

January 2025 Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

On Devolution, there is an agreement that a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) covering Norfolk and Suffolk would be a logical strategic authority for this part of the country. All Council Leaders are agreed on this and keen to progress as quickly as possible, potentially as part of the Government's Devolution Priority Programme, with an election for the first Mayor, possibly in May 2026.

On Local Government Reorganisation, progress is likely to be slower. We must recognise the Government's ambition to create unitary councils across the country and – again - there is an opportunity to work with them, along with Suffolk District, Borough and County partners to create a structure that makes sense for our local communities and economies. However, it is likely that not all will agree on the model, and this is something we will need to work through next year.

The Government will publish criteria in January 2025 and ask local areas to come up with initial proposals by March 2025 with final proposals in Autumn 2025. The intention then would be to phase the implementation of Unitary Councils across the country by the end of this Parliament (i.e. Labour's first term in office).

This is an evolving scenario so will update as necessary.

Tenant Engagement Officer Drop-In

The team at ESC are holding a number of tenant engagement drop-in sessions across the district. Officers Leah Anderson and Trudi Robinson will be on hand to talk with tenants, discuss issues and hear their views on the current services being provided.

The drop in session for Halesworth will be held at **Halesworth Library on February 11th between 10am and 12pm.**

Mental Health Organisations Invited to Well Minds Event

Organisations working to support mental health in the north of East Suffolk are invited to a Well Minds event on Tuesday 18 February (9am – 2pm).

Taking place at Lowestoft Sixth Form College, the event is dedicated to spreading awareness of mental health issues and the support available locally. As well as a provider marketplace, there will be a range of guest speakers talking about mental health, including stress management, trauma and public health.

The event is funded by the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and villages Community Partnership, Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and villages Community Partnership and Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership.

Book your place at <https://bit.ly/4fOTHcx>

Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk