



NOTICE

You are Summoned to the Meeting of Southwold Town Council which will be held on Tuesday 16th December 2025 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall

Signed *L. S. Beavan*

Dated 9th December 2025

AGENDA

1. **Apologies:** To receive and approve apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.
 - b) To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests and Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.
 - c) To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.
3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 25th November 2025.
4. **Public Forum** *(15 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).*
 - a) To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda.
5. **To receive reports from Committees and Working Groups:**
 - a) To receive the verbal report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee meeting – *to receive report from meeting held 16th December 2025, including representation at ESC Planning Cttee 9th Dec. Cllr Temple*
 - b) Leisure and Environment Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting held 4th December 2025. *Cllr Goldsmith. To include update on CCTV since meeting,*
 - c) Roads Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Roads Committee meeting held 4th December 2025. *Cllr Beavan.*

To receive invitation to the Public Rights of Way working group to join Reydon PC, and S and R Soc, for meeting 14th Jan 2026 at 2pm. – see previous T of Ref as attached.
 - d) NSIP working Group – To receive response for Deadline 2 Sealink DCO. Submitted as per delegated approval. *Cllr Davy. See attached.*

- e) LGR / Devolution working group.
Devolution – to receive update. Meeting requested with each Mayoral candidate still required.

LGR – to consider, and if agreed, approve that STC provide a response to the consultation. LGR working group to have devolved authority to respond to the Three Councils for Suffolk, and the One Suffolk submissions. (Consultation deadline is 11th Jan 2026 (see selected pages of the reports from each submission attached – and see full submissions on [Proposals for local government reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk))

- f) Bright Light Award working group – to confirm the eligibility and selection criteria for the 2025 award.

- g) Emergency Plan working group – to confirm date to meet with Reydon PC to update Joint Plan.

6. **Financial Matters - Audit and Governance**

- a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for December 2025 (*circulated to members*).
- b) *To receive and consider* management accounts/ budget/ and balance sheet for month end November 2025
- c) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee* meeting held on 10th December 2025 – *recommendation in respect of T of Ref/ donations policy* - Cllr Jarvis
- d) *To note meeting dates for confirming budget and precept for 2026.2027.*

7. **Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor updates including;**

Bungay Town Trust Town Dinner – 28th November 2025

Light Up Southwold – 29th November 2025.

A Suffolk Christmas Service at Bury St Edmunds – 10th December 2025

Christmas Reception for businesses and local organisations – Town Hall 11th December 2025

VHC Christmas Lunch – 18th December 2025

8. **Forthcoming Events for councillors**

Christmas Carol Service at St Edmund's Church 21st December 2025 at 6pm

9. **Date of next Town Council Meetings:**

Tuesday 13th January 2026 for consideration of budget 2026.2027.

Tuesday 27th January 2026.

***Some items from this agenda might need to be considered within a confidential session as below.*

10. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it might need to be resolved, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, for the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.*

Any matters, including those above as required**

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS. THE TOWN COUNCIL ABIDES BY THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT 2012.

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 25th November 2025.

PRESENT:	Councillor
	“ D Beavan
	“ P Davy
	“ S Flunder
	“ P Goldsmith (Mayor)
	“ C Hurr
	“ R Jarvis
	“ M Palmer
	“ V Redington

Also present: The Town Clerk and the High Steward and 3 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:**

To receive and approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gladwell, Cllr Miller, Cllr Temple, Cllr Wells and SCC Cllr Ladd. Noted.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

a) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.*
Cllr Flunder re Harbour, as per declaration at the HMC.

b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests / Non registrable interest regarding the agenda.* Nil.

c) *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.* Nil.

3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 28th October 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Davy. Agreed by all to approve the minutes of Tuesday 28th October 2025.

4. **Public Forum** (15 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).

a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan*
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.

Ref. Potters Bridge – Natural England created an outfall at Benacre which is working well. 3 large pipes have been placed across the beach to the broad. NE state that this is an emergency outfall, but it is doing the job and is slowly draining. Therefore it is hoped that this is a workable solution for the present time .

Rats/rabbits – ESC are carrying on with the work on this.

The HMC has met. Each Lease is going to be looked at individually. If there are disagreements, then arbitration will take place. Leases over 6 years will need to be registered at HM Land Registry. Approved long leases will have a premium included the monies from which will go to maintain the harbour.

The ESC 2026 – 2027 Budget will be tight. The new funding formula comes into effect. There is a £5m reserve held at ESC but shortfall will be about £3m this year. ESC is likely to raise maximum precept i.e. 5%.

Questions to ESC Cllr Beavan

Cllr Flunder asked re rats coming out of sewers. Personally has had to put valve in. Could Anglian Water do a survey/investigation to see what the condition of the sewers is? ESC Cllr Beavan advised that he could ask them to do this and will co-ordinate with Anglian Water and ESC.

Cllr Redington advised that there has been a problem with rats in sewers of Strickland Place properties.

ESC Cllr Beavan – has arranged an E coli monitor for the harbour for monitoring the Anglian Water outfall in the harbour.

b) To receive a report from Suffolk CC Ward Councillor M Ladd.

Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors. SCC Cllr Ladd had provided apologies.

c) To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda.

Members of the public asked about the consultation taking place in respect of the leases at the harbour. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that each leaseholder/licence holder will be contacted individually, and ESC will negotiate lease by lease individually.

Members of the public asked about the additional premium on longer leases, advising that private stage owners have invested at private cost, and are concerned that individuals are now being asked to pay more when they have already invested heavily individually into the harbour. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that this was appreciated, but that £100m still needs to be invested in the harbour. The Caravan site investment will be going ahead soon. Cllr Beavan advised that all is negotiable, and that the size of the premium will be negotiable - each individual should negotiate individually.

Members of the public advised that there has been no overall consultation – ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised them that ESC do not have to consult with everyone individually.

The members of the public asked for the town council to support their concerns.

9a) SAG/HMC – Cllr Flunder – latest SAG was a good meeting. But on this issue many people have been very upset and HMC must take account of SAG views. Clear to Cllr Flunder that the value of the harbour will be affected. The tenancies do have protected status as far as Cllr Flunder is aware.

ESC Cllr Beavan – has acknowledged that there has been bad communication.

Cllr Flunder – whole process has not been well communicated. HMC were making up a resolution during the HMC meeting – how could SAG participate in this? Public just want to be involved.

ESC Cllr Beavan – sorry that he couldn't be at SAG.

Motion was re-drafted in the meeting because HMC has been listening.

ESC Cllr Beavan – not supportive of 1 year lease/licence and totally understands what people have been saying.

ESC Cllr Beavan – everyone will be negotiated out individually. Need to move forward otherwise there will be no harbour at all. Could suggest a Trust be set up to take over the harbour if people want to.

Question from Cllr Goldsmith – has the information given this evening been communicated to all leaseholders?

ESC Cllr Beavan – A = was minuted at HMC.

ESC Cllr Beavan will arrange for each leaseholder to be written to by ESC about the HMC decision.

Cllr Jarvis – to public – harbour is a municipal harbour run by ESC. But all councils are going through devolution. Could go to a Mayoral body who has responsibility for transport, but this is yet to be made clear.

ESC Cllr Beavan – it will go to the unitary if not Mayor.

Brought forward in agenda

9a) SAG/HMC – Cllr Flunder reported that SAG had held a good meeting and that minutes of the SAG meetings are now taken. The information about the leases was not known when SAG met. SAG would like HMC Minutes to be available more promptly as they seem to take a while to come through. There had been good results at the caravan site regarding the filling of empty pitches in the site.

Cllr Flunder mentioned that there was though a feeling that there will be a cost of the lease/licence amendments and questions are being raised as to whether the process being undertaken is legal. A invitation has been sent to ESC Cllr Beavan in relation to meeting with the new Pontoon Association. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that the ESC legal team will reply regarding the leases as above.

5. To receive reports from Committees and Working Groups:

a) To receive the reports of the meetings of the Planning and Development Committee meeting – to receive report from meetings held 4th and 18th November 2025, including representation at ESC Planning Cttee. Cllr Temple. No recommendations. Cllr Flunder advised that he attended the ESC Planning Committee regarding 17 Market Place on behalf of STC. The ESC Planning Committee voted to refuse the application.

*b) Landlords Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee held 13th November 2025. Cllr Miller. ***

Recommendation.

Casino windows – Revised Quote has been received following the survey of the walls/ windows.

C and D advise that revised spec for the work is £11,858.70 plus vat.

This will provide thermally broken powder coated aluminium windows as per planning application.

Other quotes for windows alone were £9597 and £11207.

Query raised as to whether quote from C and D will include making good the interior paintwork etc. This has been confirmed. Lead time is 6 – 8 weeks.

Recommend approve revised quote of £11,858.70 plus Vat for replacement and fitting as per planning application.

Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Hurr. All agreed.

c) Leisure and Environment Cttee – No meeting held.

d) Roads Cttee – No meeting held.

e) Employment working group – No meeting held

f) NSIP working Group – To receive update on National Energy Projects – Lionlink/Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/ and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project - Sealink DCO - Cllr Davy

Sizewell C is going ahead and traffic etc is being monitored against the Deed of Obligation. Roads will get worse before getting better. Sizewell C Community Fund is still not looking at Southwold. Tourist Fund is available for requests.

Scottish Power Renewables – wind farm will be at Thorpeness. Substation at Friston. Work has commenced but there is minimal liaison with Sizewell re roads etc.

Sealink – DCO process – if approved it will be a connection hub for more NSIPS.

