



March 2020 Thedwastre North Monthly Newsletter

Ipswich Northern Route will not proceed to the next stage

On 25 February, the Cabinet of Suffolk County Council voted to accept a recommendation that the Ipswich Northern Route should not proceed to the next stage of development.

The Cabinet recommendation noted that the project had failed to attract the widespread political support needed to proceed with projects of this size and financial scale. The Cabinet paper also made it clear that local planning authorities were unable to agree to any of the additional housing growth, over the level already agreed in their local plans, which would be needed to help fund the local contribution before government funding could be requested.

The Cabinet agreed to the recommendation to create a task force to build on existing work to increase modal shift within Ipswich (reducing trips by car and increasing use of buses, walking and cycling) and to improve capacity at key junctions. More information about this will be provided in the coming weeks.

New street lighting proposed to reduce the county's carbon footprint

Suffolk County Council is looking to reduce its carbon footprint by investing £9.8m in street lighting, after Cabinet approved an LED street lighting replacement project.

Following a review of its street lighting policy in 2010, and with energy prices set to increase at between 8% and 12% a year, the Council has decided the high energy consumption of its existing lanterns could create further pressure on its resources in the near future.

The Council owns and maintains over 60,000 street lights. Back in 2010, the Council took numerous steps to help reduce both the energy costs and carbon footprint of its lighting stock. This included the introduction of part-night lighting arrangements and conversion to LED for those lighting units that were consuming the highest level of energy.

The proposal to convert the remaining street lighting stock to LED will help to reduce both Suffolk's energy consumption and carbon footprint, whilst providing crisper illumination of the streets for residents. The project will also ensure that Suffolk remains resilient to any future energy price increases. The project will be completed in the autumn of 2022.

County Council approves budget to spend more on services for vulnerable residents

On 13 February 2020, Suffolk County Council approved its annual budget. The Council will increase its spending power again this coming financial year, particularly in Children's and Adults services, where demand continues to rise year on year.

In 2020/2021, the Council's budget will rise to £556million which represents an increase of £37m (7.1%) from 2019/20. Children's and Adults Services represent around 70% of the Council's overall spend.

As well as addressing the need to maintain funding for key services, the Council will invest an additional £3.5m into two one-year programmes, the Suffolk 2020 fund (£3m) and a highways investment fund (£500k).

The Suffolk 2020 fund will be used for projects that can deliver a real difference for local communities. The intention is to adopt good ideas covering more than one area of Suffolk, rather than having a number of small-scale projects. To qualify for the fund, projects must link to one of the following themes: carbon reduction; carbon offset, road safety, natural environment; built environment; innovation; and use of technology.

The £500k highways investment fund will focus on improving the safety of pupils and parents travelling to and from school, by refreshing lines and cleaning and repairing signs in and around school zones.

The funding is allocated for use within the 2020/21 financial year and looks set to benefit areas around many Suffolk schools, complementing the road marking renewal programme, which is taking place as part of the move of civil parking powers. Suffolk Highways officers are developing a plan of how these extra works will be identified and delivered. Further information will be announced in due course.

Suffolk Highways waives fees for VE and VJ Day Commemoration events

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe and Victory over Japan Days, Suffolk Highways has confirmed it will waive road closure application fees and help support communities with event traffic management.

Communities in Suffolk will be organising commemorative events, some of which may require an application to Suffolk Highways for a road closure.

SCC is waiving application fees and will provide some help in supporting these events with the necessary road closures and management of traffic; enabling them to run as smoothly as possible. I encourage anyone who is interested in holding an event to visit our website, see what is involved and get in contact."

Communities can find out more about how to apply for a road closure as part of a commemorative event they're holding, by visiting: www.suffolk.gov.uk/eventroadclosure

Suffolk County Council issue school crossing patrol staff with body cameras

Suffolk County Council is issuing body cameras to some of its crossing patrol officers after 'drive-through' incidents and verbal abuse at school crossings.

In Suffolk we have 61 school crossing patrol officers. Increasingly, more officers have reported incidents and have said they feel abuse is becoming a regular occurrence with little respect for what they do.

In the past six months, 19 'drive-through' incidents have been recorded in Suffolk where drivers have ignored the crossing patrol officer and did not stop when the officer stood in the road to allow children to cross safely.

The cameras have been purchased by Suffolk's Roadsafe partners Suffolk County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Suffolk Constabulary with money from the Driver Diversionary Fund, which comes from motorists who have taken part in speed awareness courses.

The ten body cameras will be rotated around the county, focusing on sites where officers have reported an incident. This includes sites in Lowestoft, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds.

The body cameras follow the work of the 'Stop Means Stop' campaign from the Eastern Region School Crossing Patrol Group, which aims to remind drivers of the potential seriousness of their actions. Drivers are legally obliged to obey the school crossing patrol sign under the Road Traffic Act 1988. Failure to stop can lead to a prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000 and three penalty points.

Have your say on improvements to the Tollgate junction in Bury St Edmunds

A package of improvements is planned for the north-west area of Bury St Edmunds.

The aim is to reduce traffic congestion and improve sustainable transport facilities for pedestrians at the Tollgate junction.

As part of planning conditions, funding for the improvements will be provided jointly by Abbeygate sixth form centre on Western Way, the Marham Park housing development in Fornham All Saints, and the highways authority, Suffolk County Council.

The three options for the future layout of the Tollgate junction contain a variety of solutions, including adding a pedestrian phase to the traffic lights, the addition of an extra lane and changing the direction of travel.

Options also consider the value of the greenspace to the local area, with the proposals seeking to maintain as much of this space as possible.

The consultation will be open until 11:59pm on Tuesday 17 March 2020. Members of the public will be able to take part via www.suffolk.gov.uk/tollgate.

The results of the consultation will be presented at the end of April 2020 and improvement works will begin in early 2021.

Refilling your weekly shop without unnecessary plastic is getting easier in Suffolk

A number of shops in Suffolk are offering refills for a host of household items in a bid to cut down on the amount of plastic and packaging we use. The Suffolk Waste Partnership has launched a handy online directory which lists the shops, businesses or charities that host refill points for items such as cleaning products and toiletries, and dried foods such as rice or oats and even loose-leaf tea and chocolate. At the moment there are 22 organisations that stock refills, but the partnership is encouraging other businesses to consider introducing similar schemes.

Residents can search their local area on the directory to find where their nearest refill point is. The directory can be found here <https://suffolkrecycling.org.uk/reduce-your-waste/refill-directory>. If any retailers or businesses would like to offer refill services and get listed on the online directory please contact Waste.Management@suffolk.gov.uk.

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust public consultation

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust are consulting on plans to build a new centre at Colchester Hospital for all of their patients who need planned orthopaedic surgery, such as hip and knee replacements. The consultation closes on 1 April.

There are a number of public meetings scheduled for the week beginning 9 March:

- 9 March, 6pm – 8pm, [Bank Arts Centre, 2 Castle Street, Eye](#)
- 10 March, 6pm – 8pm, [Central Library, Northgate Street, Ipswich](#)
- 13 March, 10.30am – 12.30pm, [Community Hall, School Street, Needham Market](#)

The new centre would open in 2024 and would have at least 48 beds and up to six specialist operating theatres. Every patient would stay at the centre in Colchester while having their surgery. All other care before and after the operation – such as x-rays, pre-assessments and physiotherapy – would be provided at either Colchester or Ipswich hospital, depending on which is closest to their home. Emergency orthopaedic surgery would also continue to take place at the patient's nearest hospital.

People can respond to the consultation at www.esneft.nhs.uk/publicconsultation/ or by email on hello@esneft.nhs.uk. All of the feedback they receive will be taken into account when North East Essex and Ipswich and East Suffolk clinical commissioning groups make a final decision on the proposal in the summer.

Jane Storey
1st March 2020