. The original declaration, made in 2019, occurred during a different wave of Cllrs. Since then, we have had an election which means 31 Cllrs have yet to formally commit themselves to Net Zero by 2030.

In January, it was announced in the Carbon Budget that SCC is not on track to achieve Net Zero by 2030. In proposing the motion, Opposition Spokesperson for Achieving Net Zero, Cllr Annette Dunning wanted to ensure the Conservatives would prioritise building a clearer roadmap to protecting our environment. The motion was passed almost unanimously, with 2 Conservative Cllrs abstaining.

New Woman's Flag up in SCC

Women's History Month was celebrated throughout March, with International Women's Day being on 8th March. Last year, GLI Spokesperson for Women, Cllr Caroline Page, wrote to Suffolk County Council, asking that them to purchase a Suffragette Flag to fly proudly in celebrating a women's story.

Our Group can confirm that the Council listened to us, and the flag has been flying though out the month. It has also been confirmed that this will now be best practice moving forward. This comes as news in March shows Suffolk County Council's mean and median gender pay gaps have reduced in the last year, by 0.5% and 1.0%, respectively.

Cabinet Meeting (21st March 2023)

The Cabinet agreed an additional £32m investment to increase school provision in the county. With the new funding, 11 new schools will be built, as well as further maintenance and expansion of current schools. Our Group welcomes additional support and will ensure there is a thorough process to the development and planning of new infrastructure.

In addition, £10.8m was agreed to help deliver new walking and cycling bridges in Ipswich, as well as providing financial support to the recommendations outlined by the Ipswich Policy Development Panel. Projects include boosting employment opportunities for young people and sustainable travel.

While we welcome additional investment, our Group highlighted that there are infrastructure projects throughout the county that need investment urgently and that the Administration needs a more coherent delivery plan to address shortages outside of Ipswich.

Suffolk County Council secures £7.9 million for active travel schemes across County

Suffolk County Council has been awarded £7.9 million to boost active schemes across the county.

The money has come from Active Travel England (ATE) and will be spent on seven projects encouraging cycling and walking through measures such as cycle lanes, shared-use paths and improved crossing points on roads. They include two mini-Holland schemes totalling more than £5m for Woodbridge, £1.3m for Grange Road in Felixstowe, and £1.2m for the route between Ipswich Hospital and the University of Suffolk.

Mini-Holland schemes prioritise cyclists and pedestrians over motorised vehicles. £4m will be spent on a scheme in Woodbridge town centre which would see measures including:

- Quay Street junction pedestrian friendly surfacing and crossings
- Cumberland Street – one-way reversal
- Church Street – one-way northbound and pedestrian friendly surfacing
- Reorganisation of parking to create traffic calming on Burkitt Road
- One-way only system on Theatre Street
- Improved signalisation to prioritise cyclists at Thoroughfare junction
- Reversal of one-way direction on Thoroughfare
- Pedestrian/cycling crossing on Ipswich Road

A further £1.1m will be for a similar scheme in the south of the town including filter systems at Sandy Lane, Bilney Road/Grunisburgh Road junction, and Bullards Lane, installing a pedestrian/cycle crossing at Ipswich Road/Old Barrack Road, turning Peterhouse Crescent into a school street for Kyson Primary School, and an area wide 20mph speed limit.

Separately, Suffolk County Council is about to submit a feasibility study to the government which, if accepted, could see millions of pounds spent on expanding the mini-Holland system across the town and neighbouring Melton.

Some of the schemes, such as Ipswich Hospital to the University, have previously had improvements made under previous ATE funding rounds but this new money will link up and enhance that previous work.

The council will consult with the public throughout 2023 with a view to starting work on all schemes in 2024.

New money agreed to build 11 new schools in Suffolk

An additional £32million investment has today been agreed by Suffolk County Council's Cabinet to support its school growth programme, including the provision of 11 new schools across the county.

As well as new schools, the additional money will also be put towards school expansion projects and help maintain school buildings, including reducing the carbon footprint of premises.

Details of the new schools across Suffolk include:

- One new secondary school and two new primary schools for the Ipswich Garden Suburb development
- Relocation of Lakenheath Primary School to a new bigger site to allow for expansion
- New primary school in Haverhill
- New primary school in Woolpit
- Relocation of Trimley St Martin Primary School to a new bigger site to allow for expansion

- New primary school for north Felixstowe
- New primary school for Wolsey Grange, Ipswich
- New primary school for Rushbrooke housing development, Bury St Edmunds
- New primary school for Chilton Woods housing development, Sudbury

The money will also support plans to build new Early Years provision and expand existing sites. These include:

- Expansion of Exning Pre-school
- New pre-school in Western Way, Bury St Edmunds
- New pre-school at Holton St Peter
- Reprovision of places at Beck Row pre-school

The money will also be used to improve fire prevention at Thurston Community College and Dale Hall Primary School, Ipswich, plus new sports facilities at Dale Hall Primary School, an expansion of facilities at Moulton CEVCP School, Newmarket and a new conservatory at Highfields Nursery School, Ipswich.

The money will also be used to carry out work on school buildings to reduce the carbon footprint and the requirements needed to meet the net zero target of 2030.

The £32million will be covered by Government borrowing and other capital sources.

Suffolk County Council secures £265m government funding for children's homes

Suffolk County Council has secured £2.65m of funding from the government for the county's children's homes.

The fund was set up by Department for Education (DFE) to enable local authorities to provide more placements within council run children's homes, as many councils have to commission residential provision which is costly. £1.9m of funding will go towards repurposing two children's homes. One children's home will be reconfigured into two separate wings to accommodate complex young people, this will provide 2 additional placements. The other children's home is to be developed into a provision for young people preparing to exit the care system. A wholly separate independence/training flat with its own external entrance will be created. This will be additional capacity at the home.

The remaining £0.7m funding will be used, in addition to the £2m already approved by cabinet in November, towards the development of a new residential home for children and young people with disabilities at the Felixstowe Ferry Centre building in Felixstowe. The home will include three residential care places and two shared care beds. Shared care is when a young person spends a portion of time living with parents or carers and the rest at the home.

The £2.65m grant funding has been combined with additional resources to make a total investment into new residential provision for children and young people of almost £4.4 m in the months ahead.

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