

NOTICE

You are Summoned to the Meeting of Southwold Town Council which is being held on Tuesday 26th March 2024 at 7.30pm at the Town Hall



Signed.. *L. S. Beavan*

dated 19th March 2024

AGENDA

1. **Apologies:**
 - a) To receive 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 regarding the agenda.
 - c. To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.
 - d. To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.
 - e. To note to update the Register of Interests with changes as they occur.
3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 27th February 2024.
4. **Public Section**
 - a) To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan.
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.
 - b) To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd.
SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.
 - c) Public - To receive comments on matters on the agenda (*each member of public will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes*). (*10 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion*).
5. **To receive reports from Committees.**
Planning and Development Committee
 - a) To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 5th March 2024. *No Recommendations.*
 - b) To consider the Town Council response to the following planning applications;
 - i) DC/23/4599/FUL – Reconsultation – Single storey front extension, two storey side extension with carport, rear single storey kitchen extension, roof conversion and internal alterations, Churchill, 20 Hotson Road.
 - ii) DC/24/0450/FUL – New front porch and bay window, side and rear two storey extensions and internal alterations, Churchill, 20 Hotson Road.
 - iii) DC/24/0785/FUL – Change of use from A1 shop with conditions to Class E, 40A High Street.
 - iv) DC/24/0609/LBC – Listed Building Consent – Replacement, repair and improvement of windows to the front and rear elevations, 21 Park Lane.

v) DC/24/0826/FUL – First floor extension above the existing ground floor single storey extension, with no increase to the footprint, 20 Pier Avenue.

vi) DC/24/0864/FUL – Repairs and minor alterations to balustrading to east and part north elevations, The Craighurst, 11-13 North Parade.

Trees

- DC/24/0728/TCA – Proposal: 1 x Tamarisk (Tree) – Fell, Marlborough Court, Marlborough Road.
- DC/24/0913/TCA - 1 x Holly – Fell, Compass Point, Cumberland Road.

c) **Landlords Cttee** – To receive the report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee held 21st March 2024. *Recommendations in relation to property repairs, submission of planning applications, vacant properties.*

d) **Roads Cttee** – No meeting held.

To note temporary closure of Southwold Footpath 007 for maintenance works.

6. **To receive reports from Working Groups (task and finish) Groups;**

a) **Leisure and Environment Cttee** – To receive the notes of a working group meeting of the L and E Cttee held 19th March 2024. *Recommendations – Play areas/ Town Sign/ stocks.*

b) **NSIP working group**. To receive update from the NSIP working group. *(Including Lionlink / Sizewell/Anglia One//Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project)*

7. **Lionlink** – To consider the draft Town Council response to the Lionlink consultation.

8. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended and any training events attended**

Reports to be provided in written format and circulated to members prior to the meeting unless time allows for a verbal report to be given, subject to the Chairs discretion.

a) Christmas lights – Cllr Wells.

b) HMC/SAG/ Harbour Users – Including Vision Setting consultation - Cllr Beavan/ Cllr Gladwell.

c) Southwold Walberswick Flood Board – including Potters Bridge – Cllr Beavan.

9. **Enterprise Hub** to receive progress update from meetings with Project Board, construction team, and operators. **

10. **Business meetings** to note that the next meeting for businesses/traders is to take place on 16th May 2024 – venue to be confirmed.

11. **Town Marshes** – drainage. To receive update.

12. **Financial Matters**
- a. *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee – To receive report from meeting 21st March 2024 .
Recommendations include, policies, submittal of planning applications, donation requests,*
 - b. *Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts/bank reconciliation and balance sheet for March 2024.*
 - c. *Investments – To receive update on investments and balances held.*
13. **Forthcoming Meetings/ Events for Council/Councillors**
2 day volunteering course CAS – Cllr Wells.
Play area course – Cllr Palmer.
14. **Town Mayor updates including.**
- a) *Events attended ;
Commonwealth Day 2024.
Suffolk Justice Service Choral Evensong – Sunday 17th March 2024.*
 - b) *Upcoming engagements;
Annual Town Meeting Monday 8th April 2024.
Official Opening of Southwold Pier/interview Radio Suffolk – Friday 29th March 2024.
Lions 50th Charter Anniversary Dinner – Saturday 13th April 2024.*
 - c) *Town Mayor volunteering project – verbal update.*
15. **Consultations for council and individual consideration**
- Street Trading Policy – consultation extended to 17th May 2024.
 - Lionlink consultation to 4th April 2024 - Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping for the LionLink Multipurpose Interconnector Project
 - Suffolk County Council Devolution Consultation to May 2024
 - Southwold Harbour Vision
16. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 30th April 2024 at 7.30pm
- **Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item below.**
17. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it will 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.*
- *Property/ legal updates if any.
To consider, and if agreed approve basis of property marketing.*
 - *H R Updates – To consider and if agreed approve recommendation of the Employment working Group.*

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 27th February 2024.

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	Cllr Beavan
	“	P Davy
	“	Mrs V Gladwell
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	R Jarvis
	“	Dr J Miller
	“	M Palmer
	“	Mrs V Redington
	“	J Sutton
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

Also present: The High Steward, The Town Clerk. SCC Cllr M Ladd and 3 members of the public.

Welcomes were extended to Cllr Miller. Declaration of Acceptance of Office had been signed.

1. a) **Apologies:**
To note/approve apologies for absence. Nil.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda. Nil.*
 - b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda. Nil.*
 - c) *To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda. Nil.*
 - d) *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda. Nil.*
 - e) *To note that the Register of Interests of all Members is to be completed within 28 days of the election and updated thereafter with changes as they occur. Noted.*
3. **Minutes:** (i) *To approve and sign the minutes of the Meetings of the Town Council held on Tuesday 30th January 2024 and 15th February 2024.*
On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Wells it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 30th January 2024 and Tuesday 15th February 2024. All agreed.
4. **Public Section**
 - a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan.*
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.

ESC Budget was set last week and was passed unanimously. Less than 3% increase in taxation.

Ref Potters Bridge – ESC Cllr Beavan met with SCC Cllr Ladd, the Environment Agency and Natural England. Set up a road map with agreed KPI – so making progress but the beach outlet now needs to be dug again. If the landowner does not continue with this then the EA will take it on again. May need some real time information this autumn to indicate flood levels at the site so people are informed of the depth. Quote for signs is approx £23k. May need to look at ESC CIL monies/STC/Reydon PC to assist SCC in funding the signage.

b) To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd.

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

Ref Potters Bridge – it is clear tonight. Would hope that the measures in place, as mentioned above, will help to keep it clear.

SCC budget - £74m is being put into social care. £47m to children social care, £24m to adult care. Demand for service is rising. £752m is SCC agreed budget. Council tax will be a 4.99% increase. 2.99% on general, 2% on adult care – approximately an average of £1.12 per week extra.

SCC – have recently shut down a fake university website which was scamming young people to pay over fees.

The specific Arts & Heritage funding for 9 organisations will cease after 2024-25 but a new funding pot will be opened with access for all.

East Street TRO is being carried on as a 2 bay withdrawal as originally intended in order to widen the road to the required standards to prevent cars needing to drive on the pavements.

The East Suffolk Community Partnership is supporting the food bank and the Loft but have problems contacting Southwold Primary School.

A meeting is being held on 16th March 2024 to consider the setting up of a Men's Shed for this area – to be sited at Millenium car park.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that SCC is also cutting housing support monies for the most vulnerable. ESC and SCC officers are working together to try and lessen the impact.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that unfortunately this is a non-statutory duty of SCC. And that SCC is having to use reserves to carry out statutory duties.

Cllr Flunder – Buses at the Old Kings Head are causing major potholes so what is the answer to this ongoing issue?

SCC Cllr Ladd has put in for this area to be resurfaced as a priority from the extra funding that SCC has received for such areas. SCC Cllr Ladd will continue to chase with officers.

c) Public - To receive comments on matters on the agenda (each member of public will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes). (10 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).

A member of the public spoke about foxes on the town marshes. Fantastic habitat of birds etc which are on the amber and red list and need protecting from foxes. Would like to propose some control of fox numbers to protect the birds as there are no natural predators of foxes. Real risk of bird species being lost. Could be denying future

generations knowing these bird. Mink are controlled. Rabbits are controlled. Rats/mice are controlled. Night shooting is an option and wildlife trusts do such controls. Natural England has to give permission.

Questions from councillors

Cllr Beavan – need to control muntjac as well - STC to consider its actions.

Cllr Flunder – advised that STC would need to consider and referred it through Leisure & Environment Committee to consider further.

5. **To receive reports from Committees.**

Planning and Development Committee

a) *i) To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 6th February 2024. No Recommendations. Minutes noted.*

b) **Landlords Cttee** – *To receive the written report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee REP 02.24 held 15th February 2024. Recommendations in relation to property repairs including Hurren Terrace, 21 Market Place, workshop door, EPC upgrades, North Parade Shelter.*

Cllr Sutton – see recommendations on Landlords report.

a) Workshop door – 2 quotes received. 1) £1772 plus Vat (£2126)- works could be undertaken within 6 weeks, 2) £2619 inclusive of Vat reduced to £2319 by using existing lock and handles – work could be undertaken within 6 weeks.

It is recommended that Quote 1 be approved.

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

b) New store room at 21 Market Place – 2 quotes received 1) £10,401 plus VAT – (£12,481) could be done within 6 weeks 2) £11,088 inclusive – could be started by end of March 2024.

It is recommended that quote 2 be approved for £11,088. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Jarvis. All agreed.

c) Flat roof – Unit 9 H T – quote received to renew roofing following emergency temporary repair. Total cost £2448. Mixbrow arranged the temporary repair. It is suggested that they be asked to arrange this follow up works. Agreed by all to recommend. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Jarvis. All agreed.

d) North Parade Shelter – needs painting and guttering repairs.

Emergency gutter repairs and roof tile repairs are being carried out following anti-social behaviour.

Painting – quotes 1) £2785 inc materials – work can be done by end March 2024. 2) £2455 including materials. Work could be done by end April. Graffiti paint was mentioned as a desirable by the cttee – this would be an additional £800 – £1200.

After full discussion, it was agreed to recommend that quote 1 be accepted.

Graffiti paint not required due to cost.

Quote 1 (but not to include anti social paint). Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.

ESC Cllr Beavan suggested that the fire quote for 7 Hurren Terrace be sent to ESC Housing Department Private Sector Housing for their consideration. ESC to be kept updated on the STC decisions/thoughts.

- c) **Leisure and Environment Cttee** – *To receive the written report of the meeting of the L and E Cttee REP 01.24 held 31st January 2024. Recommendation in relation to CCTV.*

Also – update re D Day commemorations 6th June 2024, 50 years of Local Government 2024, and Charter Lunch Thursday 30th May 2024, opening of Ferry Road Garden 6th March 2024 at 9.30am.

CCTV – quotes – See quote attached. To be located on balcony to view both sides of High Street/East Street as an anti social behaviour deterrent. Police are aware. Proposed by Cllr Beavan, seconded by Cllr Sutton. All agreed.

D Day – 6th June 2024. The use of Gun Hill for any commemorations will not be taken forward. Instead there will be a service with poems/hymns/readings etc. Piper will attend, and flags will be purchased for the Town Hall and church.

50 years of Local Government will be combined with Charter Lunch on 30th May 2024 after Charter. It was suggested that STC republish the book about the loss of the Borough.

- d) **Roads Cttee** – *To receive the written report of the meeting of the Roads Cttee REP 01.24 held 9th February 2024. Recommendations including those arising from the consultation outcomes in respect of; 20mph limit, residents parking, and raised crossing points.*

East Street – the recommendation is for the removal of 2 parking bays. There has been some objection from local businesses as parking will be lost – but highway and pedestrian safety will be improved. SCC Cllr Ladd had advised that Highways would recommend the taking out of both bays to make sure East Street becomes wide enough as per highway regs. All agreed to take 2 of the bays out as originally recommended by SCC Highways in view of the safety concerns along this stretch of road.

20mph in Southwold – Recommendation - To ask that SCC Implement 20mph for Southwold from North Road. Discussion took place about where the 20mph should commence. It was agreed that it should be from Scout Hut rather than North Road. Proposed by Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Beavan. All agreed.

Resident parking in timed bays - to recommend that there be a request to ESC to provide an extension of the existing residents parking arrangements in limited time bays as per the consultation suggestion, on the terms as presently required.

A debate took place regarding the High Street parking spaces. Cllr Beavan advised that this area will be considered on a case by case basis.

Proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Wells and agreed by all to recommend that there be a request to ESC to provide an extension of the existing residents parking arrangements in limited time bays as per the consultation suggestion, on the terms as presently required.

Recommendation re priorities for Raised Priority Crossings be as follows.

1) No 51/Sutherland House area.

2) Queen Street area

Recommendation, that the area by No. 51/Sutherland House, Queen Street be costed for installation of Raised Priority Crossings - proposed by Cllr Beavan, seconded by Cllr Wells 8 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstain.

Recommendation - that the Highways safety team look at Market Place/Town Hall/East Street area as a separate piece of work. proposed by Cllr Sutton, seconded by Cllr Davy. All agreed.

Recommendation that the Disabled bay be moved from the cobbles to the one parking space outside the URC. Agreed unanimous.

