

REPORT FROM DISTRICT CLLR OWEN GREY

Dear All,

Please find below a brief update of my activities as District Councillor since May 2023.

I'm happy to share that it's been a rather hectic (almost) six months. Following the creation of a Green, Liberal, and independent administration at East Suffolk District Council, I was made chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, a role integral to ensuring the Council delivers value for money. The Committee is also charged with monitoring Council performance and making sure adequate safeguards are in place to prevent fraud and corruption. I'm also a member of East Suffolk Council's Scrutiny Committee, as well as the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel; complementary roles which I feel allow me to fight for a fairer and safer community.

As such, I have used meetings to raise...

- ...the current inadequacies in the provision of social and affordable housing for **local people**, calling for a review of the East Suffolk Local Plan so that it better supports those most in need. My efforts also include emphasising the importance of having proper regard for Neighbourhood Plans and the environment so a better balance can be struck.
- ...the need to reform the bureaucracy around costs levied by local authorities, which do much to deter drivers from applying for Hackney carriage and private hire licences. (A chronic shortage of taxi drivers has a detrimental impact on transport provision, particularly in rural communities);
- ...the importance of rigorous and transparent revenue mechanisms, ensuring the Council does not over or undercharge residents with respect to social and commercial rents (something that has sadly happened in some cases);
- ... the need to properly publicise mental health services across the district so that as many people as possible are aware of the support on offer, as well as improve the current provision of such services;
- ... the importance of investing in proper community policing so that residents can see and hear from their local law enforcement. I have also called on the police to address stereotypes surrounding the issue of antisocial behaviour. Such acts are perpetrated by people of all ages and backgrounds, and it is imperative our authorities tackle this issue without prejudice or discrimination.

Across the ward, I am grateful to have supported Easton Parish Council in ensuring Suffolk Highways covered the excess costs for speed calming measures installed in the village following a period of lengthy delay. Sadly, I have been unable as yet to convince Suffolk County Council of the need to address traffic and speeding through Saxtead, though I will continue to push this. I am also grateful to Parham and Great Glemham Parish Councils (as well as Marlesford across the border) for their cooperation as we seek clarity from Low Carbon Ltd and East Suffolk Planning on the current status of an envisaged solar farm project in the ward.

I am just as pleased to have been able to contribute through my Enabling Communities Budget (ECB) to the maintenance of the village halls at Parham and Badingham, as well as to upkeep of finger posts at Cretingham, Monewden, and Hoo. **I am eager to use the rest of my allocation before March 2024 and would welcome any requests for consideration.**

Separately, many of you will be aware that I am working on a summary of the flooding we have recently experienced across the Ward. I aim to have something completed in the next week or two and will share it with all Town and Parish Councils prior to submission. I am working closely with my co-Councillor, Vince Langdon-Morris, and I hope to use the document to hold National government, Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk District Council, the Environment Agency, and the Water Management Alliance (Internal Drainage Board) to account as regards the management of our watercourses.

Of course, there's still much more to do and progress will be slower in some areas than others. In the meantime, please do raise any issues with me and I will endeavour to address them.

Best wishes, Owen Grey

Owen Grey | Councillor for Framlingham Ward

East Suffolk Council

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