

STOWLANGTOFT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**MONDAY 20 OCTOBER 2025 AT 7.30 PM
BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL, BADWELL ASH**

Present: Cllrs D'Lima (Chair), Suggett (Vice Chair), Bourne, and Wales. A Osman (Clerk) was also in attendance with two members of the public.

29 **Apologies for absence.** Cllrs Catchpole and Cuff sent apologies which were accepted.

30 **Declarations of Interest.** None

31 **Public Forum.**

40mph Speed Limit Hunston. The meeting noted the work done by Hunston Parish Meeting and a draft report produced by Suffolk Highways around reducing the speed limit between Hunston and Stowlangtoft to 40mph. It was agreed to continue to support this proposal.

32 **County Councillors Monthly Report.** The meeting noted County Cllr Mellen's monthly report which had been pre-circulated.

33 **District Councillors Monthly Report.** The meeting noted District Cllr Richardson's monthly report which had been pre-circulated.

34 **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2025.** Cllr Suggett proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2025 be approved. Cllr Wales seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

The August and September 2025 meetings were cancelled.

35 **Matters arising from the last meeting:**

No matters arising.

36 **Finance:**

Clerks Salary. The meeting noted a pre-circulated brief on the effect of the local government pay settlement on the Clerks salary.

Finance Report. The meeting noted the pre-circulated financial report (current bank balance of £3,200.36 and the projected outturn at the end of the FY of £400 current account and £1,500 savings account), circulated before the meeting. Payments authorised:

MSDC Dog Bins	£117.82
Gipping Press (Newsletter)	£98.00
SALC Payroll	£22.80

Cllr Suggett agreed to authorise payments.

Annual Governance IT Assurance. The meeting noted the briefing note by the Clerk on future changes to assuring IT governance that had been previously circulated. It was **agreed that the Clerk would implement the following changes by 1 April 2026:**

- New 'gov.uk' email for the Clerk (parishclerk@stowlangtoft-pc.gov.uk).
- New 'gov.uk' domain for the Parish Council information (stowlangtoft-pc.gov.uk).

- New IT policy.

It was agreed to fund the in-year change cost of £49 from existing budget and future years costs of £49 were noted.

37 **St Georges Church.** The meeting noted the Remembrance Statues had been placed outside the Church and acknowledged the offer to hold winter meetings in the building. It was agreed that the Parish Council would continue to monitor the progress of proposed changes to the Church to make such use more comfortable in the winter months.

38 **Planning matters.**

DC/25/02879 - Householder Application - Replace existing, damaged west boundary fence with close boarded wood panels. replace existing south boundary wire fence and rear access gate with close boarded wood panels and gate, demolish two dilapidated wooden sheds and erection of a new shed. Location: 2 Almshouses, The Street, Stowlangtoft, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3JN .

The meeting agreed to support this application.

DC/25/04441 - Application for Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations. New SVP. Unblock 3no. windows internally. Amended fenestration to C20 single storey extension. Location: The Old Rectory, The Street, Stowlangtoft, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3JR.

The meeting agreed to support this application.

39 **Highways matters:**

'Quiet Lane'. The meeting noted the update from the Clerk that indicated Suffolk Highways were preparing the legal process for this work; once completed, signs would be installed. The Clerk reminded the meeting that Stowlangtoft were acting as a test case for this process which had previously been managed centrally.

40 **Correspondence.**

40mph Speed Limit Report. This was covered at minute 31.

41 **Councillors' Forum:**

Vacancy. The Chair highlighted a vacancy on the Parish Council following the recent resignation of Cllr Michelle Marsh. The Clerk confirmed that any person could be co-opted at a Parish Council meeting.

42 **Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17 November 2025 at 7.30pm in Badwell Ash Village Hall.

The meeting concluded at 8.05pm.

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Chair

October 2025

Parish Report

Cllr Andy Mellen, Thedwastre North

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One Suffolk Business Case Approved at Council Meeting

On Tuesday 16 September, Suffolk County Council held an Extraordinary (additional) meeting to debate the business case produced by the council that one unitary council would be best for Suffolk after the two-tier system (county and district/borough councils) is abolished. Unitary councils run all services for a local area, and the government is planning for all remaining two-tier areas in the country to change to this model. Suffolk is part of the devolution priority programme, which means it will be one of the first counties to do so. The reorganization will also see the creation of a mayoral authority and mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk. The business case for One Suffolk was endorsed by the Conservative majority in the council meeting and was immediately afterwards tabled at a Cabinet meeting where the council's Cabinet voted to formally approve it. It will now be submitted to government by the end of September. An alternative proposal for three unitary councils for Suffolk has been developed by the district and borough councils and will also be submitted to government, who have said they will make a decision on the reorganization by March 2025 – this may be delayed though, as other parts of the process have been so far.

The One Suffolk business case can be found here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/one-suffolk-business-case.pdf>

The Three Councils for Suffolk business case can be found here: <https://threecouncilsforsuffolk.org/wp-content/uploads/Three-Councils-For-Suffolk-Case-for-Change.pdf>

Local Nature Recovery Strategy Approved

On 9 September, the council's Cabinet voted to approve the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which was produced following a public consultation on the draft strategy between April and June this year. The strategy sets out priority species and habitats for nature conservation in the county, and gives advice on how different habitats can be improved by landowners to protect and encourage nature. Most of the area mapped out for Suffolk's nature priorities is private farmland, and the strategy does not make improvement mandatory, but the officers who have produced the strategy will now work with landowners to support them and work to find investment for measures in the strategy.

