

## **Cabinet Meeting, 1<sup>st</sup> February**

The Cabinet met to discuss the core budget, and voted to pass the budget through to Full Council to be finalised on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The Cabinet also voted to adopt the Carbon Budget, as well as the recommendations to enhance Suffolk Biodiversity – making this a key priority moving forward. Cabinet documents can be found here:

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(01-02-2022\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(01-02-2022),%20The%20Cabinet)

The Cabinet approved a rise in Council Tax of 2.99% giving a rise of £41.76 for a Band D property to £1438.92 (County Council components)(from £1397.16) for 2022-23. They did not increase the Social Care Precept by an additional 1% which they had the opportunity to do (which would be an additional annual rise of £13.97) which is regrettable as more funds are clearly needed for Social Care as has been explained to our group in meetings with Director of ASC and this would have raised an extra £3.6m or so. We are proposing a budget amendment to this effect and also proposing a spend of £600,000 from the unallocated Risk Reserve on a pilot scheme for fuel poverty which would reduce bills by 25% for 400 families in fuel poverty if invested in a company such as 'Ripple Energy' which buys shares in renewable energy projects such as PV panels or wind turbines.

The **Biodiversity Policy Development Panel** reported to Cabinet and their report was approved, which has some very positive promises:

- a) Enhance biodiversity value of 30% of land and assets by 2030 (including County Farm estate 12,500 acres)
- b) Measure progress towards this with resources allocated
- c) Highways managed better (new maintenance contract) with respect to verges, roadside nature reserves, tree, hedges, invasive species
- d) Stop use of Glyphosphate by 2023
- e) LED street lighting (make sure best frequencies used re wildlife)
- f) Housing- deliver additional 10% net biodiversity gain across housing programme (total at least 20%) and improve connectivity.
- g) Planning, Flooding, Transport strategy, Procurement and Governance all have biodiversity guidance/improvements in mind.
- h) Try to help replicate projects such as Carlton Marshes across Suffolk, work with other authorities and local groups; a 'nature recovery network'

Regards

Simon Harley (SCC Councillor)

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