

Parish Report – December 2022

Councillor: Andy Mellen

Divisions: Thedwastre North

Councillor contact details

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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

Suffolk County Council Budget for 2023/24

The first proposals for the 2023/24 budget have been released. SCC plan an increase of 3.99% (1.99% increase in Council Tax, 2% increase in Social Care Precept).

In a press release, the opposition group's leader, Cllr Andrew Stringer, highlighted that many of the current pressures come from the Conservatives failing to deliver the promised effects of Brexit. Currently, we have a shortage of staff, severe border delays, a less productive economy, and less funding compared to European monies. The Conservative administration had opportunities to prepare us for post-Brexit, post-pandemic. Instead, they rejected our proposals last year to increase funding for social care – which has resulted in a sharp increase in tax this year for residents.

County Deal Update

National government met with Suffolk County Council to sign a provisional County Deal. The Deal will devolve additional powers and funding to the County, including housing, transport and adult education.

The Deal has been lauded as momentous, however I believe that the deal has been massively overstated. The headline '£480m' is in fact over 30 years – equating to only around £16m a year. Just under £6m has been agreed for new housing, this equates to only around 30 homes.

The Conservative Council Leader promised we wouldn't have a Mayor, however the deal agrees to create a Mayoral Development Corporation. Politically, there is a real risk of stagnation – with the elected Mayor potentially from one party and the majority of Councillors from another.

As an opposition group we are strongly in favour of devolving national powers to local authorities. There was a real opportunity to make a difference here, but our Group sees the current deal as merely a token gesture.

For our full press release, visit our website:

<https://suffolkgli.wordpress.com/2022/12/12/suffolks-county-deal-big-deal/>

New SCC Website

Suffolk County Council have launched their new website. The new site is aimed to be easier and simpler. Our Group understands that this platform is often the first point of contact for residents and so it is important the website continues to engage and adapt to the needs of the Suffolk communities.

To see the new site, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Modern Slavery

As the Council's modern slavery annual statement was voted through cabinet, SCC have released an information bulletin to report any possible signs of modern slavery within your local communities.

General signs of modern slavery cant include: Isolation, restricted movement, poor living conditions, unusual travel arrangements, and physical appearance of abuse.

If you suspect a modern slavery crime is being committed, but there is no immediate risk of harm, you can report it to the Police on **101**, or the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline on **0800 121 700** – if there is immediate danger, phone **999**.

For further contact, email: community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk

For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/modern-slavery>

Suffolk looks for more hosts

Suffolk is looking for new hosts to help support refugees. 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 sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, or by emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk.