

Parish Report – December 2021

Councillor: Andrew Stringer

Upper Gipping Division

County Councillor 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/coronavirus

Cabinet Meeting 9th November

Climate Change Property Investment Strategy:

The Cabinet met on the 9th November, and unanimously voted in favour of a £12.8 Investment into ensuring Council buildings become carbon neutral. This is in response to the Council's climate emergency, that was declared back in 2019, and includes offices, fire stations, libraries, and others that are owned by Suffolk County Council. The Administration has said schools are not a part of this investment, as many are academies, and only a few are owned by the Council.

A12 improvements:

The Cabinet voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations outlined for the A12 Major Network Project. The Cabinet agreed a total investment of £57.46m, of which the Department for Transport are to confirm its contribution of £45.19m, in line with the Government's national scheme to improve highways. The balance of about £12m (plus any cost over runs) will have to come from a mix of the county council and any contributions it can negotiate from developers. The project aims to reduce congestion by widening roads and improving public transport along the A12 at Woodbridge and along East of England. The project also aims to incentivise walking and cycling as more practical options to driving short distances. Our Group have brought up issues of large areas of natural beauty, including mature trees, being cut down to incentivise more personal vehicle use.

Full Council Meeting 2nd December

Our Group were able to submit two motions to council, as the Labour group again failed to submit a motion of their own. This gave our Group an opportunity to submit two motions that brought about important attention to road safety in Suffolk. The purpose of our first motion was to ensure that the County Council commit to enforcing 20ph zones, in light of the newly amended Highway Code, making it clear that all speed limits within a red circle are obligatory – including a 20mph limit.

Our second motion asks the County Council to confirm its responsibility to making our roads safer for Suffolk residents and visitors, by committing to further education, enforcement, and engineering. Further commitments include expanding the Bikeability scheme, meaningful engagement via a visit from a Road Safety Specialist to every school at least once every academic year, and more coordinated between services. **The results of these motions are to be decided on the 2nd December, and so an update of the voting results will be sent in the first week of December.**

Meeting with Director of Public Health – Brief on COVID Enhanced Response Area Strategy & Countywide Shortage of Flu Jabs

On the 26th November, the Group met with Stuart Keeble, the Director of Public Health at Suffolk County Council. This was to discuss recent shortages of flu jabs reported in Suffolk, as well as a brief on Suffolk's Enhanced Response Area Strategy tackling the rising COVID rates.

It was confirmed by the Director of Public Health that there is a regional issue with the supply of flu jabs, and that the entire East of England is experiencing this. Our Group was concerned that Suffolk's agencies would not be able to provide the flu vaccine to all that fit the Government's new broadening of criteria for those who are now eligible for a free flu jab. For further details on the new criteria for a flu jab, please see here: [National flu immunisation programme 2021 to 2022 letter - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-flu-immunisation-programme-2021-to-2022-letter)

The Director of Public Health confirmed to our Group that the Enhanced Response Area program will be announced as completed, due to the falling COVID rates across Suffolk – stating that the work produced during the period can be replicated by Suffolk officials without being a part of the national strategy.

One step towards vaccinating rural communities and isolated families is through the 'Vaxi Taxi' service, funded by through the Control Outbreak Management Fund. The Council will use approved taxi contractors to provide direct transportation for eligible teenagers and parent/carers to be driven to a vaccination site, and brought back home.

Lorry Route Map Review in Suffolk

Suffolk County Council is undertaking a review of recommended lorry routes across the county, the first major review of the network since 2011. Suffolk County Council has invited parish and town councils for their views, and to provide up to three routes where they believe HGV traffic has the highest impact on their communities. For further information, please contact lorry.routes@suffolk.gov.uk, or visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/lorry-management/lorry-route-plan-review-in-suffolk/>

National Threat Level Changes: Stay Alert

Following the recent bombing incident in Liverpool and the murder of Sir David Amess MP, the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), took the decision to raise the UK National Threat Level from SUBSTANTIAL, meaning an attack is likely, to SEVERE, meaning an attack is highly likely.

If you've seen or heard something that could potentially be related to terrorism, trust your instincts and report it. Your actions could save lives. Report via <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/> or call 0800 789 321. In an emergency always call 999.

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