

## County Councillor Report



### Parish Councils, January 2026

#### Happy New Year!

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**County Elections and Local Government Reorganisation** – An Extraordinary Meeting of the County Council took place on **Monday 12 January 2026**, please refer to: [Extraordinary County Council - 12 January 2026](#) The Council considered a Ministerial invitation of 18<sup>th</sup> December (see Written Ministerial Statement in Appendix A and a Letter to the Leader, Appendix B). This invitation invites councils to:

*“set out your views on the postponement of your local election and if you consider this could release essential capacity to deliver local government reorganisation in your area and so allow reorganisation to progress effectively”.*

1. Response to this invitation is an Executive decision by Cabinet taking account of the debate at council. The council majority vote and was that the Leader should submit a letter that responds to the Minister’s question by the deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> January and acknowledges capacity pressures.
2. Pressures on both resources and officer time were considerations discussed at the council meeting. May council elections would undeniably take up substantial resources alongside the need to respond to local government reorganisation. Other responsibilities include training new councillors albeit for less than one year, reorganisation of council functions to meet the 2027 and 2028 deadlines for unitary council and mayoral elections, respectively, and preparations for dissolving the council.
3. It is noted that legal powers to postpone local elections rest with His Majesty’s Government. Information about devolution and local government re-organisation can be found at Suffolk County Council’s web site: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution>

**Battery Disposal** - Hidden batteries can spark Christmas chaos: Suffolk residents are urged to correctly dispose of items with small (and large) batteries, to avoid sparking fires. Items such as toys, power tools, vapes, small gadgets and even Christmas cards can contain hidden batteries, often difficult to remove. These can overheat or explode at recycling centres and waste transfer stations, even in waste collection vehicles, or at home. Therefore:

- Do not put batteries or items containing batteries in any of your bins at home
- Take them to the battery recycling point at your local recycling centre, or local shops – [use the battery recycling locator](#) to check your nearest location
- If you are unsure if your item contains a battery, do not throw it in any of your bins at home, take it to your local recycling centre for experts to check

**£26 million bus funding coming to Suffolk from DfT** - Government funding for public transport in Suffolk is confirmed for three years. This funding will enable the continuation and expansion of new and improved services introduced over the past two years through LABG support and its predecessor, the Bus Services Improvement Grant (BSIP), many of which were shaped by community feedback.

**New 20-mph Speed Limit Policy Adopted** - changes to the existing 20mph speed limit policy to enhance road safety and improve quality of life across Suffolk's communities were approved by SCC's cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> January. The amended criteria will give communities greater opportunity to reduce the speed limit, where appropriate, in residential and high-pedestrian areas to 20mph. Please refer to the Agenda for the Cabinet meeting papers on: [Meeting Documents - Committee Minutes](#)

**National Grid** – Preliminary Meetings for the above application (the 'Rule 6' letter) being scheduled, there is a meeting for 'interested parties' on Tuesday 10 February 2026 at 10:00 in The Sir Bobby Robson Suite at Ipswich Town Football Club, Portman Road, Ipswich, IP1 2DA and virtually via Microsoft Teams. Additional meetings are planned throughout that week in Ipswich. Access to meetings is also available on Teams.

**Consultation for a Proposed New Reservoir, Thrandeston** – Essex & Suffolk Water's proposal is ongoing to construct a new drinking water storage reservoir (large concrete storage tank) and other water supply facilities in the area of Thrandeston and/ or Eye. A second reservoir is planned near Sipton. Refer to <https://suffolkwaternetwork.co.uk/>

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: [Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk)  
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