Landowners can use areas mapped in the strategy to produce ‘units’ of biodiversity for purchase by developers, as they will be required to meet the government’s new Biodiversity Net Gain requirements which state that all development should be increasing biodiversity by a minimum of 10%. The units of biodiversity do not need to be onsite or near the development.

The new strategy should also help Suffolk County Council to improve the land it owns in the county, and local planning authorities will have to take account of the strategy when development is considered. In the future, mayoral authorities like the one currently planned for Norfolk and Suffolk will be in charge of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for their area.

The strategy will now be shared with neighbouring authorities, Natural England and local partners like district and borough councils and the Broads Authority for their feedback.

Financial Forecast at Quarter 1 of 2025-26 Financial Year

Cabinet on 9 September also considered the most recent financial reporting from the council, which aimed to give a better forecast of how the council’s spending might look for 2025-26. The council is predicting that it will overspend by £13.3m by the end of the year, which it will balance by taking £13.3m from its Risk Reserve. This is extremely worrying, as is the prediction that the council’s Designated Schools Grant debt will rise over the year by £63.3m to a total of £161.2m deficit. Currently the government has agreed councils can hold this debt until March 2028, but a long term plan needs to be made as many councils are now carrying a level of debt related to SEND costs which would bankrupt them if it was called in by the government. Other cost pressures for the council include placements for children in care, care purchasing and mental health services in adult social care. The council has also received £1.2m less than expected from dividends from Suffolk Group Holdings (companies owned by the council like Concertus and Vertas) and had to pay nearly a million more than budgeted for its annual staff pay award.

Solar Together Scheme for 2025

The Solar Together Suffolk scheme, which has so far installed 32,000 solar panels at 2,651 Suffolk households, is now open for registration for 2025. Registering is free and there is no obligation to go ahead with the installation. The scheme also includes battery storage and EV charge points, and customer who have already invested in solar panels can get quotes for these too. The scheme requires householders to register online, and pre-approved solar PV suppliers then take part in a ‘reverse auction’ to bid for the work. After this, registered households will be emailed a personal recommendation which they can choose to accept or not. Telephone and email helpdesks are available to support residents in making an informed decision. The scheme is run by Suffolk’s councils in partnership with iChoosr, who have been working with UK councils on the Solar Together scheme since 2015.

For more information and to register, visit <https://solartogether.co.uk/suffolk/home>

Apply Now for a School Place for September 2026

Parents and carers can now apply for a place in the normal year of entry at a primary, infant or junior school and a secondary school for September 2026. The deadline for applications to secure a place at a secondary school is **Friday 31 October 2025** and for primary school places, including infant and junior schools, the deadline is **Thursday 15 January 2026**. All applications received by the relevant closing date are processed at the same time using the schools’ oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications if necessary. Applications received late are processed after all of the applications received on time. Last year, 94% of applicants received offers for their first preference

school, and 98.4% of applicants received an offer for one of their top three preferred schools. The council is keen that parents take into account how their child will travel to school when applying, as the nearest school for school transport purposes may not be the catchment area school. They can check this by entering their postcode here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-places/school-catchment-areas/nearest-school-checker>

Parents and carers can apply online for a school place here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-places>

Social Media and Helpful Links

Follow us on:

Twitter - [Suffolk Green, Lib Dem & Independent Group \(@SuffolkGLI\) / Twitter](#)

Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/suffolkgli_group/

Facebook - [Suffolk GLI - Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group | Facebook](#)

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

Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/what-to-do-in-a-flood>

<https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/risk-advice/flooding/>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>



District Councillor Report – Harry Richardson

1 October 2025

<p>Local government reorganisation</p>	<p>As mentioned in my last report, Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council (the latter working with the other Districts in Suffolk and Ipswich Borough Council) have submitted their plans for local government reorganisation.</p> <p>A public consultation will be held by the Government later this year and a final decision is expected in early 2026 on the future of local government in Suffolk—this being either one or three unitary authorities across the county.</p>
<p>Stowmarket High School expansion</p>	<p>The high school in Stowmarket will have its' capacity extended from 900 to 1,200 students. This is to reflect the significant housing growth in the town and in neighbouring villages such as Elmswell and Woolpit. The total cost is around £10m, with £4.8m coming from CIL funding, £3.6m from S106 funding, and £1.6m from Suffolk County Council.</p> <p>This also follows the ongoing expansion to Thurston Community College.</p>
<p>Winter loneliness fund reopens</p>	<p>The Living Well in Winter grant provides support to local organisations—including town and parish councils, village hall and playing field committees, sports clubs and centres, charities, social enterprises, community shops, and community interest companies—to facilitate accessible and inclusive spaces, as well as affordable activities designed to help individuals maintain social connections throughout the winter months.</p> <p>Up to £2,000 can be applied for and applications must be submitted by Sunday 19 October.</p> <p>In the previous year, this scheme 13 in Mid Suffolk projects, which included initiatives such as warm spaces, coffee mornings, film screenings, and dance classes.</p> <p>The application window for the grant has now reopened, with funding available for programmes that foster social connections, enhance physical and mental wellbeing, and provide welcoming community hubs.</p> <p>Eligible projects may include lunch clubs, after-school groups, affordable family sports sessions, craft workshops, community cafés, or other initiatives aimed at uniting residents and supporting them during the colder season.</p>

Grant funding opportunities

Babergh and Mid Suffolk grants and funding team will be hosting a free funding summit on Thursday 6 November at Blackbourne Community Centre, Elmswell, from 9am to 2.30pm. The event will help community organisations access the funding they need and is being delivered in partnership with Suffolk Community Foundation, Community Action Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and the National Lottery Community Fund. Book online here: [Conference Booking Form : AideCRM](#)

Cllr Harry Richardson

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