

Suffolk County Council meeting Thursday 22 May 2025, vote taken on Motion 1.

Motion – Proposed by Councillor Richard Rout and seconded by Councillor Henry Lloyd.

Motion Text: ‘This council supports robust pre-application consultation for nationally significant infrastructure projects. In Suffolk, the unchecked surge of “clean energy” and transmission projects— sprawling solar and battery arrays and vast grid networks— strains our rural communities, farmland, and delicate ecosystems, causing significant local disruption.

The council strongly opposes the government’s amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, which remove sections 42 and 49 of the Planning Act 2008, replacing statutory consultation with inadequate statutory guidance. These changes undermine fair engagement with Suffolk’s residents, who face cumulative impacts from poorly coordinated energy schemes threatening the local economy, biodiversity, heritage, and quality of life.

The council reiterates its opposition to the government’s 2030 grid decarbonisation target, which drives this relentless pace of development, prioritising arbitrary deadlines over thoughtful planning. It is the council’s view that delays at pre-application arise from the volume of projects and applicants’ often substandard engagement, not excessive regulation. Weakening the consultation process risks approving flawed developments that disregard Suffolk’s unique environmental and social needs.

The council urges the government to:

1. Retain sections 42 and 49 of the Planning Act 2008, or
2. Enforce case-by-case statutory engagement criteria, rigorously assessing applicants’ consultation quality.

Without these safeguards, the proposals will fuel distrust and enable harmful energy projects to proceed. Suffolk demands a planning process that balances broader goals with our residents’ wellbeing, landscapes, and economy, ensuring infrastructure respects the communities it impacts.’

Total results	
For	42
Against	3
Abstain	9

Conservative Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Edward Back	For		
Peter Beer	For		
Bobby Bennett	For		
Stuart Bird	For		
Elaine Bryce			
Stephen Burroughes	For		
Nadia Cenci	For		
Jenny Ceresa			
Chris Chambers	For		
Judy Cloke			
Andy Drummond	For		
Philip Faircloth-Mutton	For		
James Finch	For		
Jessica Fleming	For		
Mick Fraser	For		
David Goldsmith	For		
Georgia Hall			
Liz Harsant	For		
Ryan Harvey			
T-J Haworth-Culf	For		
Matthew Hicks	For		
Rachel Hood	For		
Beccy Hopfensperger	For		
Michael Ladd	For		
Stuart Lawson			
Henry Lloyd	For		
Joe Mason	For		
Debbie McCallum			
Patti Mulcahy			
Sam Murray	For		
David Nettleton			
Alexander Nicoll			
Colin Noble	For		
Kay Oakes			
James Reeder	For		
Andrew Reid	For		
Debbie Richards	For		
David Roach	For		
Keith Robinson	For		
Richard Rout	For		
Richard Smith MVO	For		
Karen Soons	For		
Heike Sowa	For		
Joanna Spicer	For		
Lance Stanbury	For		
Jamie Starling			

Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro			
Paul West	For		
Steve Wiles	For		
Nathan Wilson	For		

Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Seamus Bennett			Abstain
Jessie Carter			Abstain
Annette Dunning			Abstain
Simon Harley			
Richard Kemp			
Ruth Leach	For		
Ash Lever			Abstain
Robert Lindsay			Abstain
Inga Lockington	For		
Victor Lukaniuk	For		
Andy Mellen			
Penny Otton			Abstain
Keith Scarff			
Andrew Stringer			Abstain
Caroline Topping	For		
Keith Welham		Against	

Labour Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Rob Bridgeman			Abstain
Peter Byatt			
Adele Cook		Against	
Elizabeth Farrow			
Sandy Martin		Against	
Lucy Smith			

Ungrouped Independent Councillor

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Peter Thompson			

Ungrouped Reform UK Councillor

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Christopher Hudson	For		