

October 2023 Parish Report

East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Council pledges £900,000 investment for Town Hall restoration project

A project to restore and revitalise Lowestoft's historic Town Hall has received a further funding boost thanks to a £900,000 investment by East Suffolk Council.

The funding will go towards a project to transform the vacant High Street building into a multi-functional community space, containing a Heritage Gallery, café, community event space and town council offices. On Tuesday, Cabinet members agreed a request from building owner and project leader, Lowestoft Town Council, for a financial contribution towards the redevelopment, which forms part of the Lowestoft Town Investment Plan and the Towns Fund programme.

The building occupied by the former Waveney District Council until 2015, when operations moved to new Riverside offices, and was transferred to Lowestoft Town Council in 2017. East Suffolk Council has already provided support in developing the project plan and bidding for additional external funding, which included an allocation of £2million in Towns Fund investment as part of the overall £24.9m Lowestoft's Town Deal awarded by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes & Communities (DLUHC) in 2022. Last month, the project received another major £3,257,512 funding boost from The National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of a £12.2m investment to help restore 12 historic buildings nationwide.

GLI Cllr Toby Hammond, East Suffolk's Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Transport, said: "We are delighted to be able to agree this further investment in the Lowestoft Town Hall regeneration project, which promises to maintain the listed building's character, while greatly increasing its uses and maximising sustainability."

Comment on permit for incineration plant

An application for an environmental permit has been submitted to East Suffolk Council for a small waste incineration plant at Ellough, near Beccles and residents are invited to submit their views.

The proposal to build and operate a Small Waste Incineration Plant (SWIP) in Ellough was submitted to Suffolk County Council and planning permission was granted in May 2023. This plant will be owned, constructed and managed by V.C. Cooke Ltd alongside their existing waste operation on the Ellough Industrial Estate. In law, as well as planning permission for a waste incinerator, the operators need to obtain a permit to ensure it operates with minimal pollution. V.C. Cooke Ltd have now applied to East Suffolk Council for this permit, and provided information about how the site will be built and controlled. The Council's Environmental Protection team will now follow a strict process to assess whether the application proves the SWIP will not cause harm to human health or the environment.

Residents are invited to take part in the consultation and provide any information or facts about the site that may not be included in the application paperwork. This ensures the Council has fully assessed how the operator intends to manage the incinerator.

Any comments on the application should be emailed to ep@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or sent by post to Environmental Protection, East Suffolk Council, Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ. Any written comments will be placed on the public register unless they include a statement requesting that this is not done.

The consultation closes on 5 November 2023.

The application can be viewed at: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/comment-on-permit-for-incineration-plant/

Businesses urged to have say in Explore Suffolk BID ballot

East Suffolk Council is urging local businesses to have their say in a ballot on the creation of a new 'Destination Business Improvement District' (BID), which includes parts of East Suffolk.

A ballot is being held by Locus Management Solutions Ltd to consider proposals for 'Explore Suffolk', which, in their words would seek "to connect businesses, partners and local authorities to establish a coherent tourism offer" and would see projects delivered over and above services already funded by councils. The BID is committing to champion the unique qualities of the South Suffolk area. This activity would be funded by a mandatory levy on businesses in the defined zone.

A Business Plan has been produced outlining key information about the proposal and all businesses entitled to vote should have received a statement with:

- an explanation for the arrangement of the ballot;
- an explanation of the regulations that allows the person to request a copy of the BID proposal;
- details of the name and address of the BID proposer.

If the ballot is carried, this business-led proposal will result in an additional 1.82% levy on business properties with a rateable value over £24,500. East Suffolk Council itself does not have a say in the process and has not been involved in the Advisory Board. But the Council is keen for businesses affected in East Suffolk to participate in the ballot, given the impact and requirement for them to fund the 'Explore Suffolk' BID.

GLI Cllr Vince Langdon-Morris, East Suffolk's Cabinet Member for Resources and Value for Money, said: "I urge business owners who have received these BID ballot papers and voting forms to study the business case and participate in the vote. The BID area covers part of our district and includes locations already well served by the Felixstowe BID and "The Suffolk Coast" Destination Management Organisation (DMO). It is important that those businesses affected by the proposals are clear on the requirements and expectations, and we urge them to have their say."

The ballot is taking place entirely by post and all votes must be returned by 5pm on Thursday 19 October 2023. If businesses entitled to vote have lost their ballot paper, then a replacement ballot paper can be obtained from Ipswich Borough Council. Information is available at: www.ipswich.gov.uk/BIDelections

Brownfield land grant to help pave way for waterfront regeneration

A Government grant worth more than £4.2million has been awarded to East Suffolk Council (ESC) to help transform brownfield land in Lowestoft into much needed future housing.

The £4,203,800 grant is part of the second phase of a £180m Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) designed to unlock sites across the country to make way for more than 6,000 new homes. The funding will help cover the cost of land remediation at the former Sanyo and Survitec manufacturing sites located on the south side of Lake Lothing, Lowestoft, in an area known as Kirkley Waterfront.

The land was acquired by predecessor to ESC, Waveney District Council, in 2018, having stood vacant since 2009, and forms part of the Kirkley Waterfront and Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood scheme, which focuses on regenerating the area to provide housing and jobs for local people. The work will enable preparation for future development of plans which include the construction of 350 new homes at the former Sanyo and Survitec manufacturing sites.

GLI Cllr David Beavan, East Suffolk's Cabinet Member for Housing said: "This is good news. Lowestoft's industrial past can be transformed into much needed housing which is as affordable and as sustainable as we can make it.

"Record homelessness needs more housing, which is better on brownfield than greenfield sites. We just need funding for the tidal barrier now to allow this project to go full steam ahead."

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