

SHOTTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL

SCC NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2024

One Network

This is a quick reminder about the website one.network. It is a free-to-view website, with wide-ranging sources of roadworks and traffic disruption information in the UK.

The one.network map enables highway authorities to communicate authoritative up-to-date information about roadworks, events and other activities on the highway.

Users can register for email alerts about upcoming roadworks affecting their area. This is particularly useful for informing residents on future works.

More public money for adult and children's care, but difficult decisions are needed to balance the books

In the next two years, Suffolk County Council needs to pump almost £74 million extra into protecting the county's most vulnerable residents.

- £74 million extra needed to protect the most vulnerable over two years
- £64.7 million savings to be made over two years
- Council set to reduce workforce, services and use savings

As part of financial plans to prioritise those in greatest need, an additional £42.7 million for children's services and £29.9 million for adult care are being proposed.

Along with local authorities up and down the country, the council has been hit hard by inflation and rising demand for services such as children's care, special educational needs and disabilities and home to school transport. It means having to make difficult decisions about the services it provides, including £64.7 million of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The two-year savings proposals, which have been [published on the council's website](#), include:

- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme, which has focused on reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology. This transformation programme has already saved £30.7 million over the last six years
- £0.5 million of savings by stopping core funding to Art and Museum sector organisations. To assist with the transition, £528,000 of COVID recovery money will be made available to Arts and Museum sector organisations for 2024/25 which will fully cover the funding reduction for one year.
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives to The Hold and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk. In February 2023, the council committed £3.4m to relocate the West

Suffolk Archives branch to the proposed Western Way development. Remaining at its current location would have required over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. West Suffolk Council has since decided not to progress with the Western Way development, ending that opportunity. Centralising the three branches into one brings Suffolk in line with the majority of archive services across the country and is better value for taxpayers' money.

- £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

Following the recent funding announcement from the Government, Suffolk County Council will not receive enough funding to keep pace with inflation or the level of demand for services. The council has joined national calls for additional funding and lobbied the Chancellor of the Exchequer directly.

[Full details of Suffolk County Council's financial plans for 2024/25](#) were presented to its Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January and will go before Full Council on 15th February. At the Full Council meeting on 15 February, the proposals will be debated, with a vote taking place on the budget for 2024/25 – the first year of the two-year budget proposals.

The proposals would give the council a budget of around £752 million for 2024/25, made up of funding coming from Government, business rates, charges for services and council tax. The proposed budget would require a 4.99% increase in council tax in next year. This would be made up of a 2.99% increase in general council tax and a 2% increase dedicated to funding adult care.

This means the costs for a household would be:

- Band B property: £23.50 per week (£1.12 per week increase from 2023/24)
(Band B properties are the most common in Suffolk)
- Band D property: £30.21 per week (£1.43 per week increase from 2023/24)

Council to ensure Sizewell C delivers for Suffolk as construction begins

Sizewell C today (15th January 2024) triggered its Development Consent Order, meaning that work can begin to build the new 3.2GW nuclear power station on the Suffolk coast.

Suffolk County Council played a key role to get significant improvements made to the plans during the project's examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

As a result, Suffolk will now see around £250 million made available to its communities, by way of mitigating the impact on residents, businesses, the environment, and infrastructure.

The council was also influential in ensuring that a far greater quantity of construction materials will be delivered by rail and sea, reducing the number of lorries on the county's rural roads.

During the construction of Sizewell C, Suffolk County Council will have a number of responsibilities, including:

- Discharge requirements (equivalent to planning conditions) to maintain control over highways, archaeology and flooding

- An important role in project governance over the construction period, in particular chairing the Transport Review Group
- Administering a significant proportion of funding negotiated during the examination and secured through the Deed of Obligation

The Deed of Obligation is a legal agreement between Sizewell C, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council for the scheme to limit its impact on local communities during construction.

More information about [Suffolk County Council's role in Sizewell C](#) can be found on its website.

Fake university website shut down by Suffolk Trading Standards

A website for a fake university aiming to scam money from overseas students has been shut down by Suffolk Trading Standards.

Calling itself the College of Suffolk, the website claimed the university had been founded in 1990 and was located on Queen Street in Ipswich.

Quoting yearly fees ranging from £3,500 to £8,900, it claimed to offer courses in acting, musical theatre, dance and performance.

The site used images of the real University of Suffolk and even had a page promoting the county, saying how it was home to its own breed of horses, breweries and famous celebrities such as singer Ed Sheeran.