Ofgem has agreed to give the green light for 48% of the costs to be given the go ahead to obtain parts/place orders, without prejudice, to the DCO outcome. All documents for Sealink are on NSIP sites. Been very strong representations against Sealink in Suffolk and Kent. Over 100 people attended recent local floor hearings, and some town and parish councils spoke. Meeting of East Suffolk Project Group will take place this week and will guide town and parish councils how to respond. STC will need to decide how to respond and would like a working group to have delegated power to respond by 9th December as STC do not meet again by then. Cllr Davy will draft and will circulate to all once working group has met and approved. Delegated authority has already been given to the working group to respond on behalf of STC.

SEAS have had great representation and are represented by a KC at the hearing. Prelim meeting has been held. Hearings will be in London and online. 9th December 2025 is the next deadline for representations.

LionLink – is still to come.

Saxmundham – proposal for 800 homes has been submitted.

AW/Essex & Suffolk Water – is running a pipeline from Beccles to Saxmundham.

National Grid has announced ½ year accounts profit of £810m, a rise of 20%.

g) LGR working group – see Finance cttee minutes for update.

To note meeting to be requested with each Mayoral candidate.

Cllr Jarvis – LGR consultation is to 11th January 2026. SALC will be impartial – but will emphasise getting maximum benefit for town and parish councils. Members were advised that they can respond individually, and that if agreed, STC can also respond to the 2 submissions. ESC ward Cllr Beavan advised that STC might wish to consider the assets it wants back from ESC and to start discussions.

Devolution – unitary will sit with Mayoral Board. Last week the Government enabled the shadow board to be set up. Shadow board will be supporting the Mayoral election to enable it to go ahead. There are 4 board members at the moment (2 from NCC and 2 from SCC). Will need the shadow board to run for 2 – 3 years.

SALC meeting is on 2nd December 2025, and Cllr Jarvis will Chair.

LGR working group – will be inviting all Mayor candidates to meet with them.

6. **Wi Fi Provision – letter to ESC** – *To receive update from last meeting.* Await meeting date with Economic Development.
7. **Fire Station Site** – to receive update – *ESC Ward Cllr Beavan/ SCC Ward Cllr Ladd ***
Cllr Beavan advised that ESC has no update but are chasing Hastoe. It was suggested that the town council might need to take action itself.
8. **Financial Matters - Audit and Governance**
 - a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for November 2025 (*circulated to members*).
On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Davy, it was agreed by all to approve the payments.
 - b) *To receive and consider* management accounts/ budget/ and balance sheet for month end October 2025. Cllr Jarvis advised that all expenditure is as detailed in budget. Income is also fine. The balance sheet is looking around £1.1m at 31st March 2026 year end which will be close to reserve figure of £1m.
 - c) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee meeting held on 19th November 2025 – Cllr Jarvis* – **Members considered the updated Planning Cttee, and L and E cttee Terms of Reference. Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Flunder. All agreed to approve.**
 - d) *To receive precept details 2026.2027 together with timescales* – see letter from ESC. As mentioned last year, as a principle, a precept increase of 3% has already been mentioned to the electors.

e) *To note timescales for setting of budget 2026.2027 budget setting 2026-27 – see precept timeline. Noted.*

9. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended:**

a) SAG / HMC – *Cllr Flunder* – re caravan site. Council has committed £250k for a consultant. No consultant has yet been appointed. It was requested that STC be a consultee on the final decisions.

b) Southwold Arts Centre – Tribute bands are having great reviews, and the jazz club is popular. *Cllr Flunder* advised that he will no longer be able to be the STC representative on the Centre – and would suggest that someone else takes on that role. *Cllr Flunder* advised that the commitment is to monthly meetings and to be an active volunteer.

10. **Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor updates including:**

Remembrance Parade – Town Hall – 9th November 2025

Armistice Day – Laying of Crosses – 11th November 2025

Southwold & Reydon Society Lunch – 13th November 2025

St Edmunds Day – St Edmunds Church – 20th November 2025

Bungay Town Trust Town Dinner – 28th November 2025

11. **Forthcoming Events for councillors**

Light Up Southwold – 29th November 2025.

Christmas Reception for businesses and local organisations – Town Hall – 11th December 2025

Christmas Carol Service at St Edmund's Church 21st December 2025 at 6pm

12. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 16 December 2025.

Tuesday 13th January 2026 for consideration of budget 2026.2027.

Tuesday 27th January 2026.

***Some items from this agenda might need to be considered within a confidential session as below.*

13. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it might need to be resolved, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, for the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.*

Any matters, including those above as required**

NIL

Notes of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on Thursday 4th December 2025 at 9am at the Town Hall

Notes

Item	Subject	Details
1	Present	PG, JM, MP, MW, SF
2	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	NIL
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	To note the minutes of the previous meeting - notes from October 2025. Noted.
4	Standing Orders-public section.	Nil
5	Environmental matters –	<p>Follow up to meeting with ESC re prom/ cliffs. Chase meeting date.</p> <p>Bulbs from ESC – received and being planted.</p> <p>Improvements to Natural environment – various grants - noted.</p> <p>Sustainable Development Fund and the Community and Conservation Fund – Suffolk Coast and Heaths grants Jan 2026 – Timescales noted.</p>
6	Ongoing Leisure and Other matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Sign repairs – new sign should be ready Spring 2026. • Seeding at Klondyke – to be carried out again Spring 2026. • Play area updates – Tibbys and Klondyke including Rospa inspections – remedial works being carried out. • Community Self Help scheme – SCC to order those things needed. To be stored at Town Hall. • CCTV - police have advised where they would like extra cameras to be placed. • Box Up – grant available from ESC which will virtually cover the costs. Query to be raised re any power required.
7	Finance – budget – quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 2026 – 2027 – the L and E cttee budget will be incorporated within council budget. • Events Growth Grant scheme – Sizewell – noted. • ESC Visitor Economy Support Scheme – project in relation to creating art/ sculpture trail along North Parade to join up with the existing sculpture trail. ESC will assist in working up the project and establishing potential footfall growth as a result of any scheme. It was suggested that art galleries could be approached for connection with potential people to assist with the project. Try college apprentices etc to create pieces for the project.

8	Events To consider	<p>Late night shopping – 5th Dec Town Hall Christmas Drinks – 11th Dec Christmas Carol service – 21st Dec 2025</p> <p>Events 2026 – potential to include Heritage Open Day events. Initial contact made with national organisers. Stakeholders meeting to be held in new year to assess interest.</p>
	Date of next meeting	TBC

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Notes from the Roads Committee meeting held Thursday 4th December 2025 at 10.30 am the Town Hall.

Present; Cllrs; DB, RJ, MP, CH. Also, Cllr SCC Ladd, Charles Harrison Highways officer.

1. To receive apologies for absence. Cllr Davy. Noted.
2. Declarations of interest: Nil
3. Minutes from October meeting - as presented at full council. Agreed.
4. Public section - Nil
5. Update from SCC Highways officer Charles Harrison re local Highways matters, including;
 - High Street 20mph including High Street Build outs/ courtesy crossings– to confirm timescales and costs.
SCC now has the £54K required for the scheme.
Scheme timescale is to start construction in Jan 2027. Members asked that this be brought forward to 2026. Timeline to be requested. E mail to be sent to Paul West setting out the consultation etc which STC has already carried out and the dates they were undertaken.
No design has yet been seen – this was expected for this meeting. Ask for designs asap.
 - East Cliff – road resurfacing – is on SCC Highways reporting tool.
 - EV chargers – SCC new suppliers = Believ. They will be in touch soon regarding AV chargers for Gardner Rd car park.
 - Pinkney's Lane works completed.
6. Update from ESC Ward Cllr Beavan on ESC parking matters;
 - Parking enforcement – No concerns.
 - ESC Parking machines and payment options – due to be installed. Ask for timescale.
Discussion re STC/ police taking back power for on street parking enforcement within LGR. Consider when discuss LGR with ESC. Lobby as required.
 - EV Chargers in ESC car parks – no update.
7. Other matters including;
 - Inspection of Potters Bridge – as per previous report. Outfall is now clear. Visual inspection will now take place instead of a structural inspection. Both the road and the bridge will be inspected. It was suggested that water depth signals be reviewed as/ when it does breach.
 - New ESC Street trading policy wef 1st December. Discussion re STC taking on power for on local licensing within LGR. Consider when discuss LGR with ESC. Lobby as required.
 - Upgrade of E V Charger Church Green completed.
8. Date of next meeting. 22nd Jan at 10.30am

Terms of Reference 2022 – PROW WORKING Group

- SCC maintenance programme - How to monitor and maintain access to the PROW throughout the year including addressing problems e.g., fallen trees.
- How to promote and support access to the PROW for health and leisure.
- How to improve infrastructure and connectivity to the PROW from Bridleways/Byways for all users, particularly cyclists.
- How to reconcile competing demands on PROW.
- Consideration of the application of SCC Policies in relation to PROW including use of herbicides/ invasive alexander/ Poison Hemlock control methods
- Feasibility of Volunteers assisting in PROW maintenance and footpath maintenance? (objective to ensure paths are clear safe to walk all year round - including AONB volunteer groups?)
- Lost PROW's - how to identify and reinstate?
- PROW - Silent mowing v mechanical mowing /strimming (volunteers) pooling any resources?

**Southwold Town Council's submission for Deadline 2, Sea Link DCO.
Registration Number F8D5C8AAD**

Southwold Town Council (STC) recognises the general requirement to strengthen and widen the transmission capability in England, but this should be undertaken in an holistic manner which is cognisant of other projects, including NSIPs, impacting the environment and local communities. Sizewell C (SZC), EA2 and EA1N have been consented and are already having a huge negative environmental and socio-economic impact on the localities surrounding and leading to their onshore sites which are within the Suffolk Heritage Coast, part of a National Landscape. To add Sea Link, which by its very nature would enable a significant regional connection hub attracting additional energy projects (interconnector, windfarm and solar) would impose an undue burden on this relatively small area of the Heritage Coast, renowned for its tranquil beauty, dark skies, coastal walks, ancient woodland, diversity of wildlife, medieval churches and rich cultural heritage.