Cllr Flunder spoke with reference to the Roads Committee letter from Reydon PC. Cllr Beavan suggested that any relevant road cttee matters could be incorporated within the informal quarterly meetings which already take place with Reydon P C rather than setting up another meeting, and that members of Reydon PC are welcome to come and sit in the Roads Committee meetings.

e) **Election to committees – to receive Cllr nominations for vacancy on; Planning cttee and Leisure and Environment cttee.**

Cllr Miller advised that she would like to be considered for the Leisure & Environment Committee Agreed by all.

Planning Committee has 1 vacancy.

6. **To receive reports from Working Groups (task and finish) Groups;**

a) *Comms working group – No meeting held. Business website agreed – see below.*

Members will visit Spring tomorrow who will then present to the Business Group on Thursday night.

b) *NSIP working group. No meeting held.*

To consider and if agreed approve Cllr Miller as a member of the working group.

To note online meeting 7th March 2024. Agreed that Cllr Miller join the NSIP working group.

7. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended and any training events attended**

Reports to be provided in written format and circulated to members prior to the meeting unless time allows for a verbal report to be given, subject to the Chairs discretion.

a) *Christmas lights – To consider and if agreed approve Cllr Wells as Town Council representative. Cllr Wells to become the STC representative - Agreed by all.* The cttee do have a programme for fundraising for the year.

b) *HMC/SAG/ Harbour Users – Including Vision Setting consultation - Cllr Beavan/ Cllr Gladwell.* Cllr Beavan advised that ESC await response from Caravan Owners and then the formal consultation will go out. Cllr Gladwell advised that nothing else is happening on the cttee / groups as the vision is awaited.

c) *Southwold Walberswick Flood Board – including Potters Bridge – Cllr Beavan.* As above.

- d) *S and R CPEG – To confirm Cllr Wells as the Town Council representative.*
Confirmed by all. Cllr Wells attended a course last week re being a rest centre manager. Mr Gladwell has done the course as well and thank you was extended to him.
8. **National Energy Projects** –
Lionlink / Sizewell/Anglia One//Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project – To receive updates.
 Need to ensure there is liaison between all the NSIP cable projects.
9. **Enterprise Hub** *to receive progress update from meetings with Project Board, construction team, and operators. ***
 Cllr Flunder advised that the project review meeting is today. Handover date likely now to be late April. Planning discharges are awaited. Suppliers of doors and windows have delays. Site looks good and there has been no real problem with the recent flooding. The operator document will be ready to sign next week and then exchange will take place. Advertising will then be able to be started by Menta. Menta will present at the Business meeting on Thursday.
10. **Business meetings** *to note that the next meeting for businesses/traders is to take place on Thursday 29th February 2024 at 5.30pm at Reading Room Swan Hotel.* Noted
11. **Closure of Suffolk Records Office in Lowestoft** – *See Beccles Town Council/ Southwold Museum letters (as attached). To consider, and if agreed, to write letter.*
 Cllr Jarvis and Cllr Flunder did not vote.
It was AGREED WITH 2 ABSTAIN that STC write a letter similar to that of Southwold Museum, regarding the proposed closure of the records office.
12. **Town Marshes** – *drainage. To receive update.* Meeting held with farmer last week who has been doing lots of work to clear the culverts and dykes. The excess rainfall last week means that the water on the marshes is still high. Looking into a pump for a week to get the marsh clearer. Might need help from IDB – Cllr Beavan to be asked about pump/funding from IDB as the EA have said no to a funding request. So STC will need to action themselves if there is a need to pump. As ESC ward member Cllr Beavan is looking at possible solutions for other areas throughout the district so will keep the town marshes in mind.
13. **Financial Matters**
 a. *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee – To receive verbal report from meeting 26th February 2024 FIN Rep 01.2024.*
 Cllr Jarvis advised that the Enterprise Hub and potential property purchase are the immediate expenses.
Donation request - Food Bank –
After full discussion it was agreed by all to recommend that the Town Council support the project with a donation of £679 for the dishwasher. Donation to be made as soon as monies required. Donation budget has been allocated for 2023.2024 and this donation will therefore be funded from reserves if required before the next financial year.
Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Beavan. All agreed.

Risk – climate change – need to consider having a plan to engage with resilience committees. Cllr Beavan advised that the Flood Board is part of resilient coast projects and Cllr Jarvis would be welcome to come and observe.

b. *Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts/bank reconciliation and balance sheet for February 2024.*

On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Wells it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for February 2024. All agreed.

- c. *Investments – To receive update on investments and balances held. Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Jarvis and agreed by all that STC liquid cash, not required for the monthly cashflow, be invested in the CCLA product. Authority for the finance cttee to invest and withdraw funds as appropriate.*
- d. *Procurement thresholds - SALC advice; ‘Councils can amend the standing orders (section 18) and financial regulations (section 11) if they wish to, to reflect this update’. It was agreed by all that STC updates its Standing Orders in accordance with this recommendation.*

14. **Forthcoming Meetings/ Events for Council/Councillors**

2 day volunteering course CAS – Cllr Wells.

Landlords courses – various – Cllr Gladwell and the Town Clerk will attend.

15. **Town Mayor updates including.**

a) *Events attended - Nil.*

b) *Upcoming engagements – Suffolk Justice Service Choral Evensong – Sunday 26th March 2024 at St Edmundsbury Cathedral.*

c) *Town Mayor volunteering project – verbal update.*

16. **Consultations for council consideration**

Street Trading Policy – consultation to 17th March 2024. Noted.

17. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 26th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

Members of the public left the meeting.

****Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item below.**

18. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it will 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.*

SEE Finance CONF REP 01.2024

STC to ask to be introduced to the new Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of Adnams as/when they are in situ. Agreed by all.

Police Station – No recommendation.

Fire Station Site - Agreed by all for the Finance Committee plus Cllr Redington to research and find out more about what is happening with the site and consider options in liason with SCC Cllr Ladd.

Harbour – STC field Ferry Road – AGREED by all that Cllrs Goldsmith/Palmer/Davy/Jarvis form a working group to consider the options.

Signed

Dated

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held. at the Town Hall, Southwold on Tuesday 5th March 2024 at 6pm.

PRESENT: Councillor
 “ S Flunder
 “ V Gladwell
 “ P Goldsmith
 “ R Temple (Chair)
 “ M Wells
 “ 1 vacancy

Also, present Town Clerk

1. **Apologies:** *To receive and approve apologies for absence.*
There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a. To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest regarding the agenda.
Nil.
 - b. To receive any declarations of other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.
Nil.
 - c. To receive any declarations of Non-Registerable Interest. Nil.
 - d. To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda. It was agreed by all that
Nil.
 - e. To receive details of any lobbying to members.
Nil.

