

County Councillor's Report to Creeting St Peter Parish Council – September 2024

<p>Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care</p>	<p>On 21 August the inspection report for Suffolk County Council's social care services for children was published, following an inspection at the end of May. The report found that social care services for children, which include fostering and adoption, safeguarding, child protection, youth justice and corporate parenting (children in care) 'require improvement to be good.' My group are concerned by this, as Children's Services were rated as 'Outstanding' the last time they were inspected in 2019. The remarks on leadership – that leaders do not have 'sufficient grip' on all the services provided – are especially worrying. A new director for Children's Services started in July 2024. Information on the plans for improvement are included in a report to the Cabinet meeting to be held next week</p> <p>This is a summary of the findings of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Requires improvement to be good • The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Requires improvement to be good • The experiences and progress of children in care – Good • The experiences and progress of care leavers – Requires improvement to be good • Overall effectiveness – Requires improvement to be good <p>You can read the full inspection report here: https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80565</p> <p>This inspection is separate from the recent inspection into services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</p>
<p>Back to School Transition</p>	<p>Moving up and changing school is a big change for children and a new stage of growing independence. To help parents and carers support children with this transition, Suffolk County Council have made available a selection of Solihull Approach online courses which are free to anyone with a Suffolk postcode. You can access these using the link: www.inourplace.co.uk/moving-up and register for an account using the access code WOLSEY. The Solihull Approach is a parenting support model which was developed by health visitors, child psychologists and psychotherapists in the 1990s and aims to understand child behaviour as part of their development.</p>
<p>Electric Vehicle Charging</p>	<p>Over 60 new community venues across Suffolk will have new electric vehicle (EV) charge points, as Suffolk County Council's 'Plug In Suffolk' project continues to grow. Fast charging facilities will be installed at 63 new sites, including community centres, village halls, scout huts and other community hubs, and 25 existing charge points from an early iteration of Plug In Suffolk will be adopted under a new contract. The county council has successfully bid for £7.3 million from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund, which supports local authorities to plan and deliver EV charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking. £1.4 million of the LEVI funding will go towards the community charging infrastructure, with a further £5.9 million allocated for on-street charging, which will be developed later this year.</p> <p>In addition, a trial of electric community vehicles is set to launch next summer in Suffolk, with the council's tender process for this beginning this month.</p> <p>Plug In Suffolk Car Clubs will be placing 16 electric vehicles across eight locations in Suffolk which local residents can book by the minute, hour or day. Planned locations include Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Sudbury, Needham Market, Stowmarket, Lowestoft and Woodbridge.</p>

<p>Launch of Solar Together Suffolk</p>	<p>Residents of Suffolk can come together to invest in renewable energy sources through a group-buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage. Solar Together Suffolk helps homeowners feel confident that they are paying the right price for a high-quality installation from qualified installers.</p> <p>Suffolk residents can join the group-buying scheme, which offers solar panels with optional battery storage and EV charge points, as well as retrofit battery storage for residents who have already invested in solar panels and are looking to get more from the renewable energy they generate. The scheme allows homeowners to increase their independence from the National Grid.</p> <p>It is free to register at www.solartogether.co.uk/suffolk, and there is no obligation to go ahead with an installation.</p>
<p>Simpler Recycling</p>	<p>Legislation has set out a timescale for the separate collection of a wide range of materials from households and businesses. Collection is the responsibility, in our area, of Mid Suffolk District Council. Collected materials are passed on to SCC who have responsibility for dealing with what has been collected. In future that will include food waste. There will be a capital cost, estimated at £4.235m, to adapt and improve existing transfer stations. Also, transitional costs of £1m to implement the transformation. Separate collections of glass, Tetrapaks (and similar), and a weekly collection of food waste are due to commence no later than 31 March 2026. Separate collection of plastic film is due to commence by April 2027.</p>
<p>Local Highways Issues</p>	<p>A1120 Tesco Roundabout to A14 – The water has been pumped away, the pipes have been flushed out and intruding roots cut away. A survey of the existing drainage has been carried out and officers are preparing a scheme which should cure the flooding problem once and for all. Works are due to start in the current financial year and be complete by the end of 2025.</p> <p>Signs at A1120 Creeting Lane, Stowupland, junction and at Mill Road/Pound Road Junction – I have asked for these signs to be replaced from the signs replacement budget.</p>
<p>Useful websites</p>	<p>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?adulchannel=0</p>

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