Need

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) argues that Sea Link is vital to export power from Kent to Suffolk at times of low wind and high interconnector imports, but East Anglia already has sufficient power through Sizewell B and prospectively C. It also asserts that it is needed as a backup in a scenario where there is a transmission fault between Canterbury and Kemsley, but no substantive evidence is presented of reliability risk.

NGET further argues that Sea Link is required at times of high wind as an additional route for power to flow out of East Anglia into the network, but the only new wind farm projects currently consented are EA2 and EA1N for which there is existing capacity through the overhead lines from Sizewell to Bramford. Again they assert that Sea Link is needed as a backup in case of a fault between Sizewell and Bramford preventing transmission from what they call the Sizewell Generation Group, but no substantive evidence is presented of reliability risk, and the introduction of the term "Sizewell Generation Group" hides NGET's intention to create a connection hub at Friston into which other potential energy projects may connect which would require extra transmission capability. SZC is delayed and will not be online until 2040, and no mention was made during the extensive and robust DCO for SZC of any need to supplement the network to accommodate it. Indeed, transmission concerns were not raised or examined. Nautilus is now connecting at Grain, Lion Link and Helios Solar Farm and other potential energy projects are not consented, so there is no present necessity for Sea Link, and there is time to design a better solution which would obviate the additional turmoil and impact on this relatively small area of East Suffolk. We would ask the ExA to press for proof of present constraints and reliability risks before accepting NGET's justification.

Cumulative Effect

It is noticeable that NGET in its many submissions regards Sea Link's impact in isolation as having no significant adverse effect when it should be impossible to view the project in isolation in this way but as part of multiple overlapping projects whose cumulative effect on this small area of East Suffolk, when added to the already consented SZC and EA2/EA1N, has enormous impact. Despite this self-fulfilling approach, NGET is quick to acknowledge other unconsented projects such as Lion Link to substantiate its needs case. STC's contention is that the cumulative effect of Sea Link and the projects it will attract on top of the consented SZC and EA2/EA1N is overburdening to local communities and requires far

more robust analysis and assessment than currently undertaken by NGET across in particular Traffic and Transport, Recreation and Tourism, Health and Well-being, Environment and Ecology to reveal the true impact.

Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk District Council LIRs

STC fully supports the issues raised by both SCC and ESDC in their LIRs which demand proper resolution and should not in critical instances (such as access over Benhall Bridge, new bridge access over the River Fromus and siting of the converter station) be dismissed by NGET as easily resolvable as part of the ongoing consent process.

Regional Effects

NGET has assessed the likely significant socio-economic, recreation and tourism effects of Sea Link over a broader study area being within a 60 minute drive-time catchment from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme Boundary. This includes Southwold.

The base data used by NGET is outdated (2022) and the assessment is based on the Sea Link project in isolation, concluding that there are no anticipated significant adverse effects on local businesses, tourism or community facilities and consequently no mitigation measures are proposed. On the other hand, NGET assesses potential beneficial socio-economic effects, all be them minor, during construction in particular by generating jobs and increased workforce spend.

Southwold Specific Response

SZC and EA2 are already having a substantial impact and Sea Link would only add to the potential harm.

Southwold, very much like Aldeburgh and Thorpeness, is a coastal town whose economy and community well-being is highly dependent on tourism and visitor accessibility (90% of visitors are day trippers). Local employment, hospitality, retail and seasonal businesses rely on visitors who travel via a limited number of rural access roads (Southwold has only one road into town). Even modest congestion or journey-time uncertainty leads to measurable reductions in visitor numbers, especially outside peak season when local businesses depend on predictable access.

The A12 south from Blythburgh to Woodbridge is currently plagued by traffic management and closures related to SZC and SPR/EA2, and Sea Link and other consequential projects would only add to and extend the disruption. Traffic accidents are prevalent, travel times and routes are unpredictable, and HGV, abnormal loads and worker traffic are already placing a disproportionate strain on a wider fragile road network with no capacity for diversion or widening. These effects will inevitably discourage day visitors due to uncertainty of travel times, extended queues at pinch points and reduced reliability of travel during bank holidays, festivals and peak season months.

November 2025 footfall numbers produced by East Suffolk DC for Southwold show total footfall for the year to November has decreased by 5% based on the same period as last year. Anecdotal feedback from Southwold High Street retailers is that takings this year are markedly down and there have been a number of shop closures.

Taking data produced by Destination Research Ltd using the Cambridge Model for East Suffolk's visitor economy (there is no smaller regional breakdown), tourism value for 2024 was £743m and supported 15,500 jobs. Even modest declines translate into significant economic and employment losses concentrated in frontline sectors. A 5% decline results overall in £37.1m lost value and 775 job losses.

Southwold is disproportionately reliant on tourism with local economies dominated by hospitality, retail and accommodation sectors and businesses operating on tight seasonal margins, so a small percentage drop in visitor numbers will have magnified and long-lasting economic consequences to Southwold with businesses finding it hard to survive.

Tourism underpins local identity and vitality and any decline erodes social cohesion and cultural vitality. Residents are impacted taking local journeys south, blue light services are constrained, businesses struggle to recruit staff given the difficulty of commutes and higher wages on offer at the energy projects, skill-based labour (electricians, plumbers, construction workers) is being displaced, High Street shops are closing. The very fabric of Southwold as a vibrant seaside resort is under threat.

Request to ExA

Given all the above, STC respectfully requests the ExA:

1. Further tests NGET's assertion that Sea Link is needed at the current time.
2. Requires NGET to engage and address upfront the critical issues raised in SCC's and ESDC's LIRs.
3. Requires NGET to assess tourism-related economic harm within the 60 minute drive-time catchment area on a cumulative basis including consented NSIPs and energy projects with offered connections to the Friston sub-station e.g. Lion Link and Helios solar farm.
4. Requires NGET to carry out cumulative traffic modelling on the same basis and produce a robust, enforceable Construction Traffic Management Plan.
5. Requires economic mitigation for tourism-dependent towns if Sea Link is to be consented.

1LGR - Consultation questions – responses required separately on both submissions

Having considered the proposals at the links above, please respond to the following questions:

Question 1

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Question 2

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Question3

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Question 4

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Question 5

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Question 6

To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

Question 7

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Question 8

If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-7 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer.

You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Where a proposal includes a request that the Secretary of State modifies a proposal to achieve boundary change, you will be asked an additional question:

Question 9

This proposal is accompanied by a request that the Secretary of State considers boundary changes. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal sets out a strong public services and financial sustainability justification for boundary change?

Question 10

If you would like to, please use this free text box to explain your answer to question 9.

For each question, you can provide the following answers:

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree
- don't know

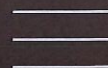
You will also be invited to explain your answers to questions 1 to 7 using a free text box at question 8. If a question on boundary change is included at question 9, you will be invited to explain your answer in a free text box at question 10.



**Suffolk³
to the *power*
of three**

(<https://threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org>)

Menu



Benefits for Town & Parish Councils

We know that Town and Parish councils are the closest tier of government to our communities. You are deeply rooted in local life, and uniquely positioned to understand and respond to the needs of residents. Three Councils in Suffolk will be able to work with Town and Parish Councils to address the needs of communities.

Plans are underway for Ipswich to have its own Town Council like the other towns in Suffolk. This will mean that the whole of Suffolk is represented by either a Town or Parish Council as well as a new unitary council.

Three Unitary Councils for Suffolk offers the best way to support and strengthen Town and Parish Councils:

01 | Closer Relationships, Greater Influence

Three unitary
councils
are not c



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of **three**

more accessible and responsive local unitary
councils will foster stronger relationships, ensuring local voices
shape decisions being made by unitary councils.

02 | <https://www.threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org/> Formal Inclusion in Governance

Three Councils For Suffolk creates clear, consistent pathways for engagement. Town and Parish councils will be recognised as essential partners.

03 | Empowering Neighbourhood Governance

Three councils can better tailor support, empower, and where wanted, transfer responsibilities in ways that reflect the unique character and capacity of each area.

04 | Localism in Action

This model enables localism to thrive. Where Town and Parish councils want to, they'll be supported to take on more roles, access resources, form new community networks and deliver services that matter most to their communities. But the locally focused approach of three unitary councils means that Town and Parish Councils won't be forced to take on additional responsibilities.

Will the Three Councils proposal save money?

Yes! Having three councils will save money compared to the current six councils, and it will also enable investment in services.



Menu

(<http://threecounties.suffolk.org>)

Savings in first 5 years:

£106 Million

This is an amalgamation of savings delivered through economies and efficiencies, use of technology, harmonising services etc.

Annual savings after 5 years:

£34 Million

These are the ongoing savings every year after the first five years. £20m of this could be reinvested in services.

Payback:

4.3 Years

The length of time it will take for the costs of change to be paid back by savings, and a "breakeven" point reached.



Menu

(<https://threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org>)

One off implementation cost: £39 Million

These are the costs of change e.g. novating legal contracts, programme management, bringing services together, procurement etc

Annual service investment: £20 million

The proposals ensure that there is sufficient resource to deliver service improvement e.g. making better use of technology.

We have worked closely with specialist accountants, **KPMG**, to analyse the current budgets for all six councils in Suffolk and the costs of change.

**Find out more about what Three Councils for Suffolk means for
you:**



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y & Community Sector

Menu

[forsuffolk.org/why-three-councils-for-statutory-and-community-sector/](https://threecouncilsfor-suffolk.org/why-three-councils-for-statutory-and-community-sector/))

(<https://threecouncilsfor-suffolk.org/>)

town & Parish Councils

(<https://threecouncilsfor-suffolk.org/why-three-councils-for-suffolk/town-and-parish-councils/>)

Three strong local voices.