3. **To receive and approve the Minutes of Tuesday 27th February 2024.**
The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 27th February 2024 were noted and agreed by all.

4. **To receive comments from the public on matters on the agenda** *(each will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes – to a total maximum of 10 minutes).*
There were no members of the public present.

5. **Planning Matters:**
 - a. **To determine the Town Council response to the following applications:**
 - i) *DC/24/0553/FUL – Demolition of single-storey rear extension and erection of new single-storey rear extension, 45 North Road.*
This site is now in the updated Southwold Conservation Area - therefore a Design & Access Statement will be required.
There is no explanation as to why living space is becoming a bedroom - and there is no comment about the impact on parking provision. Under the guidance additional parking on site will be required.
As additional information is required to assess the application - the town council could not support the proposal at the present time until this is received.

 - ii) *DC/24/0601/FUL – External fire escape staircase, The Boathouse, Southwold Harbour Walberswick side, Ferry Road.*

It is suggested that this application is required in accordance with fire safety requirements. This being the case the town council would have no objection to the request.

iii) DC/24/0627/TCA – 5 x Robinia (Ts, T3, t4, T6, T13) – Fell, 1 x Laburnum (T14) – Fell, 2 x Beech (T7, T8) – Raise crown above 3m, Gun Hill Bight, 8 Ferry Road. Noted.

iv) DC/24/0642/TCA – Tree – common lime tree denoted ‘CL’ on sketch plan. Proposed works – remove/fell tree and replace with two or more mature silver birch trees (approx. 1.5m to 2m tall) Rationale – replacement of a single tree with two or more mature silver birches will provide immediate appeal and a positive environment for wildlife. The common lime offers no amenity value for the property and front garden. If unmanaged it can grow to 45 metres and would present a risk to the property and overhead cables. Also, removal of the tree will ensure a good and stable working area for the required footings for the new flint wall at the front of the property (as per approved plans DC/21/5650/FUL, DC/22/2231/AME, DC/22/2555/AME), 17 Cumberland Road. Noted.

v) DC/24/0709/TCA – Reduction in the size of the willow adjacent to the garage back to the previous pollard points. The removal of the conifer tree to the rear of the garage. Please note pruning works to the conifer were undertaken towards the end of last year prior to the conservation area status. Reduction in the crown of the apple tree by 20% - located adjacent to the southern boundary, 72 North Road. Noted.

vi) DC/24/0675/FUL – External balcony, The Yacht Yard, Southwold Harbour Walberswick Side, Ferry Road. No issue.

b. ESC decisions and applications to ESC Committee. See attached.

c. Any Planning Inspectorate Appeals Lodged. Nil.

Blackshore Cottage 1 Blackshore Southwold Suffolk IP18 6TA Ref. No: AP/23/0053/REFUSE | Received: Mon 25 Sep 2023 | Status: Appeal In Progress

d. Any licence applications/decisions to consider – Nil.

e. Any consultations to consider – Nil.

6. **Date of next Planning and Development Committee Meeting:**

Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 6pm.

Signed

Dated

LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT Cttee notes – from meeting held on Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 9.30am

REP L and E 2/2024

Item	Subject	Details	
1	Present	<p>Clrs Miller (JM), Palmer (MP) and Wells (MW).</p> <p>MEETING NOT QUORATE. Discussion Only.</p> <p>Also present the Town Clerk. No members of the public.</p> <p>Cllr Wells was appointed as Chair of the meeting.</p>	
2	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	<p>There were apologies for absence from Cllr Redington, Cllr Sutton, and Cllr Goldsmith</p>	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	<p><i>To note the minutes of the previous meeting - notes from Jan 2024. All agreed.</i></p>	
5	Standing Orders-public section.		
6	Environmental matters – timelines and completion dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ferry Road Garden and the area to the side and behind it – including ongoing request for volunteers, water bowser, accessibility, additional plants, request for information board.</i> Funding application being submitted to improve frontage of garden and access from Jubilee Bridge as well as a Notice Board which will serve as a thank you to the volunteers with sponsors logos, history re the location of the site. SCC Cllr Ladd has offered £1k from his locality allocation 2024.2025. Cllr Goldsmith to ask Robert Beevor for bluebells/snowdrops – outstanding. Opening on 6th March 2024 was well attended. Water for the site organised by Cllr Wells via the provision of an old bath. Water bowser – Cllr Goldsmith to collect – outstanding. • <i>Marshes update (alongside landlords cttee) – recent meeting held with tenant – update provided by the Town Clerk. Further meeting arranged this week after the low tides to assess how much water still needs to be drained. Foxes on the marsh has been described by a member of the public as being an issue. Suffolk Wildlife Trust to be asked to be asked to carry out an assessment. Note - No shooting is permitted on the marshes.</i> • <i>Other garden maintenance works updates – including Gardner Rd verges.</i> Members advised that they would provide details of any possible handy person/ gardener they become aware of. Skip has been provided to remove some of the rubbish from Electricity Green. 	<p>JM/LB</p> <p>ML</p> <p>PG</p> <p>PG</p> <p>LB</p>
7	Leisure and Other matters	<p><i>Shelter on North Parade project update.</i> This is being progressed by the Geography Academy and James Mellish. Shelter is being painting in advance of the boards being erected.</p> <p><i>Community Payback / community self-help scheme projects – seafront railings project is on the list for 2024 – await start date.</i></p> <p><i>Fingerpost for Field Stile Road.</i> Fingerpost is held at Town Hall – await formal licence from ESC – discussion re license fee ongoing.</p>	<p>LB</p>

		<p><i>Public Wi Fi extension</i> – Grant funding for the Wi fi extension to Gun Hill need to be used by end March and the project is being progressed by ESC / Proximity Futures to erect on Casino.</p> <p><i>Stocks from Bartholomew Green</i> – The old stocks were deemed a hazard and have been removed and being held with C and D who have assessed them and advise that new ones will need to be made as these are irreparable. Quote £2865.70 from C and D. SCC Cllr Ladd has offered to fund £1k from his Locality Budget for 2024.2025. Recommended to proceed with C and D with request to STC to allocate £ 1865.70 from the L and E Budget to this project.</p> <p><i>Play area repairs</i> – over the past 12 months one piece of play equip has been removed from Tibbys play area and the tunnels now need full repair. Cost £2493.17 agreed as an emergency repair. Equipment on this play area to be considered for upgrade/ replacement – all cttee members to visit site.</p> <p><i>Skatepark – Klondyke</i> – work has commenced this week on the new skatepark.</p> <p><i>Town Sign repairs</i> – The Town Sign has been removed from Electricity Green due to the post and sign having rot which needs repair. Posts are on order and will be installed in due course. Quote received for the restoration of the Sign and making good - £750 including materials. Other quotes to be obtained. L and E request budget of £1k from the L and E Budget to select and proceed with project.</p> <p><i>Electricity Green – Water</i> – Cllr Beavan to be asked to fund cost of new water butt/ guttering to assist with watering at the site from next Locality allocation. It was considered that an outside tap was not appropriate at this site.</p> <p><i>Benches St Edmunds Green</i> – Although St Edmunds Green is owned by ESC, ESC advises that some of the benches belong to STC. ESC advise that these should be on a concrete plinth on H and S grounds these days. As some also need refurbishment it was suggested that J Hammet be asked to take a look initially.</p> <p><i>Greenseas Bin for prom</i> – Both STC and ESC applied for a bin and ESC has been successful in being awarded one for the prom which will be situated close to the lifeguard hut nearest to the Pier.</p> <p><i>CCTV project for Town Hall</i> – Ordered.</p> <p><u>Civic events</u> <i>D Day 80th anniversary commemoration event 6th June 2024 – update.</i> Mindful that this is a weekday event, and not in a school holiday it was agreed that the activities would be limited to a church service. Discussions ongoing with Rev Gant. Proposed that service would be at 6pm or 7pm on 6th June – starting at the church and then with a walk to the beach for the closure of the service. Commemorative flags purchased for town hall and church. Service will be ecumenical. Cllr Wells liaising with Rev Gant re payers/ poems. Relatives of any D Day veterans to web asked for memories.</p> <p><i>Charter Fair and Charter Lunch</i> – Thursday 30th May 2024 from 11.30am. Charter lunch is being organised following several years of not having an event. It will be tied into the theme of 50 years of Local Government.</p> <p><i>Civic Sunday 23rd June 2024</i> – Leiston Town Band will attend. This will be a joint ecumenical service with the Arts Festival. Arrangements are ongoing with Rev Gant.</p>	<p>All Cttee members</p> <p>LB</p> <p>DB</p> <p>LB/CS</p> <p>MW</p> <p>LB/CS</p> <p>LB/CS</p>
8	Date of next meeting	TBC	

Sticks from Bartholomew Green – The old sticks were deemed a hazard and have been removed and being held with C and D who have assessed them and advise that new ones will need to be made as these are irreparable. Quote £2865.70 from C and D. SCC Cllr Ladd has offered to fund £1k from his Locality Budget for 2024.2025. Recommend to proceed with C and D. STC to allocate £ 1865.70 from the L and E Budget to this project.

Play area repairs – over the past 12 months one piece of play equip has been removed from Tibbys play area and the tunnels now need full repair. Cost £2493.17 agreed as an emergency repair.

Town Sign repairs – The Town Sign has been removed from Electricity Green due to the post and sign having rot which needs repair. Posts are on order and will be installed in due course. Quote received for the restoration of the Sign and making good - £750 including materials. Other quotes to be obtained. L and E request budget of £1k from the L and E Budget to select and proceed with project.

Draft Minutes of Southwold Town Council Landlords Committee meeting held 22nd March 2024 at 9.00am Town Hall Southwold. Rep LL 03.24

Present – Cllrs Flunder, Gladwell, Redington, Wells. And the Town Clerk

1. **Apologies:** To receive apologies for absence. Apologies from Cllr Sutton and Cllr Goldsmith – Noted.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a. To receive any declarations of Non registerable Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
 - b. To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest/ Other Registrable Interests regarding the agenda. Nil
 - c. To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda. Nil
3. **To receive comments from public.** Nil
4. **Minutes/ notes of the previous meeting** – noted and agreed for signature.
5. **Grant availability for insulation/ property repairs etc. Hurren Terrace – action required.**
Information held re various grant funders including Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Funder.

Town Clerk noted that there are some grant funders offering funding for insulation, solar panels etc. Cttee to consider these opportunities when reviewing/ undertaking the maintenance programme.

Cllr Gladwell had attended a 'Mould and Damp' course in Ipswich for landlords and briefed the cttee on the information provided at the course. There are advisers operating under the Healthy Homes initiative who will look at properties for tenants and then signpost tenant/ landlord to grant bodies etc after ascertaining which works might create some improvement.

It had previously been agreed that Flat 1 Hurren terrace would be used as a pilot for the town council. An extraction fan needs to be provided and Cllr Gladwell will liase with tenant and make contact with some of the advisers to start the process and then come back to the town Council. If this becomes an appropriate way of reviewing the let property, then the same process will be applied to the other accommodation on Hurren Terrace / Station Road. The gable end at the rear of H T is being considered for renovation – any external wall insulation required in this area will be considered at the same time.

6. Update on repairs 2023.2024 and planned works 2024.2025.

Spreadsheet of work in progress and those requiring works shown on screen to all including.

- The gable end at the rear of H T is being considered for renovation – any external wall insulation required in this area will be considered at the same time. There will be a decision to make as to whether the project involves a) an external wall insulated option or b) additional brick outer skin. The Architect has confirmed that both pf these would help to improve the EPC rating at the property and that loft insulation would provide the roof insulation.
- EPC requirements to be checked at Flat 21a Market Place which has just become empty to ensure that additional works are considered before reletting.
- 4 Strickland Place to be asked for update about the grant application for improvements to property.
- Flat 3 Hurren Terrace – clothes dryer required once Hub works completed – appropriate place to be ascertained.
- Town Hall works – Museum will assist with the sorting of the cellar – other council volunteers required.

Once Phase 1 of Town Hall works start the kitchen will be knocked through – so consideration to be given for temporary arrangements for a kitchen.

- 2 Strickland Place – works should commence by end April 2024. Revised scope means costs are now £52,765 plus Vat as indicated.
- Casino new windows – planning application being prepared.
- Water Tower – dehumidifiers to be commissioned for each floor for a short period of time to refresh property after wet winter. Priority of works required to be ascertained with potential tenant.
(Large water tower – upgrade works re mobile network being carried out 27th March)

7. Empty Properties

Number of options for council to consider for appropriate residential properties include;

- a) Rent – advertised locally and nationally to include the opportunity for any Ukrainian refugees seeking independent living.
- b) HMO – with advisory assistance from East Suffolk Council
- c) Sizewell C Accommodation pool – There is an e mail address to register any available property for workers who are not living on site.
- d) East Suffolk Lettings - who have been asked to do presentation to landlords cttee about their offer.

Discussion about the appropriateness of each for the properties which STC owns.

The available properties from STC presently are;

- Flat 21a Market Place – one bedroom – improvements on EPC being considered and could then be let under a) or c) above.
- Flat above shop Station Rd – one bedroom flat - being advertised at present.
- Shop Station Rd – commercial - being advertised for rent at present.
- Flat 7 Hurren Terrace – Fire Requirements for an HMO are considerable, and a second quote is being obtained. Whilst this might be a longer-term ambition for the property it will take some time to take forward should council wish to. It is recommended therefore that in the short term the property be let under Option a) above – rent to be ascertained and agreed by council and property then to be advertised for short term let both locally and through SCC Ukrainian refugees’ team who might have a family who would be interested.
At the same time a business case for an HMO to be worked through for the longer term.

