

Please find below the latest news from the County Council:

Council Elections to take place on 7 May 2026

Following the legal challenge by Reform UK, HM Government has now confirmed elections for the County Council will take place in May, and there will be no postponement for capacity reasons, as requested by the Conservative Administration at Suffolk County Council.

Arrangements for the election will be announced in March and April in respect of polling stations and other matters of election management.

County Council Tax to Rise by 4.99%

On Thursday, Full Council voted to raise the County Council's share of council tax by This decision raises the tax for a Band D property by £82.26 per annum, bringing the annual payment to £1,731.69 from £1,649.43 with a 2.99% increase in the base and 2.00% in the Adult Social Care Precept. This is the maximum permitted under law without a referendum. This was supported by the Conservatives and all Lib Dems, Greens and Independents. Reform UK voted against and Labour abstained.

Reform UK proposed an alternative budget of a 4.00%, with a 2.00% increase in the base and 2.00% in the Adult Social Care Precept. This would have pumped £4.66 million back into the Suffolk high street, residents' savings accounts, helped residents to pay down debt or make contributions to our voluntary sector. Efficiency savings, confirmed by the Monitoring Officer and Responsible Finance Officer as legal, would have been made by reducing non-frontline personnel and reducing long levels of sick leave, where possible. This was unsuccessful with all other parties voting against.

43 Bus Service Query – Reporting Back

As requested at last month's meeting, I met with the Cabinet Member responsible, and voiced our concerns about the service not running on a number of occasions in January.

In summary, Konect bus have been under new ownership since October (they are now part of the Transport Made Simple group) and the team have been working hard to address the problems experienced as part of the Go Ahead group. This has included bringing in drivers from their other Essex companies (Central Connect and Flagfinders), sub-contracting one route to another local operator and attempting to recruit and train new drivers locally.

This should now be resolved, but please let me know if there are further issues.

High Street Resurfacing

I raised local concern regarding the surface dressing works and loose chippings.

The Construction Manager is shortly undertaking a site visit, with a view of undertaking an additional 'sweep' to address the problem.

If you have any matters arising, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to seeing you in March.

Kind regards,

Philip

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