+

Three local areas playing to their natural economic strengths.

+

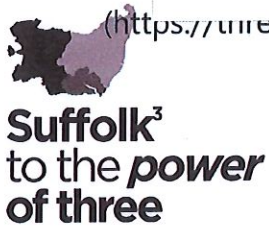
**Three
local strategies for investment where it's actually
needed.**

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That's Suffolk to the power of three.



Menu



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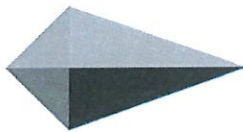
Contact us about the proposal(<https://threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org/contact-us/>)

Accessibility &
Privacy

(<https://threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org/accessibility-and-privacy/>)

Local Government
Reorganisation – Easy
Read

(<https://threecouncilsfor.suffolk.org/wp-content/uploads/Local-Government-Reorganisation-Easy-Read.docx>)



Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

It is a statutory requirement for every Local Education Authority (LEA) to appoint a SACRE to advise on religious education and to support curriculum reviews.

It is anticipated that 4 Councillors would be appointed to the SACRE and that the body would meet 3 times per year.

Corporate Parenting Board

A corporate parenting board provides a forum by which to: monitor the wellbeing of children looked after by the council; look strategically at the way children in care and care leavers are experiencing services; provide a forum to discuss issues; and a positive link with children in care councils and other forums.

It is anticipated that 6 Councillors would be appointed to the Corporate Parenting Board and that the Board would meet 4 times per year.

Governance of Shared Services

As is the case now, there is scope for some services to be shared with other Councils, and others may be hosted by one authority for others. For instance, the current very successful revenues partnerships (one of which is shared with parts of Cambridgeshire and Norfolk).

Where a shared arrangement is in place, Joint Committees (of Cabinet) will need to be established to provide governance for these arrangements.

Additional committees / Panels

Each Council will need Committees / Panels to appoint senior officers as well as to deal with disciplinary matters relating to senior officers (in line with the relevant JNC advice). The governance of pension funds will also require councillor input.

Where the council may be shareholders in more than one LATCO, a shareholder representative/group will be required involving the Leader and/or Cabinet members.

Consideration should be given to other working groups such as environment, Local Plan, treasury management, etc.

These are likely to be ad hoc rather than standing committees / panels but it is important that they are included within relevant constitutions. Each committee / panel should have no fewer than five members.

Additional arrangements for children's services

Councils may wish to discharge some Children's Services functions through Committees. Suffolk County Council has an Education Transport Appeals Committee.

Outside Bodies

The Council is likely to make appointments across a wide range of Outside Bodies, meaning that Councillors will be involved in a large number of organisations across the area, representing the interests of these within the Council and the Council's interests at the Outside Body. The time commitment varies by each outside body, and the nature of the appointments vary (some being simply observers and others being trustees) but there will be a significant commitment from Councillors involved in this partnership working. It is anticipated that each Councillor would be appointed to one or two Outside Bodies and that these would each take approximately 1 hour per month of their time.

Community Leadership

A large part of the role of every councillor is representing their own ward, including dealing with casework from constituents. The LGA's 2022 councillor census showed an average unitary councillor spent 7.6 hours a week engaging with constituents and 4.8 hours working with community groups. Council size is therefore important to ensure this workload is shared in a manageable way, and the widest range of people is able to consider standing for election.

Furthermore, as an area's population grows, so will casework. Whereas the number of councillors will not increase until the next electoral review, possibly well over 10 years' away. So future capacity in a rapidly growing area should also be considered.

Each of the new councils will need to reflect on this aspect carefully in reaching a final view on council size, including the support given to councillors in their ward roles.

In terms of direct impact on creating capacity in governance models for community representation, the following would need to be taken into account on top of casework from individual constituents:

Neighbourhood/Area Governance

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill will introduce a requirement on English local authorities to establish neighbourhood governance mechanisms. Regulations around these arrangements are awaited but it is likely that this will represent a significant time commitment for Councillors. Anecdotal evidence from Ipswich's previous Area Committee model and other area governance models suggests an average demand on Councillors time of around 3 hours per month.

Parish & Town Council/Community Group liaison

Neighbourhood governance may create new models for engagement but ward members will still need to interact directly with parish and town councils and/or residents' or community associations/forums. This direct engagement is a key characteristic of local government in most parts of Suffolk today.

While new models of engagement might be required in rural wards (some parts of the country have adopted ward member engagement with clusters of parishes) there will always be a need for direct interaction and this is still likely to equate to several hours a month for each councillor, usually in the evening.

In addition, we know from the input of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils to the LGR process that the town and parish council sector is keen to see a new enhanced role for itself, working with the new unitary councils. They have asked for a range of collaboration initiatives, including:

- A Suffolk Charter: A binding agreement outlining mutual responsibilities, expectations, and procedures—regularly reviewed to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- Parish Liaison Officers: Dedicated roles within the new authority structure, supported by senior community development officers (as seen in North Yorkshire)
- Community Networks: Two-way communication channels enabling clustering of councils to:
 - Monitor service quality.
 - Consult residents and escalate issues.
 - Support local partnerships.
 - Develop community-led projects and funding bids.

APPENDIX

6

- Focus Groups: Representative samples of parishes and towns to co-design improvements in areas such as communication, highways, and emergency planning.
- Regular Engagement: Scheduled meetings between Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), lead councils, and parish meetings to maintain dialogue and alignment.

This new approach is likely to increase the current levels of engagement and add to the requirement on council size.

Baseline council size

The governance model above suggests that there is a need to allow for up to 10 Councillors to form each Council's Cabinet. Given the demanding role of Cabinet members, it is assumed that these Councillors will generally not be members of other committees.

There are then around 80 'main' committee places to fill, excluding employment committees and an Education Transport Appeals Committee plus joint arrangements which would be allocated to members of Cabinet, and specific local requirements. Even if it was assumed that each Councillor not on Cabinet will sit on two 'main' Committees, this will require a further 40 Councillors.

Finally, an allowance needs to be made for effectively managing the governance requirements outlined above, which will be in addition to populating Cabinet and the 'main' committees. As a baseline, this allowance is suggested to be 10 Councillors in each council. This extra capacity will allow some flexibility and specialism in committee memberships, and the fairer allocation of other councillor roles, such as sitting on boards. For instance, recognising the particular burden placed on regulatory committee members compared to other committees.

In summary, our proposal to test in later stages of the review is that **60 Councillors** is the minimum requirement for council size in each of the three new councils, before taking into account specific local factors and emerging national views on how regulatory and other functions are organised. A council of this minimum size is also best placed to be able to organise its business in a way that attracts the widest range of people to stand for public office.

NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNANCE AND EMPOWERMENT MODEL – THREE UNITARY COUNCIL APPROACH

Principles of neighbourhood working in Suffolk

New councils will adopt key principles (as set out in the main Case for Change) in the design of the appropriate neighbourhood governance structures and embed an early help and prevention model to reduce demand on statutory services. Councils will achieve this by listening to all of their residents, ensuring those from marginal groups or deprived communities are heard, and build on the assets and infrastructure in that community that meet local need. This will build on pre reorganisation relationships with residents and local groups to be able to embed this in a swift and meaningful way.

Working with what exists

The new councils will need to consider what can be usefully and successfully transferred from existing pre-LGR neighbourhood models. For example, where an area has a strong, active and inclusive existing structure which can serve the function of engagement with new councils well, then it is likely that this will be adopted as the foundation of the model for a new council.

Inclusive participation by default

No matter what the model of empowerment, ways to engage residents will reflect accessibility and inclusivity. This will mean mixing in-person and online to maximise participation, where using digital means ensuring they are accessible, working with residents with specific access needs to best understand how to design options. New councils will ensure that all voices are heard, proactively seeking those who don't or can't come to the council, to ensure all communities are represented in all forms of dialogue and co-design, as well as decision making. One way of doing this is working through elected members, local frontline staff or community champions who are working with these residents, ensuring that contacts with residents in their homes and communities are optimised and 'Making Every Contact Count'.

Widening audiences and partnerships

In designing ways to involve residents meaningfully on key topics, the new authorities will ensure they understand the different audiences and appropriate routes to engage them. New councils will want local people identifying local problems and identifying the local solutions that will work in their own community.

This may include working through local VCFSE organisations, working with local anchor organisations or businesses, or youth organisations to ensure all voices are heard, and that those with the most investment (i.e. the most to lose or to gain) are actively encouraged to participate. It remains important however not to see organisations as a proxy for residents, and councils will need to engage directly with their residents.



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Benefits for Residents

Three Councils for Suffolk will:

- Be simpler, more clearly accountable and provide greater value for money
- Make decisions more quickly, focusing on meeting the needs of different towns and villages
- Provide local people with more direct access to officers and councillors
- Deliver high quality services with a local focus, investing finances and resources on the things that really matter
- Be local, accountable and responsive, not distant and detached
- Listen to residents' needs and ensure their voices are heard



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Town & Parish Councils

(<https://threecouncilsfor-suffolk.org/why-three-councils-for-suffolk/town-and-parish-councils/>)

Three strong local voices.



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Menu

Local areas playing to their natural economic strengths.



**Three
local strategies for investment where it's actually
needed.**



That's Suffolk to the power of three.



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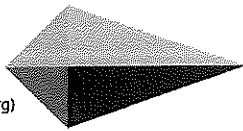
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Menu



Smarter Simpler Better One Suffolk

Town and parish council summary

Suffolk and proud

Suffolk is a place that we are proud to call home. It's a historic county with understated charm and character. But it's also a place that's on the cutting edge of technology and industry.