A foreword by college 'President' Dr Stephen Spinks talked of how it provides "exciting learning opportunities in business, human resources, accountancy, finance, musician (sic) and art – all critical areas for the world of work."

It is the second time such a fake college has been foiled by Trading Standards – an identical scam using the same name and information was closed down in 2019.

The website was being run from Hong Kong and while Suffolk Trading Standards have had no reports of victims in the UK there may be some overseas.

Trading Standards says anyone considering applying for a college course can beat degree fraud through the Higher Education Degree Datacheck (HEDD) website <https://hedd.ac.uk/> where people can:

- Check whether a university or college is an official degree awarding body by using the look-up service
- Download free toolkits allowing employers, universities and colleges to tackle degree fraud
- Check original degree certificates with the issuing university

Degree fraud can be reported to the HEDD fraud team on 020 8148 2400.

If you have concerns about a website, please report it to Trading Standards via 0808 223 1133.

1,400-year-old Anglo-Saxon artefacts now on display in West Suffolk

Archaeological finds from a popular exhibition at the National Trust's Sutton Hoo, are now on display at the West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum.

Rendlesham Revealed: The Heart of a Kingdom AD 400-800 will be on display until 23 July 2024. Over 50 archaeological finds from the original exhibition are on public view, including gold jewellery, coinage, and food remains.

The display focuses on the main story of royal Rendlesham at its height when it was the power centre of the early East Anglian kingdom 1,400 years ago.

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service is curating the display to celebrate the "Rendlesham Revealed" community archaeology project funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, made possible thanks to National Lottery players.

The objects are on loan from Colchester and Ipswich Museums and from Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, some of those on display include:

- Gold and garnet dress accessories and weaponry fittings, used by the highest levels of society, such as warriors and royalty
 - A copper-alloy gilt horse-harness fitting, with garnet and shell centre inlay with a zoomorphic interlace design
 - A gold-and-garnet pyramid mount used on sword scabbards
- Gold, silver and copper-alloy coinage. More coinage of the 6th to 8th centuries has been found at Rendlesham than anywhere else in England, suggesting that Rendlesham played a crucial role in encouraging trade and the use of money across south-east Suffolk and beyond
- Imported objects from across Europe suggests long-distance contacts, gift giving and trade
 - A gold circular pendant made of impressed gold sheet of a form which originated in southern Scandinavia in the 5th century
 - An unusual silver brooch in the form of a horse-and-rider, similar to examples found in modern-day France and the Netherlands in the later 5th century
- Objects representing the ordinary population of farmers and craftworkers, including belt buckles, pins and weaving items
- Animal bone, the rubbish from butchery, cooking and eating, which tells us about farming practices and feasting.

The temporary display is now open at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum until 23 July 2024. Entry to see the display is included in the normal admission charge to the museum.

A virtual interactive tour of the original exhibition at Sutton Hoo is also planned in the coming months, including video interviews with the archaeologists themselves.

To find out more about the Rendlesham Revealed project visit: heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham

Council to propose new funding for arts & heritage in Suffolk

Suffolk County Council announced on 26th January its intention to create a new funding pot open to all arts and heritage organisations in the county.

- Core funding for nine arts and heritage organisations still to cease after 2024/25
- New £500,000 funding pot proposed from 2025/26, open to all arts and heritage organisations in Suffolk
- Proposal to be tabled at Cabinet meeting on 30 January

Following this week's announcement from government that £600 million of further funding will be available to local councils, the council intends to propose a new £500,000 project fund to which all Suffolk's arts and heritage organisations can apply.

However, this does not alter the difficult financial decisions the council is having to make so that it can prioritise spending on services like SEND, home to school transport and children in care. An extra £74 million is still needed over the next two years to protect the county's most vulnerable adults and children.

Proposals to end the core funding of £528,000 of nine arts and heritage organisations after the 2024/25 financial year, are still in place. This funding will be replaced with the new £500,000 project funding pot, open to all arts and heritage organisations, from April 2025.

The new £500,000 fund would contribute to delivering on the council's ambitions such as looking after the health and wellbeing of Suffolk's residents, particularly those most in need of extra support to live as safely, independently, and healthily as possible.

The impact of the government announcement for further funding for councils will be discussed at Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Meeting on 30 January 2024, where proposals will be explored.

Trading Standards seize 2,007 illegal vapes in Ipswich

Suffolk Trading Standards has seized more than 2,000 illegal nicotine vapes from shops in Ipswich.

The devices were recovered from three shops in the borough by trading standards officers checking for compliance on advice issued after previous visits.

The businesses will now be subject to further investigation to consider whether they should face further action, which could include prosecution.

The legal UK limit on nicotine content in disposable electronic cigarettes is no more than 2% (20mg/ml) and must not exceed 2ml in capacity (around 600 puffs).

The disposable products seized contained oversized tanks, giving between 3,500 to up to more than 10,000 puffs.

The seizures saw 964 found at one shop, 867 in the second and 176 in the third.

Last November a total of 1,913 vapes were seized from shops in Lowestoft, Felixstowe, and Ipswich, while a further 2,500 were recovered in September from a shop in Ipswich. Investigations into these seizures continue.

Used properly, vapes and e-cigarettes can be a successful way of helping people to stop smoking.

But criminals are capitalising on this, leading to a market for illegal vapes. In addition, some retailers sell vapes to underage children by using colourful packaging and sweet flavours.

The Government [announced on Monday January 29](#) that it intends to ban disposable vapes to tackle the rising number of young people taking up vaping. It will also bring in measures to prevent vapes being marketed at children and to target underage sales.

Always buy vaping products from a reputable supplier such as a specialist vape shop, pharmacy, supermarket or a UK-based online retailer so they are covered by UK safety and quality regulations.

Anyone who suspects that a business is inappropriately selling vaping materials can report this in confidence to Suffolk Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.

Suffolk local area partnership commits to urgent improvements to SEND services and apologises to families

The partnership responsible for overseeing and delivering services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Suffolk have apologised to families and commits to urgent action to strengthen and accelerate improvement plans following an inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission.

- Ofsted and CQC Inspection Report finds significant concerns with SEND services
- The Local Area Partnership promise urgent action to accelerate and strengthen improvement plans
- Senior leaders offer joint apology to Suffolk families

The inspection, which took place in November, highlighted that ‘there are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns’ about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND. The report can be read [here](#).

The local area partnership which delivers SEND services is made up of Suffolk County Council, the NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB.

The inspection report, published January 30th, identifies two priority actions as follows:

1. The partnership should work more collaboratively and effectively to improve strategic planning. This needs to deliver systems with measurable impact that will create better experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
2. Leaders should cooperate to take urgent action to improve the timeliness and quality of the statutory Education Health Care plan process, Education Health Care plan needs assessments and Education Health Care plans and annual reviews. This should ensure that plans meaningfully capture the views and aspirations of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that they get the right support at the right time.

The local area partnership is now implementing a number of urgent actions. These include the proposed investment of £4.4 million into SEND services next year by Suffolk County Council (subject to Full Council agreement on February 15), and the establishment of a Suffolk SEND Improvement

Board, which will be chaired by an Independent Chair, to oversee the improvement plan and actions needed. A new SEND Strategy is also in the process of being co-produced with parents and carers to set the strategic direction.

Alongside key priorities, the report identifies a number of areas where the partnership is working well. These include:

- In some areas, the local area partnership has worked successfully to improve services
- Strong levels of capital investment have increased the availability of special school places
- Initiatives to equip professionals in schools, such as the online tool to support schools, Valuing SEND or VSEND, are showing early signs of impact
- Several health teams support families sensitively and successfully, including the neonatal physiotherapy service
- Social care teams are effective. Social work assessments and reviews are comprehensive and helpful.
- Many providers, such as schools and colleges, praise their relationship with the local area partnership

As a result of this inspection, a monitoring inspection will be carried out within approximately 18 months. The local area partnership is now required to prepare and submit a priority action plan to address the identified areas for priority action.

The Ofsted and CQC report follows two years of significant investment into the way SEND services are delivered in Suffolk. Reform progress has been monitored by the Department for Education, who reported [in March 2023](#), that progress was 'reassuring' and noted 'the leadership's commitment to improvement in a wide range of areas'.

Significant pieces of reform include:

- Investment of more than £55 million to create more than 1,250 additional places in specialist and mainstream schools
- Creation of specialist SEND support teams and training for all Suffolk schools to support them to meet the additional needs of children in mainstream schools
- Proposed investment of £4.4m in 2024/25 and £3.4m in 2025/26 to expand our statutory SEND teams and secure sufficient educational psychology resource to improve the quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care assessments and reviews
- The ICB has invested £700,000 in recurring funding in the voluntary and community sector to provide support for families waiting for these diagnoses, as well as co-producing a new parent resource pack as part of the Suffolk Local Offer

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