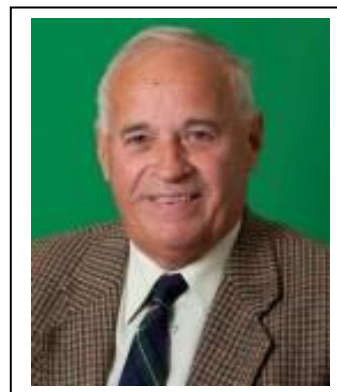


Parish Report December 2022

Councillor

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Information Updates

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

Latest SCC COVID information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

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

Personal message from Richard

2022 has seen everyone facing many challenges and hardships as we work on returning to normal services following 2 years of lockdown restrictions brought about by Covid, the recession we are now all trying to manage, job losses, business closures and alarming rises in cost of living expenses.

And yet as a community we continue pulling together, helping with support (physical, emotional and monetary) where we can via food banks and charities or by opening our doors to Ukrainian refugees as they seek safety during the conflict in their homeland.

As always I am so proud of the kindness, determination, generosity and spirit of the people in the parishes I serve, it is my honour and privilege to work with you and for you in my role as Suffolk County Councillor

I wish you all good health, peace, a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year!

Suffolk County Deal - Update

As part of the government's Levelling-up Strategy, Suffolk CC are currently negotiating a deal for more devolved powers. It was announced this month in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement that Suffolk will look to install a directly elected leader, known as a Mayor.

Our Group were told by the Conservatives that this wouldn't happen, however it appears to be a part of the deal for more powers to be devolved to county council. There are potential issues with the new mayoral role, as a Mayor can be elected from outside the majority party and has the power to select a Cabinet that is also outside of the majority – which could create a gridlocked political system.

SEND Services - Update on Lincolnshire Report

Last year, Suffolk CC's SEND services were criticised in a damning report conducted by Lincolnshire Council. Our Group received an update this month outlining the progress our SEND services have made to implement the report's recommendations.

We were told 22 of the 32 recommendations have been actioned, and the remaining 10 will be completed by the end of 2022. The delivery of 1317 new specialist school places by 2026 has been agreed and 826 of these places are now open. The number of Education Health Care Plans (EHP) has increased to 6847 in September 2022, from 5849 in September 2020.

Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan - Update

The Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group met to update leaders on the progress of the county's action plan to achieve net zero by 2030. A new Suffolk Climate Emergency Dashboard has been set up to display the latest data and performance measures, as well as other action such as a successful communications campaign, additional match funding, homeowner support services, and a Net Zero knowledge hub to educate businesses.

Next steps include investments in EV charging infrastructure and developing a community energy sector. The Leaders Group agreed to release £923,458 of previously allocated funding to further implement actions. The next review will be in Spring 2023.

Newly Elected Member of Suffolk GLI!

The Beccles by-election finished with a landslide victory for the Green candidate, Ash Lever. The election was to replace Peggy McGregor who sadly has left us. We are excited to begin working with Cllr Lever and we will update all on his involvement with the Group.

Suffolk looks for more hosts!

New hosts coming forward to help accommodate guests that are already in Suffolk can sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, by [completing our online form](#) or emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk.

Accommodation must be available to guests for a minimum of 6 months. Hosts will be eligible to receive the £350 thank you payment for up to 6 months or more, depending on the date your guests arrived in the UK (12 months starting from the date your guests first arrived in the UK).

If you know anyone that might be interested, please encourage them to visit [Ukraine: Could you help a family in need? | Suffolk County Council](#)

Social Care Reform

Huge changes are to be put in place. One element of the reform is the lifetime care cap of £86k. It is anticipated that many people in receipt of care from private care companies, or from family and/or other individuals will instead arrange to receive care via the local authority. It will be the responsibility of the local authority to keep records of the payments made by each individual for care provided up to the level of the cap, after which care will be funded by the local authority.

New powers given to Police

In the latest legislation, new powers are to be given to the Police (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022), which gave the Police the following new powers:

- Additional police power to tackle disruptive protests and protect the public by increasing the range of conditions police can impose on public assemblies, increasing the sentences for obstructing a highway and introducing new conditions police can set based on the noise generated by protests.
- Confers new powers on the police to assist them in locating human remains, to help provide closure where possible to families with missing loved ones.
- Strengthens police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments, where trespassers cause distress and misery to local communities and businesses.
- Introduces new Serious Violence Reduction Orders, giving the police power to stop and search adults convicted of knife and offensive weapons offences.
- Strengthens the management of terrorism risk offenders on licence in the community by introducing new police powers of premises and personal search and an urgent power of arrest.

According to the House of Commons Library, the impact assessments published alongside the Act indicate that the current estimated cost of the measures in the Act applying to England and Wales is between £100 million to £146 million per year once fully implemented. This may be a good way to ask about the budget in December.

Full Council - December 1st - Motion Submitted

Full Council will be meeting in December. Our Group has submitted a motion calling for an improved Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This Spring, SCC were notified by Government that it would be receiving zero funding from their Bus Back Better bid. The Department for Transport stated the bid was not ambitious enough.

Our motion looks to prioritise Demand-Responsive & Community Transport for Suffolk rural communities, as well as requesting the Council to provide recommendations to improve the Council's BSIP for the next wave of funding.

Cabinet Meeting - 8th November

The Cabinet met to discuss the Q2 forecasts of the Council's budget. Currently, there is a worry as they have reported a £12.2m budget gap – largely due to inflation and energy prices. The Council will use Reserves to cover this cost. However, this cannot be a long-term solution. Our Group are concerned that the Council will not be fully funded by this Government to deliver the same services to residents.

The Cabinet also met to agree a new road enforcement scheme, and to apply for new Government powers to penalise drivers who commit offences affecting buses. The trial for the scheme has selected four sites in Ipswich for a cost of over£200,000. Our Group believes this money could've been spent more appropriately on bus priority measures, new bus lanes, and maintaining rural services.

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkqli.wordpress.com\)](#)