Suffolk is diverse and vibrant – an exciting mix of larger urban areas, market towns, coastal communities and rural villages. Its people come from all walks of life. Yet despite this variety, we have a single, strong and binding sense of identity and belonging. This is evident in things like Suffolk Day, the Suffolk Show, the University of Suffolk, Suffolk-wide local media and the good old Suffolk Trinity (comprising the Suffolk Punch horse, the Redpoll bull and the Suffolk Sheep). There is even a Suffolk way of saying things that lives on through the ages – the blockbuster film “The Dig” had this in spades!

We're home to nationally and internationally significant businesses,

from clean energy, ports and logistics, digital technology, advanced manufacturing, the horseracing industry and tourism - not to mention some of the best food and drink you can buy. Farming in Suffolk is deeply woven into our local economy and lives.

Together, Suffolk is one of only a few areas in the UK that has consistently been a net financial contributor to national wealth and prosperity.

Suffolk is home to a network of 372 town and parish councils and 56 parish meetings. These local bodies form the bedrock of community democracy – giving residents a voice, shaping local priorities and driving grassroots action. However, many councils have told us they feel undervalued and overlooked, rather than recognised for the vital work they do. That must change. We need a strong, respectful partnership that can deliver together.

Suffolk is a truly special place. It deserves the best support we can give it, so it can fulfil its true potential. That's where local government reorganisation comes in.

Local government reorganisation

LGR means completely scrapping the existing district, borough and county councils (this includes Suffolk County Council) and replacing them with one new organisation, complete with a fresh structure, culture, less bureaucracy and better ways of working. It would be a completely new start – an opportunity to reset and take the best bits from the current councils whilst getting rid of the bits that don't work well for town and parish councils and, through them, residents.



Market Hill in Sudbury

The big benefits of One Suffolk

One Suffolk will not only be smarter, simpler and better, it will also offer greater financial resilience, sustainability and be connected to and reflective of the communities it serves.

This is a rare opportunity to bring together those services that make a real difference to Suffolk's people, places and businesses. Key services, such as planning, parking, transport, environmental health, licensing and economic development are better delivered in a more efficient and streamlined way.

This will help to create safer, cleaner and more attractive environments for businesses to thrive and residents and visitors to enjoy.

There are many tangible benefits to **One Suffolk**, but these are some of the most significant:

Communities empowered to lead

One Suffolk will empower communities by offering more powers such as setting speed limits, grass and verge cutting and planning. Where councils want to do more, and feel they can make more of a difference, **One Suffolk** stands ready to support them. This will be achieved through partnership working, supported by 16 new area committees – as successfully rolled out in Wiltshire. These committees will bring together councillors from the new council, town and parish councils, residents and groups like charities and businesses. Their job is to assess what matters most in each area – things like roads, planning, safety and employment – and make sure local voices are heard. For town and parish councils, this means having a stronger voice, with tangible decision-making and funding powers and greater opportunity to



An aerial view of Framlingham Castle

work together with others to improve their community.

Easy to access, locally based, named staff that work face to face is key - especially in areas like highways where relations and trust need to be built and maintained. This will give a voice to communities with clearer accountability, stronger local leadership and more responsive service design.

A proactive highways service

The savings **One Suffolk** creates means we can revitalise Suffolk's highways service so it can say “yes” more often – acting swiftly, communicating clearly and delivering results. It needs a senior leadership team that is committed to being visible, respectful and accessible – engaging openly with businesses and communities to drive progress together. **One Suffolk** will be a responsive community partner that wants to get things done right first time.

Unified, consistent and locally shaped planning

Suffolk would be better served by having a single and unified planning framework that delivers greater consistency, efficiency and strategic alignment. Parish councils told us during our initial engagement sessions that they wanted more say and control over local planning decisions. We will deliver this with new powers for Town and Parish councils including the devolution of minor development control functions over things like house extensions and minor changes to existing buildings. This reform will be guided by evidence, shaped by local engagement and implemented with care to preserve community identity and local knowledge. The goal is to build a planning system, including local planning committees with councillors who know the area, that is not only faster and more consistent but also smarter, more responsive and better aligned with Suffolk's long-term ambitions.

£40 million new deal for market towns

Our market towns are among the jewels in the crown of Suffolk, but high streets nationally are struggling and need help. To drive local economic growth, we propose our market towns – from the smallest to the biggest – have access to a £40 million capital investment fund. Working in consultation with traders, businesses and representative organisations, a review of car parking and town centre markets across the county would be held. **One Suffolk** will focus on local economic priorities identified by local communities. Our residents’ survey was clear that access to towns, bars, restaurants, shopping and retail is important.

Low Council Tax and more financial resilience

Improved financial strength will enable the new unitary council to free up public money for frontline services – like highways and bin collection – and keeping Council Tax as low as possible. We know that people who live in Suffolk will want to see and feel improvements from day one of the new authority. That’s why our plan is for all the different Council Tax rates to be harmonised to the lowest current level in Suffolk (this is the Mid Suffolk area) in its first year. Based on band D homes, this would put back in your pockets between £17 and £245 a year.

A modern, tech-driven innovative council

One Suffolk will mirror businesses in the county – using technology and innovation to save money and prepare for future challenges. This approach will make best use of staff, improve accessibility and support informed decision-making around council finances and resources. This frees up

our staff to spend more time working directly with you – how a council should work.

A resilient and growing local economy

Suffolk needs a strong, flourishing and resilient local economy that serves all residents, businesses and communities. To achieve this, planning, housing, transport, environmental health, licensing and economic development need to work together better. **One Suffolk** will ensure these are delivered in a more efficient and joined-up way, making it easier for businesses and entrepreneurs. A centralised economic development team will champion local enterprise, attract investment, promote tourism and work proactively with partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts and Destination Management Organisations.



Playground at Clare Country Park

A strong voice for Suffolk and its future

Soon, Suffolk and Norfolk will have a new mayor, so Suffolk will be better served by a strong and unified voice to speak up for the county. By working closely with the mayor, **One Suffolk** will also ensure that Suffolk’s diverse communities and areas are celebrated and that investment is strategically directed to enhance connectivity between places, people and businesses. This partnership will focus on identifying clear investment priorities that maximise the benefits of devolution. This transformation is not simply about structural change; it is about unlocking the full potential of Suffolk so that businesses and residents can benefit. **One Suffolk** is committed to collaborating with residents, businesses and stakeholders to ensure that the county remains vibrant, sustainable and fit for the future.

A new approach grounded in partnership

The **One Suffolk** plan is built on a truly collaborative relationship with town and parish councils. Our proposed new model of governance will recognise the diversity of councils across Suffolk – some well-established and experienced, others still developing – and will offer tailored support accordingly.

This new relationship won’t be distant or imposed, nor ad hoc or infrequent. Instead, it will be based on genuine partnership, face-to-face and with ongoing dialogue and flexible support that reflects the ambitions and capacity of each council.

Our commitments to you

We have developed a bespoke support package to empower town and parish councils, which includes:

- a **Partnership Charter**, formally recognising the role of local councils and creating a new level of respect for them, their voice and their experiences in local decision-making.
- **bespoke training** for councillors and clerks on relevant topics – for example safeguarding, AI, and data security
- **technical and digital** support, including help with website

development to standardise how information is shared with the public

- **guidance on funding**, including how to find and apply for grants
- **direct access** by phone and email to dedicated town, parish and locality team contacts
- the right to request **officer attendance** at local meetings
- access to **shared services**, including favourable rates for printing, catering, IT procurement and more.

We also propose a new town council for Ipswich to provide the same level of local representation as the rest of Suffolk, while ensuring retention of our county town’s historic identity and civic heritage.

Opportunities for more influence and responsibility

Many councils also expressed interest in taking on more influence and responsibility, where appropriate. In response to feedback, including from SALC, we have developed an initial list of services and assets that could be devolved to councils with the desire to do more. This will be a completely voluntary process.



Houses in Needham Market

Assets	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cemeteries and church yards• Memorials• Crematoria• Public toilets• Local parks• Open spaces• Sports grounds• Swimming pools• Leisure and arts centres• Play areas• Roadside verges and other small open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor highways functions and public rights of way• (e.g. speed limits, gritting)• Minor development control functions• Soft estate (e.g. grass cutting and weeds)• Fly-tipping clearance• Street cleaning• Community transport• Community safety• Neighbourhood watch• Footpath lighting• Community grants• Isolation/volunteering/befriending initiatives• Partnering in local tourism initiatives• Partnering in local climate change initiatives• Street naming• Licensing (e.g. event notices, street trading)

A proposal shaped by town and parish councils

The **One Suffolk** proposal has been developed following the most extensive resident and stakeholder engagement Suffolk County Council has delivered in the past decade. This included two public surveys (one of which received 8,189 responses from across every part of the county), over 60 face-to-face and online events with town and parish councils, voluntary and community groups, businesses and residents all fed into our proposal.

One of the most significant findings from this work is how much people identify with being from Suffolk, the importance of meeting local needs and support for streamlining public services.



A street in Aldeburgh

Your feedback has shaped this approach. Through widespread face-to-face and online engagement events, we heard concerns about:

- loss of local representation and knowledge due to fewer councillors (reduction from 308 county and district councillors to 140 under **One Suffolk**)
- urban priorities overshadowing rural voices
- poor communication with county and district councils and a desire for more direct, face-to-face engagement
- a bureaucratic and unresponsive planning system that often ignores town and parish input
- parish councils feeling under-

- resourced and fear that LGR will increase responsibilities without adequate support
- how savings will be used and whether Council Tax harmonisation will be fair
- centralisation of services and loss of local access.

Each of these concerns has directly influenced the design of the **One Suffolk** model, and our commitment is to continue listening and talking as it evolves.