Red Cross Hut – non-residential - pre planning application being taken forward as previously agreed at costs of £13,500 plus Vat. Estimated fees to take it through to full planning is £13,500 plus Vat additional sum. No recommendation at present time. Await result of pre planning and then consider whether the council takes to full planning or not. Option would be for a purchaser to take through full planning.

1 Strickland Place - indication of market price received. Council to consider basis of sale and timescales.

8. Grant availability for insulation/ property repairs etc.

Town Clerk noted that there are some grant funders offering funding for insulation, solar panels etc. Cttee to consider these opportunities when reviewing/ undertaking the maintenance programme.

9. **Date of next landlords cttee meeting.** 11th April 2024 at 9.00 am.

****Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item below.**

9. **Exclusion of Public and Press:** Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodied (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is proposed that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.

Legal Advice Tender for works Rent/lease reviews.

Discussion and updates on various legal matters re leases. No recommendations.

Recommendations

- Flat 7 Hurren Terrace – Fire upgrade requirements for an HMO are considerable - a second quote is being obtained. Whilst this might be a longer-term ambition for the property it will take some time to take forward should council wish to.
It is recommended therefore that in the short term the property be let under Option a)above – rent to be ascertained from NPS and agreed, and property then to be advertised for short term let both locally and through SCC Ukrainian refugees team who might have a family who would be interested.
At the same time a business case for an HMO to be worked through for the longer term.



Councillors Briefing Note for Parishes:

Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping for the LionLink Multipurpose Interconnector Project

Summary

- This is not a consultation about the principle of the development.
- Parishes can engage without prejudice to any objections they may have to the scheme.
- Parish and Town Councils can play a significant role, by identifying local environmental and socio-economic sensitivities and risks that the applicant needs to consider.
- The deadline of the 4th of April is fixed by Regulation.

The project promoter for LionLink, National Grid Ventures, has approached the parishes within the consultation zone, regarding the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for this project. This is because these parishes are identified by regulation as relevant consultation bodies.

It is essential to recognise that this consultation is specifically about the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the proposal, and how those impacts should be understood and assessed by the applicant, and the Planning Inspectorate.

This is not a consultation about the principle of the development, or a consultation regarding alternatives to it. Therefore, it should not be used to make representations on those matters.

Furthermore, parish councils can engage with this consultation, without prejudice to any objections they may have to the scheme.

Local Authorities, and other statutory bodies, including but not limited to, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Historic England, will provide detailed technical comments on the proposed methodologies and scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Parish and Town Councils can play a significant role, by identifying local environmental and socio-economic sensitivities and risks which the applicant needs to consider. It is also an opportunity to suggest approaches to the avoidance of harm, and mitigation measures, that respond effectively to local sensitivities and issues.

Parish and Town councils may choose to respond individually, or where there are areas, or issues, of common interest, it may be more efficient and effective for several parishes to make a joint representation.

Finally, **it is important to recognise that the 4th of April deadline is fixed for all consultees and cannot be changed**, as it is laid down in the Regulations.

The Scoping Report and appendices can be found at:

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020033/documents>

Responses, from the relevant Parish Councils, to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the Scoping Report should be clearly identified as such, and sent by email to lionlinkinterconnector@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

Laura Harrad
Planning Officer (Infrastructure)
8th March 2024

EMPOWERING SUFFOLK'S FUTURE

**Public consultation
on the proposed
Suffolk Devolution Deal**



Have your say

18 MARCH - 26 MAY 2024

EMPOWERING SUFFOLK'S FUTURE

In December 2022, the Government and Suffolk County Council signed a proposed, in principle, devolution deal which would transfer certain powers and funding from the Government to Suffolk. It would mean more decisions about Suffolk's future being made in Suffolk, rather than nationally. This type of county-level devolution deal is new, and Suffolk is one of the first areas to explore it.





WHAT IS A DEVOLUTION DEAL?

Councils make many decisions about public services. Much of the country, including Suffolk, has two tiers of local government: district and borough councils, which provide more local services; and county councils, which generally provide more strategic functions and services that cover the whole county, such as adult and children's social care, household waste sites, transport, environment, economic development, skills, registrars and trading standards.

Local authorities have three main sources of income: council tax, business rates, and direct funding from the Government. In some cases, although councils may be responsible for delivering the services, the Government still makes some of the decisions about how and where funding is spent locally, e.g. in areas such as adult education, transport and the environment.

A devolution deal is an agreement whereby the Government passes control of decisions over some of this funding and areas of policy to local councils. This has already happened in some other areas, including Greater London, Liverpool, West Midlands and Greater Manchester.

A DEVOLUTION DEAL FOR SUFFOLK

If the proposed deal is finalised, Suffolk would receive new decision-making powers and greater local control of funding in areas including adult education, regeneration and transport, as well as control of a new investment fund worth £480 million over the next thirty years. This could help us to create new jobs, offer local business support and invest in infrastructure.

The proposed deal would also mean that, for the first time, the leader of Suffolk County Council would be directly elected by the people of Suffolk. Once every four years, residents would be given two votes and empowered to elect their local county councillor AND the leader of the county council. The first election would take place on 1 May 2025.

This consultation is an important part of the process. This document contains information about the proposed deal to help you complete the consultation. The results of the survey will be analysed and presented to county councillors and the Secretary of State when they come to make a final decision on how to proceed. This is your opportunity to have your say.

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE TO A DEAL?

Suffolk's proposed, in principle, devolution deal was agreed following months of discussions between Suffolk County Council and the Government. The agreement reached was for a 'Level 3' devolution deal, which involves the maximum possible devolution of powers and funding currently available as defined in the Levelling Up white paper. There is currently no other offer on the table, so the alternative is to reject the proposed deal. If we wanted a different deal, we would have to restart discussions, and there is no guarantee this would be possible.



What are the key points from Suffolk's proposed devolution deal?

£480M INVESTMENT FUND

Under this deal, Suffolk County Council would be given control over an investment fund worth £16 million per year over thirty years - a total of £480 million.

This is money we would not otherwise receive. It would be for Suffolk County Council, working with local partners, to decide how best to invest this money but, by way of example, other areas with a devolution deal have used their investment funds on:

- local business support
- regeneration, e.g. by clearing up brownfield sites to make them available for development
- housing infrastructure (for example, providing funding for supported housing for people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions)
- helping young people access free bus travel
- supporting victims of domestic violence
- investing in transport infrastructure.

