

# Parish Report – April 2022

Councillor: Penny Otton

Divisions: Thedwastre south

County Council Details

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## COVID-19

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Latest Government advice is available here: [www.gov.uk/coronavirushave](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirushave)

**FESTIVAL OF SUFFOLK TORCH RELAY**; this will be going around the whole of Suffolk starting on 13TH May and in many villages, residents will be invited to take part and to cheer on all who pass through their village. This will end on 1<sup>st</sup> June at the Suffolk Show Ground where the big Platinum Jubilee Pageant will take place

### **Cabinet 1<sup>st</sup> March**

The Cabinet met to vote on the disapproval of the current plans by Sunnica to build the country's largest solar farm in Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire. Suffolk County Council have asked the Government to reject the plans in its current form, arguing the application fails to properly mitigate the impacts of such a large project.

In addition, the Cabinet voted on approving the National Grid's project to scale up its energy infrastructure from Bramford to Twinstead, as part of the Government's Net-Zero plan to increase low-carbon energy in the UK.

### **Full Council 24<sup>th</sup> March**

Full Council presented a rare opportunity of solidarity between Councillors, as our Group and the Conservatives shared a single motion in support of Ukraine. Our Group recommended a motion condemning the actions of the Russian government, as well as commitment to supporting and welcoming refugees as they become a part of our Suffolk communities. The Conservatives supported our idea and together we showed how politics can be put aside through difficult times.

**UKRAINE REFUGEES; I have sent all available details of what needs and can be done to help those offering a home to the refugees. There are still many issues till to sort out including school places and home inspections, plus visas.**

### **Cabinet 29<sup>th</sup> March**

The Cabinet met to vote on a plan to establish 'Freeport East'. This is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country, in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. Felixstowe Port, Harwich Port, and Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' Business Park are set to become part of Freeport East. Our Group is severely concerned with this project, as foreign direct investment is being prioritised over local businesses, many of which will now not be able to compete with the foreign businesses receiving tax relief.

The Cabinet also voted on the Enhanced Partnership between SCC and bus operators, in line with the new Bus Back Better strategy, aimed at improving services across Suffolk. The improvement plan

was voted for in October 2021. Our Group have concerns on the Government's promise of funding, as no funding has yet been confirmed by the Department for Transport.

AVAIAN FLU; I have circulated the details of the recent outbreak in Buxhall near Stowmarket and the area for exclusion.

### **International Women's Month, and Day 2022 – #BreaktheBias**

In March, we celebrated International Women's Month 2022. This is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the amazing achievements of women and push further for equality around the world.

Our group was immensely supportive of this celebration. Suffolk GLI's Spokesperson for Women, Cllr Caroline Page, called for the flag for Women's History Month to be flown high next year at Endeavour House. Suffolk County Council agreed this was an important step forward.

**BUS BACK BRITAIN** Suffolk county council was unsuccessful in its bid to government for money to provide more bus routes which is very disappointing as so many of our buses have had to be withdrawn

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**Website** - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

## **MIDSUFFOLK.**

I have sent the revised wording for the gliding club and await their new application.

GOVERNMENT ENERGY GRANTS; the £150 pound will be given to all who pay council tax by direct debit, the council must contact those who do not to tell them how to apply. I have also asked how they will help those who pay their Tax direct to their landlord. Will the landlord then pass back to the tenants???

COUNCIL HOUSE RENTS; following a problem with mail company NOT delivering the information about the rent rises this will be resent and any rise will now start from 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

LEISURE CENTRE; new disable facilities for the Stowmarket leisure centre.