

May 2025

# Parish Report

**Cllr Andrew Stringer, Upper Gipping**

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## **Care Market Strategy**

On Tuesday 13 May, Cabinet approved the council's new five-year Care Market Strategy, which replaces the previous strategy from 2021-2024. The strategy sets out how the council will work with care providers in the county and other voluntary and community organizations to ensure there is enough care accommodation and workforce to meet adult social care need. The council has a legal duty to do this and care purchasing is one of the largest costs faced by the council – over £380m in the 2024-25 financial year, with demand forecast to keep growing. The strategy was developed in partnership with care providers, NHS Integrated Care Boards and Healthwatch Suffolk, with a focus on supporting people with higher additional needs such as dementia, neurological illness and autism, promoting independence where possible and providing better support for unpaid carers.

You can read the new strategy here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/suffolk-care-market-strategy-2025-2030.pdf>

## **Council Objections to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects**

The Cabinet meeting on 13 May also agreed that the council should object to the proposals for the Sea Link Grid Reinforcement, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) creating an undersea link between Kent and Suffolk, making landfall near Thorpeness and including a converter station being built at Saxmundham. The council acknowledged that the infrastructure was important for connecting low carbon energy developments, but that they had concerns about a number of issues, including the

proposed bridge across the River Fromus which was felt would have had significant adverse effects on the local landscape and character, and the inclusion of 7am to 5pm on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays in the working hours, as this would not give local residents any respite from the construction works. The council also reiterated the lack of coordination with other energy projects in the county, particularly National Grid Ventures' Lion Link project which is due to make landfall further up the coast at Walberswick.

The council has also objected to the plans for Eco Power's new large solar farm in north Suffolk, based on several factors including the loss of good quality agricultural land, the impact on communities and the local landscape and damage from cable corridors. A statutory consultation on the plans is expected later in the year.

### **Consultation launched on Developer Contributions**

Suffolk County Council has launched a consultation so Suffolk residents can give their views on the contributions which can be sought from developers proposing major planning applications. In 2011, the council published the "Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions to make developers aware of what they should consider, and the financial contributions they should take into account to mitigate for the impact of new developments such as housing estates. The guide has been updated periodically since it was launched, and has now been reviewed and is out for consultation focusing on early years childcare settings, education costs, libraries, and waste infrastructure contributions. Developers need to provide funding to the county council to absorb the impact of extra housing to enable it to provide council services, and the consultation asks for public feedback on how this should be calculated. The consultation is open until 9 June and you can find it here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/developers-guide-to-infrastructure-contributions-in-suffolk>

### **Council Annual General Meeting**

On Thursday 22 May, all three motions tabled were passed by the council, these included a motion against the government's proposed changes to public consultation for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) like Sizewell C, Sea Link and Lion Link and solar farm applications. The council also agreed motions proposing a ban on live animals being used as prizes on council land, and to support the campaign for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to be eligible for the 20 year long service medal which is currently for warranted police officers only. The meeting was the council's AGM (Annual General Meeting), and a new Chair, Cllr Jessica Fleming, and new Vice Chair, David Roach, were sworn in during the meeting.

### **Local Government Reorganization – Engagement Meetings**

Suffolk County Council is currently arranging meetings with town and parish councils to engage with them about the coming changes in local government which will see Suffolk's

two-tier system (districts/boroughs and county council) move to unitary councils/mayoral model which will undertake all services. As the administration's position is that one council would be best for Suffolk, it is likely that they will be promoting this at the meetings. County councillors have not been invited to the meetings but as your representatives, we would very much like to be there – if you are attending one of these meetings, please make contact with your local county councillor to find out if they are coming. The meetings are being organized by the council's communications team and will be around the county in the next couple of months.

### **Nominations sought for Suffolk Community Awards 2025**

Nominations are now open for the Suffolk Community Awards 2025, which is organized by Community Action Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Association of Local Councils. The awards ceremony will showcase the excellent work and achievements of individuals, groups and local councils across Suffolk with 18 awards, including a new one for a local council's efforts respond to climate change. Other award categories cover youth participation and young person of the year, community building, contribution to volunteering, most active community and council, councillor, young councillor and clerk of the year. Nominations are now open and must be made by Sunday 13 July at [www.suffolkcommunityawards.co.uk](http://www.suffolkcommunityawards.co.uk)

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