County Councillor Report

Parish Councils, November 2025

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Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Both Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils have consented to Government to form a Mayoral Authority – that is -'*the making of Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority Regulations as required by s46(1)(d) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 such that Suffolk County Council will be a constituent council of the Authority*.' Government is expected to decide in January on the form of unitary structures the two counties should adopt, mayoral elections are planned in May possibly along with local County elections however the latter are more likely to be postponed.

Norfolk and Suffolk County Combined Authority Web Site – the Norfolk and Suffolk fledgeling Combined Authority has set up a website to provide information and serve as a hub - refer to www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk The site will serve as a central hub for information about the new authority, including the anticipated mayoral election on 7 May 226.

Asylum Seekers in Mellis – The Home Office has contracted housing responsibility to private providers including Mears Group, Serco and Clearsprings Ready Homes, who procure and manage properties to house asylum seekers, both for initial accommodation (for up to the first 4 weeks) and dispersal. District councils and the County Council have limited involvement. I have been in direct contact with the Home Office and have suggested that better communication locally would be very helpful to all involved. Please refer to a link to the regional Strategic Migration Partnership website find out more about responsibilities for refugees & asylum seekers in England. What we do - Local Government East .

Bird Flu - Sadly, there has been an outbreak at a commercial poultry facility near Lakenheath. DEFRA's Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) has imposed restrictions on the premises, and the county's Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) has been informed. More information on the case is at: www.gov.uk/animal-disease-cases-england/bird-flu-near-lakenheath-west-suffolk-suffolk-aiv2025-slash-70 (including a map in the link to the Declaration within it).

SCC Trading Standards is managing enforcement of controls and is working with owners of poultry.

Archaeology and Sizewell C Construction - A hoard of 321 silver coins found last year during excavations for Sizewell C is to be donated to Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS). Oxford Cotswold Archaeology discovered a package containing mint condition coins dated between 1036 and 1044 during the reigns of Harold I, Edward the Confessor will be provided at a free open day on Saturday 25 October 2025 at the Riverside Centre in Stratford St Andrew. Also,

webinars are being delivered by Oxford Cotswold Archaeology over the winter to present findings from the ongoing excavations. Details on all these events can be found at www.sizewellc.com

Dangerous Electrical Transport Vehicles Seized - Led by Suffolk Trading Standards' Imports Team and supported by Hertfordshire and Metropolitan Police, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) and the Department for Transport, agencies shared intelligence to target goods imported through the Port of Felixstowe. Approximately 630 items were seized as posing a serious risk to safety. Some were CE/UKCA marked but much of the technical documentation supplied was fake and none were legal for the UK, on or off the road. Examples of dangerous goods include various electric motorbikes, electric bikes such as used for food delivery and electric scooters.

EcoPower Suffolk - is holding local meetings through its Community Liaison Group about its plans for a large (approx..3,000 acre/ 600 ha) solar farm with Battery Electric Storage (BESS) and a connection to National Grid's substation in Yaxley. Potential dates for the next are Thursday 27th November: 09:00 – 15:00 (TBC). See EcoPower Suffolk - Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage

National Grid Pylon Scheme - The application for the Development Consent Order (DCO) - essentially planning permission - was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) by National Grid and has been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State. The application documents are now available to view on the **Planning Inspectorate's website.**

Suffolk County Council is objecting to the proposals. The Council's Relevant Representations to the Planning Inspectorate were endorsed on 4th November by Cabinet, maintaining its long-held, opposition to the scheme. We encourage Parish Councils and local communities to register and comment - refer to **Click here** The county council's objections primarily include:

- a clear preference for alternative options, in particular cable undergrounding or an offshore solution
- to formally and strongly request National Grid pausing the proposals, to enable the effective consideration of the alternatives.

Interested parties may register with the Planning Inspectorate, comment on the application and take part during the examination.

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: *Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk*
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