Our business case has support from people across Suffolk, including leaders in the NHS, business and culture sectors. You can pledge your support too at www.onesuffolkcouncil.co.uk

The most detailed, realistic and local plan

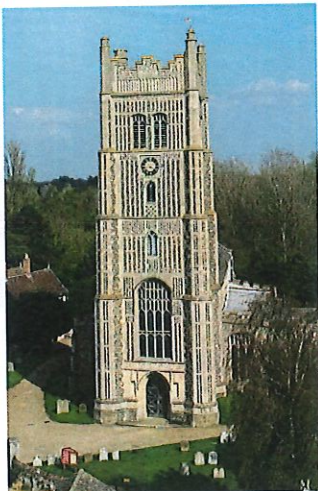
To create the best and most realistic plan, we've used up-to-date, Suffolk-specific local information and data – like council budgets, population figures and staffing costs. Everything has been thoroughly checked and double-checked – with support from experts from professional service firm Grant Thornton.

We have made a conscious decision to be cautious when predicting how much money can be saved, because we don't want to over-promise and under-deliver, as has been the case elsewhere in the country when they have gone through this process. For example, when we've modelled possible savings, rather than looking at

what LGR plans from other parts of the country promised, we looked at what they actually achieved. Real life, real understanding, real outcomes for residents.

Saving taxpayers' money

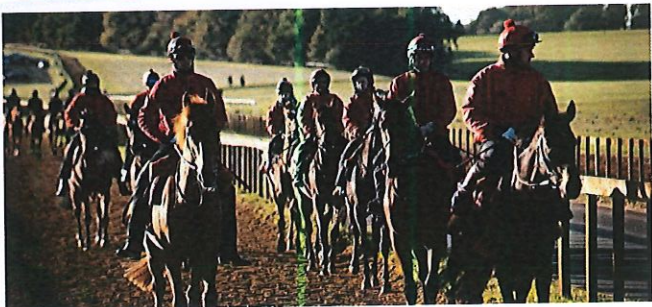
Our detailed analysis of local data, using real life examples from elsewhere in the country, shows that having one council will **save £78.2 million** in the first five years and **£39.4 million** each year thereafter. In contrast, setting up three councils would cost an additional **£145.3 million** in the first five years. In short, it would be cheaper to stay as we are than move to having three councils!



Eye Church

Table 01: Summary of costs and savings from three options: local government reorganisation in Suffolk

	One unitary council (£m)	Two unitary councils (£m)	Three unitary councils (£m)
Total annual benefit	£39.7m	£21.1m	£14.3m
Five-year break up costs	£0	-£67.6m	-£135.2m
Savings in first five years	£78.2m	-£48.0m	-£145.3m
Annual savings after five years	£39.4m	£7.3m	-£13.1m



Racehorse training in Newmarket

Three councils, same old story

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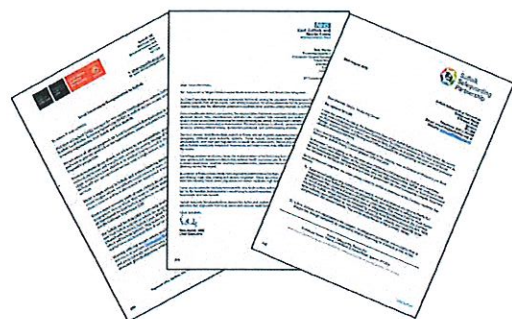
We firmly believe that their business case lacks robust evidence.



Two ladies looking out to sea in Felixstowe

Support for One Suffolk

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More information and next steps

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The government is now considering the plan and will decide whether or not to include it in a public consultation in the coming months. We hope you will take part when the time comes.

If you want to keep up to date on **One Suffolk** and the government's consultation, you can subscribe to our fortnightly newsletter at www.onesuffolkcouncil.co.uk/newsletter

Smarter Simpler Better One Suffolk



Residents' Summary



Suffolk and proud

Suffolk is a place that we are proud to call home. It's a historic county with understated charm and character. But it's also a place that's on the cutting edge of technology and industry.

Suffolk is diverse and vibrant – an exciting mix of larger urban areas, market towns, coastal communities and rural villages. Its people come from all walks of life. Yet despite this variety, we have a single, strong and binding sense of identity and belonging. This is evident in things like Suffolk Day, the Suffolk Show, the

University of Suffolk, Suffolk-wide local media and the good old Suffolk Trinity (comprising the Suffolk Punch horse, the Redpoll bull and the Suffolk Sheep). There is even a Suffolk way of saying things that lives on through the ages – the blockbuster film "The Dig" had this in spades!

We're home to nationally and internationally significant businesses, from clean energy, ports and logistics, digital technology, advanced manufacturing, the horseracing industry and tourism - not to mention

some of the best food and drink you can buy. Farming in Suffolk is deeply woven into our local economy and lives.

Together, Suffolk is one of only a few areas in the UK that has consistently been a net financial contributor to national wealth and prosperity.

Suffolk is a truly special place. It deserves the best support we can give it, so it can fulfil its true potential. That's where local government reorganisation comes in.



An aerial view of Framlingham Castle



Racehorse training in Newmarket

Local government reorganisation

The government wants to simplify how councils operate in Suffolk – a process called local government reorganisation (LGR). It's a chance to fix the things that frustrate residents and communities about local councils.

Currently, there are six councils: a county council, four districts and a borough. This structure has been in place for more than 50 years. Until now.

One Suffolk is a proposal for bold and positive change: to bring all six councils together into a single new council, delivering all local and county-wide services. This will be smarter, simpler and better for Suffolk – and will save millions of pounds which can be reinvested in public services and keeping council tax as low as possible.

Out with the old, in with the new

This would mean completely scrapping all the existing councils (including

Suffolk County Council) and replacing them with one new organisation, complete with a fresh structure, culture, less bureaucracy and better ways of working. It would be a completely new start – an opportunity to reset and take the best bits from the current councils whilst getting rid of the bits that don't work well for residents.

The big benefits of One Suffolk

One Suffolk will not only be smarter, simpler and better, it will also offer greater financial resilience, sustainability and be connected to and reflective of the communities it serves.

This is a rare opportunity to bring together those services that make a real difference to Suffolk's people, places and businesses. Key services, such as planning, parking, transport, environmental health, licensing and economic development are better delivered in a more strategic, efficient and integrated way.

This will help to create safer, cleaner and more attractive environments for businesses to thrive and residents and visitors to enjoy.

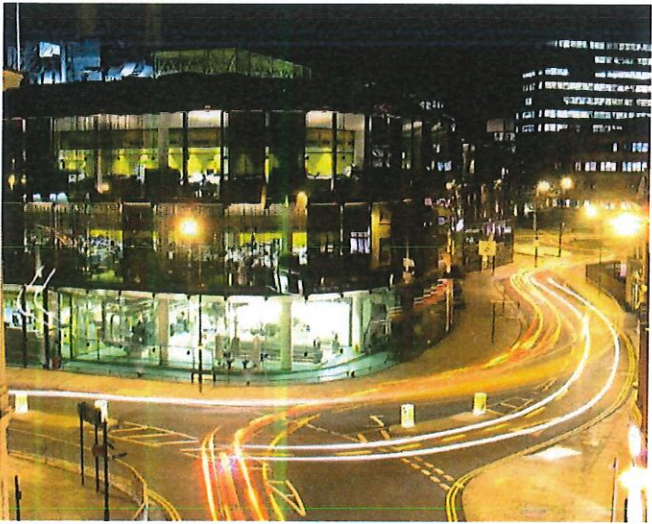
There are many tangible benefits to One Suffolk, but these are some of the most significant:

Low Council Tax and more financial resilience

Improved financial strength will enable the new unitary council to free up public money for frontline services – like highways and bin collection – and keeping Council Tax as low as possible. We know that people who live in Suffolk will want to see and feel improvements from day one of the new authority. That's why our plan is for all the different Council Tax rates to be harmonised to the lowest current level in Suffolk (this is the Mid Suffolk area) in its first year. Based on band D homes, this would put back in your pockets between £17 and £245 a year.

£40 million new deal for market towns

Our market towns are among the jewels in the crown of Suffolk, but high streets nationally are struggling and need help. To drive local economic growth, we propose our market towns – from the smallest to the biggest –



The Willis Building in Ipswich at night

have access to a £40 million capital investment fund. Working in consultation with traders, businesses and representative organisations, a review of car parking and town centre markets across the county would be held. One Suffolk will focus on local economic priorities identified by local communities. Our residents' survey was clear that access to towns, bars, restaurants, shopping and retail is important.

Communities empowered to lead

One Suffolk will empower communities by offering powers and funding to town and parish councils, where these councils want to do more and feel they can make a difference. New powers could include making decisions on minor planning applications, naming streets and making decisions about local speed limits. This will be achieved through partnership working, supported by 16 new area committees – as successfully

rolled out in Wiltshire. Easy to access, locally based, named staff that work face-to-face is key - especially in areas like highways where relations and trust need to be built and maintained. This will give a voice to communities with clearer accountability, stronger local leadership and more responsive service design.

A proactive highways service

Freed up money means we can revitalise Suffolk's highways service so it can say "yes" more often – acting swiftly, communicating clearly and delivering results. It needs a senior leadership team that is committed to being visible, respectful and accessible – engaging openly with businesses and communities to drive progress together. One Suffolk will be a responsive community partner that wants to get things done right first time.

Unified, consistent and locally shaped planning

Suffolk would be better served by having a single and unified planning framework that delivers greater consistency, efficiency and strategic alignment. This reform will be guided by evidence, shaped by local engagement and implemented with care to preserve community identity and local knowledge. The goal is to build a planning system, including local planning committees with councillors who know the area, that is not only faster and more consistent but also smarter, more responsive and better aligned with Suffolk's long-term ambitions.

A modern, tech-driven innovative council

One Suffolk will mirror businesses in the county – using technology and innovation to save money and prepare for future challenges. This would include making use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to predict and address the needs of the community more effectively. This

approach will make best use of staff, improve accessibility and support informed decision-making around council finances and resources. This frees up our staff to spend more time working directly with you – how a council should work.

A resilient and growing local economy

Suffolk needs a strong, flourishing and resilient local economy that serves all residents, businesses and communities. To achieve this, planning, housing, transport, environmental health, licensing and economic development need to work together better. One Suffolk will ensure these are delivered in a more efficient and joined-up way, making it easier for businesses and entrepreneurs. A centralised economic development team will champion local enterprise, attract investment, promote tourism and work proactively with partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts and Destination Management Organisations.

A strong voice for Suffolk and its future

Soon, Suffolk and Norfolk will have a new mayor, so Suffolk will be better served by a strong and unified voice to speak up for the county. By working closely with the mayor, One Suffolk will also ensure that Suffolk's diverse communities and areas are celebrated and that investment is strategically directed to enhance connectivity between places, people and businesses. This partnership will focus on identifying clear investment priorities that maximise the benefits of devolution. This transformation is not simply about structural change; it is about unlocking the full potential of Suffolk so that businesses and residents can benefit. One Suffolk is committed to collaborating with residents, businesses and stakeholders to ensure that the county remains vibrant, sustainable and fit for the future.



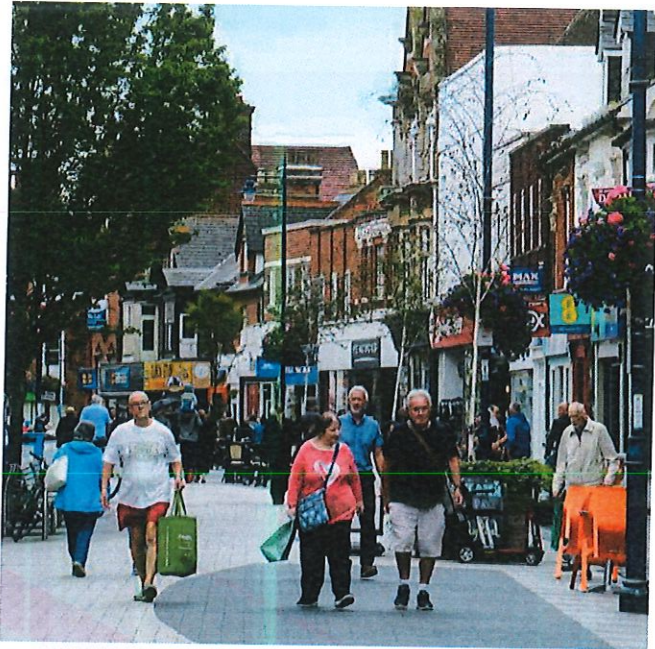
Looking through the Abbey Gate in Abbey Gardens, towards Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds

A proposal shaped by people like you

The **One Suffolk** proposal has been developed following the most extensive resident and stakeholder engagement Suffolk County Council has delivered in the past decade. This included two public surveys (one of which received 8,189 responses from across every part of the county), over 60 face-to-face and online events with town and parish councils, voluntary and community groups, businesses and residents all fed into our proposal.

One of the most significant findings from this work is how much people identify with being from Suffolk, the importance of meeting local needs and support for streamlining public services.

Our business case has support from people across Suffolk, including leaders in the NHS, business and culture sectors. You can pledge your support too at www.onesuffolkcouncil.co.uk



Shoppers in Felixstowe High Street

The most detailed, realistic and local plan

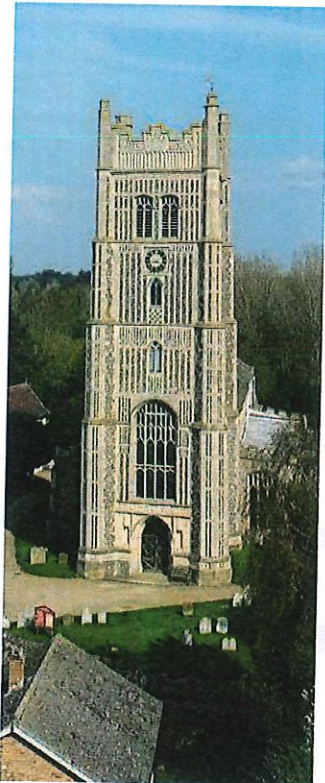
To create the best and most realistic plan, we've used up-to-date, Suffolk-specific local information and data – like council budgets, population figures and staffing costs. Everything has been thoroughly checked and double-checked – with support from experts from professional service firm Grant Thornton.

We've made a conscious decision to be cautious when predicting how much money can be saved, because we don't want to over-promise and under-deliver, as has been the case elsewhere in the country when they have gone through this process. For example, when we've modelled possible savings, rather than looking at

what LGR plans from other parts of the country promised, we looked at what they actually achieved. Real life, real understanding, real outcomes for residents.

Saving taxpayers' money

Our detailed analysis of local data, using real life examples from elsewhere in the country, shows that having one council will **save** £78.2 million in the first five years and £39.4 million each year thereafter. In contrast, setting up three councils would cost an additional £145.3 million in the first five years. In short, it would be cheaper to stay as we are than move to having three councils!



Eye Church

Table 01: Summary of costs and savings from three options local government reorganisation in Suffolk

	One unitary council (£m)	Two unitary councils (£m)	Three unitary councils (£m)
Total annual benefit	£39.7m	£21.1m	£14.3m
Five-year break up costs		-£67.6m	-£135.2m
Savings in first five years	£78.2m	-£48.0m	-£145.3m
Annual savings after five years	£39.4m	£7.3m	-£13.1m



The Gull Wing Bridge in Lowestoft

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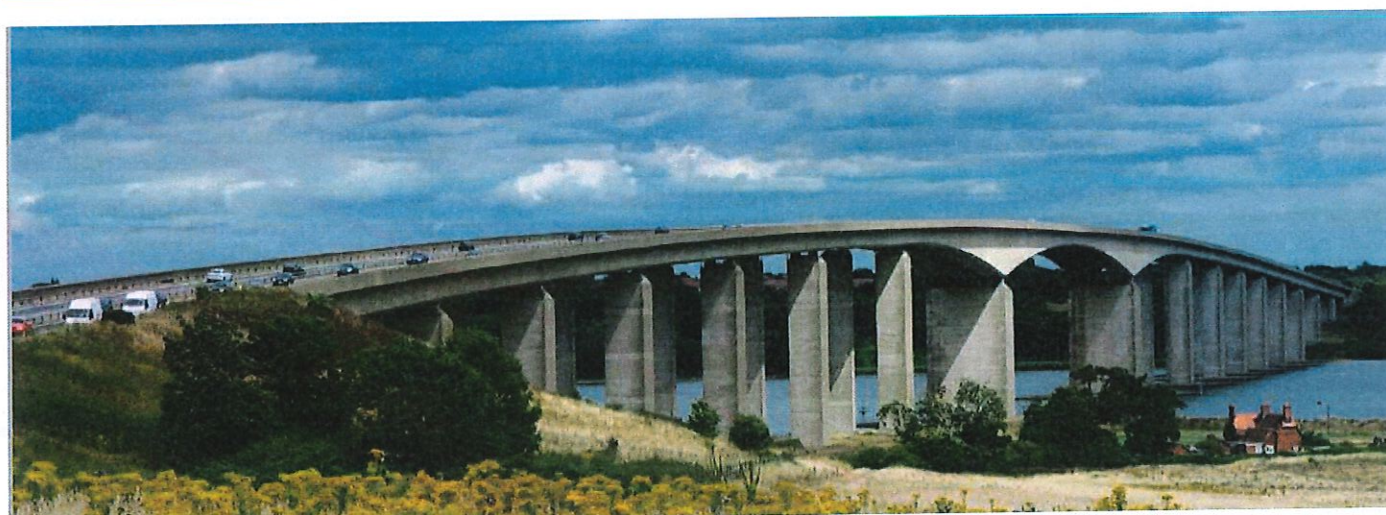
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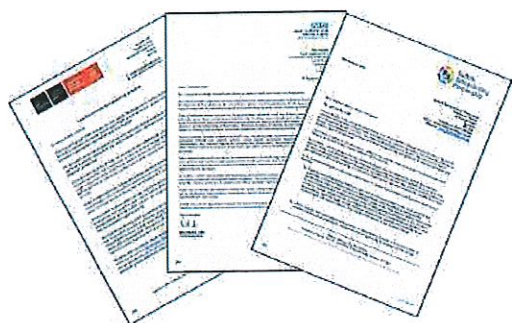
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Notes from the FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE meeting Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 9 am at the Town Hall.

Present Cllrs; Flunder, Davy, Goldsmith, Jarvis ((Chair)

Apologies: Nil

Declarations of interest: Nil

Matters from the public on matters relating to matters on the agenda. Nil

Minutes of the November meeting – Approved

To Review management accounts to 30th November 2025 . See supporting papers
Cttee reviewed the EV chargers income/ expenditure. Approx. £5k surplus has been retained to date.

To review the balance sheet and to approve reconciliations to 30th November 2025.
Approved

To review Reserves – Noted

Investment – CCLA – no withdrawal required.

Budget 2026.2027 – Timescales

Informal meeting – to consider draft budget 8th Jan 2026 at 6.30pm
Full council 13th Jan 2026. Precept setting – 13th Jan 2026.

Year End 2025 -2026 – arrangements are already underway for accounts close at year end.

Quotes to consider; replica chain £14k. To be considered within budget setting.

Updated Donation Policy - recommend full council to approve.

Terms of Reference of Committees – recommend updated Roads cttee T of R be approved.

Insurance Policy – 2026 review taking place with broker this week.

Devolution - No longer taking place

LGR - Response to LGR consultation – Councillors to respond individually and Full council to consider whether a response will be submitted from STC.

Updated Donation Policy - recommend full council to approve.

Terms of Reference of Committees – recommend updated Roads cttee T of R be approved.

Roads & Sustainable Travel Committee – Updated Terms of Reference

Reviewed Nov 2025

1. Purpose

The Roads & Sustainable Travel Committee is a standing committee of the Town Council responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and advising on matters relating to highways, traffic management, footpaths, public lighting, transport, and sustainable travel initiatives. The Committee works collaboratively with statutory authorities and stakeholders to ensure safe, accessible, and well-maintained routes and travel infrastructure throughout the town.

2. Meetings

- The Committee shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently if required.
 - Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair or Town Clerk when urgent matters arise.
-

3. Delegated Powers

- The Committee has no delegated powers unless expressly granted by Full Council.
 - Recommendations shall be referred to Full Council for approval.
-

4. Membership

- Up to 5 councillors, appointed and reviewed annually at the Annual Council Meeting.
 - Quorum: 3 members.
-

5. Public Attendance

- Meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.
 - Public participation is permitted at the Chair's discretion, in line with Standing Orders.
-

6. Advisory Members

The Committee may invite or appoint non-voting advisory members to provide specialist expertise, including but not limited to:

- Suffolk County Council (Highways, Rights of Way, Lighting)
 - East Suffolk Council (Civil Parking Enforcement)
 - Suffolk Police (traffic and enforcement matters)
 - Local ward councillors
 - Representatives from transport or mobility organisations
 - Southwold Common Trust (where relevant)
-

7. Chairmanship

- At the first meeting following the Annual Council Meeting, members shall elect a Chair for a one-year term.
-

8. Term of Office

- Councillor appointments run for four years, aligned with the electoral cycle, unless otherwise determined by Council.
-

9. Committee Responsibilities

9.1 Highways & Traffic Management

- Consider waiting restrictions, speed limits, traffic orders, and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
- Review and make recommendations on the above, as well as on highways repair, maintenance, and improvements.
- Liaise with Suffolk County Council Highways on signage, lines, road layout, road safety, and infrastructure changes.
- Monitor heavy vehicle movements and advise on mitigation in line with the Town Strategy.
- Comment on directional signage and traffic routing proposals.

9.2 Footpaths, Rights of Way & Cycleways

- Review and make recommendations to SCC on repair, maintenance, and improvement of footpaths, pavements, and bridleways.
- Liaise with SCC Rights of Way officers regarding public access routes.

- Promote cycling infrastructure and active travel improvements, including projects funded through national or local schemes.

9.3 Public Lighting

- Refer to SCC any concerns re maintenance, management, and improvement of public lighting.

9.4 Parking & Enforcement

- Work with East Suffolk Council on Civil Parking Enforcement matters.
- Comment on and support Residents Parking Schemes and permit schemes where applicable.
- Consider town-wide parking management in line with the Town Strategy.
- Liaise with Suffolk Police on traffic enforcement issues.

9.5 Sustainable Transport & Mobility

- Consider matters relating to any local transport initiatives.
- Support development of walking trails and sustainable mobility routes.
- Advise on EV charging provision.
- Monitor and contribute to initiatives such as the Rural Mobility Fund.

9.6 Other Matters

- Consider any transport, traffic, or highway-related matters referred by the Town Council.
- Consider the ESC Licensing applications for street trading and table/ chairs on pavements.
- Work collaboratively with statutory bodies, partners, and community stakeholders.

10. Review

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed regularly and in line with NALC guidance.

Southwold Town Council

Donations & Community Grant Policy updated Dec 2025

Southwold Town Council budgets annually to support organisations whose work delivers measurable benefit to residents in the Town of Southwold. Funding is primarily intended for capital expenditure, community activities, and special projects, although support for operating costs may be considered in exceptional cases where strong justification is provided.

Eligibility & Application Rules

1. Applications will only be accepted from **formally constituted, non-profit, voluntary or charitable organisations**.
Applications from individuals or informal groups are not eligible.
 2. Applicant organisations must operate for the benefit of **residents within the Town of Southwold**, or clearly demonstrate substantial local impact.
 3. Applicants must demonstrate a **financial contribution or in-kind support from their own resources**, unless exempted by the Town Council on the basis of project need.
 4. Organisations may normally receive funding for **one project per financial year**, although additional awards may be granted at the discretion of the Council.
 5. Grants must not be used to support:
 - Private/business profit-making activities
 - Political organisations or campaigning activity
 - Religious worship activities (although faith-based community projects *are* eligible if non-proselytising)
-

Funding Decisions & Conditions

6. All funding amounts are awarded at the **Council's discretion**, based on budget availability and community benefit.
7. The Council may apply conditions to any award, including reporting requirements, recognition of support, or spending restrictions.
8. Successful applicants will be required to:
 - Provide evidence of how funds were spent (if requested)
 - Submit a short impact statement or report within 6 months of project completion
 - Acknowledge Southwold Town Council support in publicity where appropriate
9. Organisations that fail to:
 - Complete the funded project, **or**
 - Comply with award conditions, **or**
 - Use funds for purposes other than those approvedshall be required to **return funds in full or in part**, at the Council's discretion.

10. The Council reserves the right to recover funds that are: Unspent, misapplied, or irrecoverably unaccounted for.
 11. All decisions made by Southwold Town Council relating to grants, donations, or awards are **final and not subject to appeal**.
-

Application Requirements

12. Applications must be submitted:
 - **In writing**, addressed to the Town Clerk, (Townclerk@southwoldtowncouncil.com) and accompanied by a completed application form.
 13. Supporting documents must include, where applicable:
 - Latest available accounts (audited if required by governing rules)
 - A breakdown of project costs
 - Evidence of match funding or in-kind contribution
 - Details of any other funding partnerships
 14. If accounts are **not provided**, applications may be declined unless the Town Council confirms they are not required for that applicant type.
 15. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk before submission where guidance is needed. Townclerk@southwoldtowncouncil.com
-

Transparency

16. Grant awards will be recorded in Council minutes and published in accordance with the Council's transparency obligations.

1. Purpose & Budget Allocation

- The Council will allocate an **annual Donations/Grants budget**. This represents a **maximum total fund** available for that financial year; there is no guarantee of full expenditure.
- Grant applications will be considered by Council (or a relevant Committee) at **regular intervals** (e.g. quarterly). Urgent applications may be accepted outside the normal schedule if clearly marked as such.
- The Council may set a **maximum “normal” grant amount per application** (for example, aligning with practices like a £1,000 guideline), though smaller or larger awards may be made at discretion depending on need and match funding.

2. Who May Apply

- Applications are restricted to **formally constituted, non-profit, voluntary or charitable organisations** (local clubs, charities, associations, community groups).
- Organisations must **benefit residents of Southwold**, or clearly demonstrate substantial local impact.
- Local branches of regional or national charities/clubs may apply, *provided* the grant is intended solely for work benefitting Southwold residents.
- Statutory bodies, for-profit businesses, private individuals or organisations intended to benefit private property will not normally be eligible.

3. Application Requirements

Applicants must submit:

- A copy of the organisation's **Constitution or governing document**;
- Latest **financial accounts** (audited, if required by governing rules);
- A **detailed breakdown of project costs**, with quotes or other supporting documentation;
- Evidence of **match funding or in-kind contribution**, where applicable or required;
- Where relevant: business plan or project plan, demonstrating viability, sustainability, and long-term benefit.
- For certain organisations (e.g. sports clubs), evidence of past financial usage — e.g. membership growth, facility maintenance — may be required.

Applications must be submitted **in writing**, addressed to the Town Clerk, using a standard application form supplied by the Council.

4. What May Be Funded

Grants may support:

- Capital expenditure, community activities, special projects, events or facilities that deliver clear benefit to the community;

- Projects that aim to improve social, environmental, or economic wellbeing of Southwold;
- Projects that are sustainable, add value, and ideally contribute to self-sustainability or long-term community benefit.

The Council is unlikely to fund:

- Projects that simply replace existing facilities without meaningful improvement;
- Projects lacking a clear plan or business case;
- Large-scale funding requests with no evidence of match funding or other contributions;
- General running costs, or ongoing overheads, unless exceptional circumstances justify support.

5. Grant Conditions & Monitoring

- On award, recipients must sign a **Grant Agreement** accepting the Council's conditions.
- Conditions include: funds may only be used for the purpose agreed; funds may not be distributed to other organisations unless explicitly permitted; grant recipients must acknowledge Southwold Town Council support in **all publicity, promotional materials and media** pertaining to the project.
- Recipients are required to submit a **report on outcomes / impact** within a defined period (e.g. within 6 months of project completion or funding expenditure), or as otherwise specified.
- Where requested, recipients must provide **evidence of spend** (receipts, invoices etc.).

6. Decision Criteria & Council Discretion

When assessing applications, the Council will consider:

- Eligibility and credibility of the organisation;
- Demonstrated local need and community support/involvement;
- Value for money, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness;
- Evidence of match funding or self-contribution;
- Social, environmental, or economic impact;
- Quality and clarity of project or business plan;
- Long-term benefit and likelihood of sustainability beyond the grant.

Final decisions remain at the **discretion of the Council or designated Committee**, considering budget availability and strategic priorities.

7. Transparency & Reporting

- All grant awards will be recorded in Council minutes.
 - The Council will publish a summary of grants awarded (organisation, amount, purpose) in line with its transparency obligations.
-