

## **January 2026 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update**

### ***Millions in investment planned for East Suffolk***

East Suffolk Council is seeking to commit almost £107million across the next four years towards the delivery of key projects and schemes that improve and enhance local communities.

On Tuesday 13 January, Cabinet members approved a General Fund Capital Programme, financed with internal and external resources, as part of the annual Budget-setting process, with a total financing requirement of £106.87m for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30. These proposals will now move to the next stage ahead of presentation to Full Council in February.

The programme includes Government funding for the transformation of brownfield land at Lowestoft's former Sanyo factory site into much needed future housing, increased investment into improving play equipment and play areas across the district, and funding towards the planned regeneration of Leiston Market Square.

GLI Cllr Vince Langdon-Morris, cabinet member with responsibility for Resources and Value for Money, said:

“This comprehensive Capital Programme is designed to deliver lasting benefits for residents, businesses and visitors to East Suffolk by investing in our communities, improving public spaces and creating new opportunities.

“It benefits from various sources of funding, including the Government's Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund, and is based on this Council's key ambitions and its four main principles of Environmental Impact, Sustainable Housing, Tackling Inequalities and Thriving Economy.”

### ***Small grants scheme launched to boost community cohesion***

Community groups are being invited to apply for funding as part of a new scheme which aims to strengthen local ties.

The Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership is offering grants to community and voluntary organisations, as well as town and parish councils.

Grants ranging from £500 to £2,500 are available, and funding will be awarded to projects that work towards fostering a sense of belonging in the community.

Applications can be submitted from Monday 12 January until Monday 23 February and will be reviewed by a dedicated grant panel.

GLI Councillor Katie Graham, Chair of the Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership, said:

“We are proud to launch this grant scheme, aimed at helping projects in the community that boost local cohesion.

“Creating a sense of belonging and pride in the local area is key to the Community Partnership’s priorities, and we are looking for projects that support togetherness by bringing people from different backgrounds together.

“We hope that by supporting these projects, we can help unite the community and improve wellbeing, stability and security within our society.”

This initiative supports the Community Partnership’s cohesion priority and reflects their commitment to building stronger, more connected communities.

The grant scheme is open to projects and organisations supporting community cohesion in Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and the surrounding villages.

For more information, please visit: [tinyurl.com/58ftufm7](https://tinyurl.com/58ftufm7)

### ***Council urges Government to improve coordination of major infrastructure projects during ministerial visit***

During a recent ministerial visit to the district, East Suffolk Council has urged the Government to improve coordination and strategic oversight of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

On Thursday 18 December, Lord Vallance, Minister for Nuclear at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, visited Sizewell C. The Council's Deputy Leader Cllr Paul Ashton and cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change Cllr Tom Daly met with the Minister, alongside the MP for Suffolk Coastal Jenny Riddell-Carpenter. During discussions, the Council pressed its concerns about the lack of coordination across multiple NSIPs affecting East Suffolk and emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum on the social and environmental mitigations secured as part of the Sizewell C project.

East Suffolk continues to play a significant role in the nation’s progress towards Net Zero, with several NSIPs already planned or under construction across the district and heritage coast. These include the Sizewell C new nuclear project, alongside other large-scale energy and infrastructure schemes, including the Sea Link grid reinforcement project currently in examination with the Planning Inspectorate. However, the concentration of these projects, many with overlapping construction periods in the same geographical areas, poses the risk of substantial cumulative impacts on local communities, the environment, the district’s tourism economy, and essential services.

The Council has for years consistently raised these concerns with central government, stressing the need for a more joined up approach to infrastructure consenting. It has repeatedly called for a comprehensive cost benefit analysis of all available options or, at minimum, a Government led requirement for developers to work collaboratively to minimise harm to host communities.

During the meeting, the Council reiterated its commitment to constructive engagement with Government and developers but warned that the current system risks undermining community confidence and the deliverability of national infrastructure ambitions. The

Council also reinforced its expectation that all NSIP developers must deliver the environmental mitigation and community benefits they have committed to, ensuring these measures provide meaningful and lasting value for local communities and environments.

GLI Cllr Daly said: “East Suffolk plays a vital role in supporting the nation’s energy and infrastructure ambitions. However, the sheer volume of major projects proposed for our district means we are facing unprecedented pressures. Whilst project benefits are on a national scale, the impacts are localised within our district. We need Government to take a more coordinated, strategic approach so that these projects can be delivered in a way that is fair to our communities and environment, and sustainable for the future. It is essential that the developers of these nationally significant projects not only make commitments but follow through on them, particularly when it comes to environmental mitigation and community benefits.”

In October, the Leader of East Suffolk Council, Cllr Caroline Topping, wrote to the Minister reiterating these concerns and invited him to visit the district to see firsthand the close proximity of the proposed NSIPs and the challenges faced by local communities.

East Suffolk Council will continue to advocate for improved coordination and collaboration between projects and developers and will keep pressing for communities affected by nationally important infrastructure to receive appropriate benefits for hosting them.

### ***Updated strategy sets out future air quality improvement measures***

East Suffolk Council has adopted a renewed strategy for improving air quality across the district through a range of proactive measures.

The updated Air Quality Strategy takes into account priorities identified during public consultation last spring.

The previous Air Quality Strategy was adopted in 2021 – before East Suffolk’s last remaining Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), in Woodbridge and Stratford St Andrew, were revoked following consecutive years of nitrogen dioxide concentrations falling within Government-set air quality objectives.

As well as public opinion, consultation on the updated strategy involved workshops with key stakeholders including the Council’s own Environment and Climate Change, Planning, Building Control and Energy Projects teams, alongside Suffolk County Council Highways and Public Health & Communities team.

Required by Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to specify proactive measures for improving air quality, the strategy also identifies key emission sources of the three main pollutants – nitrogen dioxide, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> (particulate matter under 10 and 2.5 micrometres’ diameter) – to help focus work and resources.

New Government guidance and legislation produced since adoption of the previous strategy has been included, as well as updated health data specific to East Suffolk.

The updated Air Quality Strategy was approved by Cabinet members in December. GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk Council cabinet member for the Environment, said:

“The whole strategy has been simplified and restructured to make it clearer and easier to read for the public and stakeholders.

“It shows just what has been achieved since the 2021 strategy was published and provides an action plan of measures to help further reduce emissions.

“The strategy will be updated as projects develop, and in the light of any new information, and progress on the action plan measures will be reported annually in an Air Quality Annual Status Report to Defra.”

East Suffolk Council’s [Air Quality](#) webpage contains various resources, information and guidance on reducing emissions and tackling pollution, while [East Suffolk Greenprint Forum](#) provides a link between public and voluntary organisations and community groups, to share skills and experiences, as well as assisting local environmental action.

### ***Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living***

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

**[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/)**

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

**[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)**

**View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet:** [tinyurl.com/9xhka624](https://tinyurl.com/9xhka624)