

July 2023 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Greetings,

I'm sending this along early this month because the first item, funding to help setting up school uniform banks, is time-sensitive with a deadline of the 28 July. There are more details below on the formation of East Suffolk Services mentioned in the last report, and an exciting new initiative to make private rented accommodation cheaper and more accessible to residents.

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Helping Families Access Affordable School Uniform

Community groups, organisations and town and parish councils are invited to apply for funding to help provide school uniform to East Suffolk families in need.

The East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme provides funding for community groups to open a new uniform bank or expand an existing uniform bank. Once operational, donations of new or pre-loved good-quality uniform, sportswear and school equipment can be made to the banks, which will then be made available to families who may be struggling to afford uniform.

GLI Member Cllr Katie Graham, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "School uniforms are a necessity but can be expensive, and many families, particularly in rural areas, struggle to purchase affordable school uniforms and school equipment. Uniform banks step in to provide good quality uniform to those in need and are also a valuable resource for those looking to do their bit to address the global problem of textile over-production and waste. Currently, an estimated 1.4 million items of school uniforms are discarded every year."

Applications are welcome from community and voluntary groups, organisations and town and parish councils. Dependent on capacity and need, successful applicants may be encouraged to also offer interview clothing and prom wear to assist families with older children. Grants are available for up to £3,000 and applications close on 28 July.

For further details, please contact gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Improving Access to Private Rented Housing

A new scheme, which will help East Suffolk residents to better access private rented housing, has been launched.

Approved by East Suffolk Council's cabinet on Tuesday 11 July, a new lettings partnership – East Suffolk Lettings – will be created, along with the introduction of a new Guaranteed Rent Scheme, to increase residents access to the private rented sector and minimise the use of

temporary accommodation. East Suffolk Lettings will encourage landlords to work with the Council, by charging a lower rent, at Local Housing Allowance or within 10%. Landlords will be offered a financial incentive based on the difference in cost between what they would have been able to charge, compared to the lower rate they are charging.

GLI Member Cllr David Beavan, East Suffolk's Deputy Leader and cabinet member for Housing said: "Many more people face homelessness this year as private rents rocket, mortgages soar and landlords look to sell. After a slow building programme and right to buy sales, we sadly just do not have the houses to offer to prevent or relieve homelessness, which is our statutory duty. This imaginative letting policy, devised by our great housing team, will certainly help. Any homeless person housed is a victory but the war against the housing crisis continues unabated. We must find a way to provide more homes that people can afford to live in."

Funded through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the scheme will be offered on a two-year pilot basis and if successful will become a permanent service.

East Suffolk Services Limited Launches

As part of its commitment to seek the best possible value for money for residents, businesses and all local stakeholders, East Suffolk Council agreed to create a 'Local Authority Trading Company' (LATCo) in the Autumn of 2021, enabling it to play a more direct and influential role in how important services are delivered.

The company, now called East Suffolk Services Ltd (ESSL), operates as an 'arms-length' commercial business, separate to the Council and is responsible for delivering crucial council services such as waste and recycling collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing.

GLI Member Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte, East Suffolk's Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: "I'm really pleased this is happening and we want the new company to be a great success for our staff, customers and communities. It will maximise efficiency and seek to deliver the highest possible standard of services after, of course, a smooth transition."

"The decision to create East Suffolk Services was taken in part to help us deliver environmental changes, such as new fuels, more efficient vehicles and different approaches to waste management. This commitment could not be more timely, and we will work together to achieve our ambitions in this area."

GLI Member Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council said: "The Council wants to deliver improvement that benefits council taxpayers, and an incredible amount of hard work has gone into the creation of East Suffolk Services to ensure it is ready to commence trading. East Suffolk Services aims to provide a more flexible service and respond quickly to local issues."

The Tour of Britain: Suffolk Stage

Suffolk will be hosting a full stage of the prestigious race, with Felixstowe seeing the start and finish of stage five on Thursday 7 September. Over 100 of the world's best riders will weave through our gorgeous countryside, with Kesgrave, Framlingham, Leiston and

Woodbridge all featuring. The anticipation has already begun, with a media campaign showing race-related imagery projected onto Framlingham Castle, Orwell Bridge and an Apache helicopter at Wattisham Airbase. Previously over 400,000 people watched the Tour of Britain as it visited Suffolk, generating over £8.5 million of economic benefit for the county. East Suffolk Council is an official partner of stage five.

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:
www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk