

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023

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For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis: [www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving)

Latest SCC COVID information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email: [refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk)  
or [ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk)

### **Budget Proposals for 2023-24**

The first proposals for the 2023/24 budget have been released. SCC plan to increase tax by 3.99% (1.99% increase in Council Tax, 2% increase in Social Care Precept).

We are currently in discussions over our response to the budget proposals. If the administration had used the additional 1% raise in Council Tax allowable last year which we suggested there would be more money available this year but instead cuts in services look likely as a result of this and the other financial problems acquired last year.

### **County Deal Update**

National government met with Suffolk County Council to sign a provisional County Deal. The Deal will agree to devolve additional powers and funding to the County, including housing, transport and adult education.

The Deal has been lauded as a momentous, however our Group believes that this Deal has been massively overstated. The headline '£480m' is in fact over 30 years – equating to only around £16m a year. Just under £6m has been agreed for new housing, this equates to under 30 homes per year across Suffolk.

The Council Leader promised we wouldn't have a Mayor, however the deal agrees to create a Mayoral Development Corporation which will allow all the electors of Suffolk to choose an elected Leader of the Council in 2024 for the first 5 years and then again every 4 years. Politically, there is a real risk of stagnation – with the elected Mayor/Leader potentially from one party and the majority of Councillors from another.

Our Group are strongly in favour of devolving national powers to local authorities. There was a real opportunity to make a difference here, but the result appears to be token politics.

For our full press release, visit our website: <https://suffolkqli.wordpress.com/2022/12/12/suffolks-county-deal-big-deal/>

## **New SCC Website**

Suffolk County Council have launched their new website. The new site is aimed to be easier and simpler. Our Group understands that this platform is often the first point of contact for residents and so it is important the website continues to engage and adapt to the needs of the Suffolk communities.

To see the new site, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/>

## **Modern Slavery**

As the Council's modern slavery annual statement was voted through cabinet, SCC have released an information bulletin to report any possible signs of modern slavery within your local communities.

General signs of modern slavery include: Isolation, restricted movement, poor living conditions, unusual travel arrangements, and physical appearance of abuse.

If you suspect a modern slavery crime is being committed, but there is no immediate risk of harm, you can report it to the Police on **101**, or the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline on **0800 121 700** – if there is immediate danger, phone **999**.

For further contact, email: [community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk)

For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/modern-slavery>

## **Suffolk looks for more hosts!**

Suffolk is looking for new hosts to help support refugees. Accommodation must be available to guests for a minimum of 6 months. Hosts will be eligible to receive the £350 thank you payment for up to 6 months or more, depending on the date your guests arrived in the UK (12 months starting from the date your guests first arrived in the UK).

If you know anyone that might be interested, please encourage them sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, or by emailing [refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk).

### **Follow us on:**

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**Facebook** - Search 'Suffolk GLI - Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group'

**Website** - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkqli.wordpress.com\)](#)

**I wish you a peaceful New Year**

**Simon Harley    Suffolk County Councillor for Peninsula Division**