It would also be possible to borrow larger sums of money and use this funding to pay the interest on it. This could mean that larger infrastructure projects could be developed and started, secure in the knowledge that we have the money to pay for them. This is very common in local government.

The fund is not 'index-linked', which means that its value would decline over time if inflation went up. This is the same for all devolution deals. Government funding arrangements over longer periods of time are usually not index-linked.

In addition to the investment fund, the deal would transfer budgets and decision-making in key areas which will be explored in the following pages.



ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET

The 'Adult Education Budget' funds learning and training courses for adults over the age of 19 and is managed at a national level by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. In simple terms, the agency decides what types of courses should be made available and allocates funding to provide them based on a set financial formula.

Suffolk receives a percentage of the national pot of money available for adult education. Most of this funding is allocated directly to training providers (including our main Further Education colleges) who are restricted on how they can use this by the national formula. There is no direct link between any local skills strategy and the allocation of money to education providers. This means there can be a mismatch between what is needed and what is on offer locally.

Under the proposed deal, Suffolk County Council would become responsible for commissioning adult education in Suffolk and would work with local businesses and adult education providers to understand the skills needed for Suffolk people and deliver the necessary courses.

The county council would be given the money that the Government currently allocates to the county – so that it can invest in skills training more closely aligned with local employment and community needs. Based on the current arrangement, this would be **£9.4 million in 2025/26**. This amount could change over time based on the Government's approach to funding adult education. The funding is not index-linked.

Regardless of the amount, this money would be coming to Suffolk anyway. But under the deal, local partners in Suffolk would have control over how it is spent.

As is the case with other areas with devolved control of adult education, Suffolk County Council will need to use a small percentage of the funding to administer the programme. In other areas, this is between 4% and 5%.

Suffolk County Council will look to build on national good practice and ensure that key stakeholders are actively engaged in deciding what training is most needed in Suffolk. Meeting the needs of local businesses and local people would be the key to success.



REGENERATION

There are currently more than 200 brownfield sites across Suffolk which could be appropriate for development. This includes many derelict industrial sites standing empty. These sites have been identified in partnership with Suffolk's five district and borough councils. Sometimes, all it takes is for a brownfield site to be cleared up and prepared for development in order for it to become financially-viable for potential developers. This includes confirming ownership, demolition and decontamination. As it stands, Suffolk County Council or district and borough councils must bid for funding from the Government to clean up brownfield land.

Instead of bidding for funding on a case-by-case basis, under devolution Suffolk County Council would get a one-off lump sum. In 2024/25, this would be **£5.8 million** which could help unlock the building of new homes on some of that otherwise redundant brownfield land.

Under devolution, Suffolk County Council would work with local council partners, through their Local Plans, to decide which sites are supported for development. Making more brownfield sites available for development can mean that less development is proposed on greenfield sites.

This would help create the right locations to increase affordable housing. Decisions would be made in consultation with district and borough councils, as they are responsible for planning decisions and housing.

The deal would also mean that the county council, working closely with district and borough councils and other relevant partners, would get new powers to buy land to support development, regeneration and infrastructure projects that are in the public interest. These compulsory purchase powers would be transferred from the Government's housing and regeneration agency 'Homes England' to Suffolk County Council. With the consent of the local planning authority, Suffolk County Council could also create 'Development Corporations' - legal bodies that support the regeneration of a defined area by using a wide range of powers to acquire, hold, dispose of and develop land and property and develop infrastructure.

TRANSPORT

As the Local Transport Authority, Suffolk County Council already has transport planning and delivery powers. Suffolk Highways is responsible for Suffolk's roads, and Suffolk's 'Enhanced Partnership' (which also represents local bus operators) makes decisions about how to deliver and improve local bus services. This would continue under devolution. Currently, the Government offers transport funding to Suffolk County Council on an annual basis. This funds a variety of services including pothole repairs and drain clearing. There is also sometimes one-off funding offered on a case-by-case basis, but this is not guaranteed.

Under devolution, Suffolk County Council would begin to receive multi-year transport funding from Government, which would provide greater certainty for longer-term planning.

It is not yet clear how much money would be available as part of the multi-year funding. However, this guaranteed investment could help us to

- better plan road improvement schemes
- reduce congestion and carbon emissions by making public transport more attractive
- introduce Oyster card-style smart ticketing
- improve the bus offer in rural areas.

In addition to the multi-year funding, the county council would receive **£250,000** each year for two years to support the development of Suffolk's Local Transport Plan, which sets the strategy for the management, maintenance and development of the county's transport system. This funding could be used to pay for research, consultation and developing business cases.

Finally, evidence from other devolved areas suggests that they are more successful in securing Government financial support for locally important projects. One of the reasons for this may be because devolved areas seem to have a higher profile with Government and are therefore in a stronger position to start negotiations.

LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

If the proposed devolution deal is approved, Suffolk County Council's governance structure would change.

Currently, all elected county councillors vote on who should be the leader of the council. The leader is usually from the party with the most elected members. The leader then appoints other councillors to the Cabinet and together they make key decisions within the policy framework set by the Full Council. The leader and cabinet members are held accountable by the rest of the elected councillors via the county council's various committees, which scrutinise the cabinet's decisions and make recommendations. This is how it works in most parts of the country.

Under devolution, the leader of Suffolk County Council would be directly elected by the people of Suffolk. Once every four years, residents would be given two votes and empowered to elect their local county councillor AND the leader of the county council.

The first election would take place in May 2025, under a 'first past the post' system, meaning that whoever receives the highest number of votes wins.

There would be no new layer of local government or additional offices – the directly elected leader would remain part of Suffolk County Council, and they would not be able to set their own council tax demand. Any extra costs would mainly be around running the election once every four years – alongside the election of county councillors that is already taking place.

This change would create the possibility of new dynamics surrounding the council's leadership. For example, it could be the case that a leader is elected from a different political party than the majority of councillors on the council, or from no political party at all. As now, the directly elected leader would be free to choose any elected members to serve in their cabinet, whether from the majority party, a minority party, or no party.

The Government has a clear preference for directly elected council leaders, and evidence from places like Manchester and the West Midlands suggests that people in similar roles have a higher profile and greater influence with the Government and have been able to negotiate additional devolution for their areas. For example, in March 2024 the Government announced £160 million of funding to create a new Tees Valley Investment Zone to increase productivity and create jobs in that region's digital and creative industries. This investment was secured by the directly-elected Mayor of Tees Valley, the Tees Valley Combined Authority and Teesside University.

In reality, the current decision-making arrangements would continue under a directly-elected leader model. The main difference in Suffolk's case would be how the leader is elected.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND COOPERATION

Councillors work to reflect the views of their local communities. Residents can contact their local representative in writing, by phone or by email to make their voice heard.

To make important decisions about how public services are delivered and money is used, Suffolk County Council consults and engages with residents, service users, businesses, partners and staff. This would continue under devolution.

Whilst the powers and funding would be devolved to the county council specifically, Suffolk's strong history of collaboration is already written into the text of the proposed deal. The deal's implementation would therefore be a collaborative endeavour with local partners, including the district and borough councils, town and parish councils, business, education partners and others. For example, the county council would work with the district and borough councils, as the local planning authorities, to decide which brownfield sites to clear up; with local transport operators to identify and develop opportunities for new transport projects; and with business partners to develop a local skills strategy.

Directly Elected and Indirectly Elected Council Leader: Key Differences and Similarities

HOW IT WORKS NOW

Appointed by Full Council

Represents a particular electoral division

WHAT WOULD STAY THE SAME

Responsible for executive functions

Appoints a cabinet of between 2 and 9 other councillors

Decides and allocates cabinet portfolios; delegates executive functions to cabinet members

Appoints deputy leader

Recommends the strategic and budgetary framework to Full Council for approval

Subject to the council's scrutiny arrangements

Subject to the Elected Member Code of Conduct

Receives an allowance in accordance with the Elected Member Scheme of Allowances

THE PROPOSED CHANGES

Directly elected by Suffolk voters

Does not represent a particular electoral division

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUFFOLK

Devolution is a journey, not a one-off event. Evidence from other areas shows that devolution opens the door to greater powers and funding over time. For example, Greater Manchester has now negotiated seven devolution deals, covering areas such as planning, transport, and health and social care. The West Midlands has recently agreed a Deeper Devolution Deal with a budget windfall in excess of £1.5 billion to level up the region.

The Government has already announced a fourth level of devolution which would grant even more powers and funding around skills, transport, housing, net zero and other policy areas.

This first deal would pave the way for deeper devolution in the future.

SUFFOLK'S PROPOSED DEVOLUTION DEAL TEXT IN FULL

The full text of Suffolk's proposed devolution deal with Government can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution

This in-principle deal was signed by Suffolk County Council and the Government on 8 December 2022 at the home of Claas UK in Little Saxham, near Bury St Edmunds. This proposed deal is now being consulted on publicly.

The deal in numbers

£480 MILLION INVESTMENT FUND

New Investment Fund worth £16 million per year for 30 years (£480 million in total)

£9.4 MILLION* ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET

Local control of the Adult Education Budget each year

*This is the expected allocation for 2024/25

£5.8 MILLION REGENERATION FUND

One-off funding to prepare brownfield sites for use

MULTI-YEAR TRANSPORT FUNDING

£500,000 over two year to develop proposals for the Local Transport Plan



MORE INFORMATION

More information about Suffolk's proposed devolution deal, including answers to frequently asked questions and a three-minute video explaining the deal, is available at www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution

Equalities Impact Assessment screenings have been completed for this consultation and the impacts of the deal itself. Both are available on our devolution webpage.

A consultation on a previous devolution proposal for Norfolk and Suffolk was held in 2016. This deal was not progressed. An analysis of responses to that consultation has however informed the current consultation.

GETTING SUFFOLK READY FOR THIS CONSULTATION

Throughout February and early March 2024, Suffolk County Council spoke to more than 1,500 people to tell them about the proposed deal and that the consultation will be launched on 18 March 2024.

This included sharing information and holding online and face to face meetings with representatives from a wide range of organisations and sectors, including:

- Businesses and business federations
- Community organisations and other public bodies
- Town and parish council elected members and staff
- District and borough council elected members and staff
- Suffolk County Council elected members and staff
- Suffolk's MPs.

Feedback from the discussions have further informed the design of the consultation. Key points included the need to:

- Not assume knowledge and explain clearly how things work now and would work under a deal
- Explain that the investment fund is not index-linked and so it could decrease in value over time if inflation rises
- Explain the possibility that a directly elected leader could be from a different political party to the majority of elected councillors, or no political party at all
- Explain the important role that working with partners would play in delivering the deal
- Confirm that the governance changes would not require any new layer of local government and nor would the directly elected leader be able to set their own council tax demand
- Explain that this type of county-level devolution deal is new and that Suffolk one of the first to explore it.

Suffolk County Council also published information about the proposed deal on its website and made available a three-minute video explaining the deal and the consultation. At the time of going to consultation, more than 43,000 people had viewed the video for 15 seconds or more and more than 800 people had accessed the webpage www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution

IMPARTIAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

Holding an impartial and independent consultation is very important, so we have enlisted the help of the Consultation Institute and Ipsos. We are following the Consultation Institute's rigorous Quality Assurance programme which ultimately determines whether our consultation approach meets their high standards.

The Institute has confirmed that it is content that the council's approach to the planning of this consultation and its documentation is consistent with industry good practice standards.

We have also commissioned Ipsos to conduct an independent sample survey of 1,000 Suffolk residents and three focus groups. The work to complete this survey and focus groups will take place during the 10-week consultation period. This survey will complement our wider public survey.

The results of all parts of the consultation will be analysed by Suffolk County Council staff and presented as part of a report on the consultation. Suffolk county councillors and Government ministers will consider the consultation responses as part of the decision-making process on whether or not to proceed with Suffolk's devolution deal.

HOW TO RESPOND

The consultation will run from 18 March to 26 May (10 weeks) and is open to anyone who lives or works in Suffolk. You can either complete the survey online, via www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution, or in hard copy. Copies of the consultation are available in all Suffolk library buildings or can be requested by contacting Suffolk County Council's customer services team. If you need assistance completing the survey, please phone our customer services team.

You can also send comments via letter and email, and these will be analysed for the final report. Although we will be using the media and social media to promote awareness of the consultation, comments received via these channels will not be considered as consultation responses. We will be running online drop-in sessions during the consultation where you can ask further questions. Details are available on our website, on social media or by contacting Suffolk County Council.

This consultation document is available in other languages and formats and these are available on request.



What happens next?

18 MARCH 2024

Consultation opens

26 MAY 2024

Consultation closes

JULY 2024

Suffolk County Council Cabinet considers the outcome of the public consultation. Full Council considers whether to change Suffolk County Council's governance structure and submit consultation result to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

1 MAY 2025

Election of Leader of Suffolk County Council (if approved) and all County Councillors (guaranteed)

How to contact Suffolk County Council

Phone: **0345 603 1842**.

Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm (excluding Bank Holidays).

0345 numbers are charged at the same rate as standard landline numbers that start with 01 or 02. If your phone tariff offers inclusive calls to landlines, calls to 0345 numbers will also be included on the same basis.

Email: **devolution@suffolk.gov.uk**

Post: Consultation Team, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX