

# Parish Report – April 2021

## Councillor

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## **LDGI Group motion on carer's database receives unanimous support**

On March 18<sup>th</sup> the LDGI Group presented a motion designed to improve the county's support offer for carers. The motion will see the Council working with Suffolk Family Carers to create an opt-in register for carers, who will be offered increased support including advice, signposting to key services, and the option to be consulted on key policies affecting carers. The motion received unanimous support from the Council.

## **Automatic number plate recognition camera project (ANPR)**

Suffolk County Council is working with the police to run a 2-year ANPR camera trial in speeding hot spots across the county. The cameras will be used to help detect and deter speeding offences that have been highlighted in towns and villages and educate drivers on the importance of road safety.

An ANPR camera will be installed at a site where it has been identified by a local council, with support from their county councillor, that there is a problem with speeding and/or rat-running on roads with a 20 or 30mph speed limit. The devices will be moved between sites and will remain in situ for up to one week per site. There is the option of extending this period if needed.

An ANPR device identifies a speeding vehicle by capturing an image of the number plate of the vehicle. Data will then be shared with the Police and the County Council. The County Council will write to the owner of the vehicle on behalf of both parties explaining that their vehicle has been registered as speeding. Repeat offences at a particular location could prompt the deployment of SafeCam (the Police's enforcement team) and the issuing of fines to those who breach the speed limit. I have registered an interest in this project with all villages in my division that have current SID devices.

## **Freeport East bid successful**

A combined bid from Suffolk and north Essex for a designated freeport has been approved by the Government. Freeport East will have sites at Felixstowe, Harwich and Stowmarket, and could create 13500 jobs over the next ten years. Trade would increase by an estimated 1.3 million tonnes and £66.4m gross value added.

The freeport will operate its own customs zone, allowing businesses to import goods without paying duties until the goods are exported again. This allows for raw materials to be imported, refined into a finish product, and then exported again while only paying one round of customs duties. Part of this Freeport is due to be "Gateway 14" in Stowmarket, this project is being hailed as a huge economic boost, but we need to make sure that any economic benefits filter into our local economy, and that the traffic generated doesn't out-way any economic benefit.

## **Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund**

As part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Suffolk Public Sector Leaders have established the £1.65m Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund (SIGIF), with contributions from Suffolk's pooled business rates and New Anglia LEP.

The fund is open to projects which address the significant impact of Covid-19 on Suffolk's businesses, employees, and the local economy. Projects must be sponsored by either a Suffolk local authority and / or the New Anglia LEP. Thus far £367,292 of the money has been allocated to town centre improvements in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, a multi-media improvement hub in

Ipswich, and flexible retail 'pods' in West Suffolk. There will be a rolling call for projects with decisions made quarterly (Dec / Mar / June / Sept) – the aim is to have all funding committed by 30 September 2021.

### **£500k for highways improvements near schools**

Locations around schools across Suffolk have benefitted from new road markings and signs, following an investment of £500,000 from the Highways Investment Fund (HIF). The extra funding has been focussed on improving the safety of pupils and parents travelling to and from school, refreshing lines and cleaning and repairing signs in and around school zones. 146 locations were identified as requiring new signs to replace those that were damaged or missing. Additionally, 218 areas with faded road markings are receiving a refresh.

### **New sustainable travel website launched**

The Way To Go Suffolk provides information and advice on walking and cycling, public transport, car sharing and electric vehicles. The new website will feature up to date information on how people can travel more sustainably across the county, and will also include support and guidance on how to write a Travel Plan for a Business, School or a New Housing Development.

### **SCC plants 10,000 trees in five months**

100,000 trees have been planted in just five months, since Suffolk County Council committed £228,000 from its Suffolk 2020 Fund to protect biodiversity. The council has been working closely with the farm tenants, The Woodland Trust, Giles Landscapes, The Suffolk Tree Warden Initiative and local communities to ensure that a total of 102,586 saplings have been distributed and planted in the best possible places available over this last winter. This is of the actions I suggested, in my work on the panel that looked at Our County Farms.