

## Suffolk County Council meeting Thursday 19 March 2026, vote taken on Motion 2.

Motion 2 – Proposed by Councillor Ruth Leach and seconded by Councillor Inga Lockington.

Motion Text: 'This council is appalled by the scale of the revelations in the recent releases from the 'Epstein' files, and acknowledges that the high volume of media coverage makes this a triggering time for all survivors of sexual exploitation and harm, whatever their gender. There are indications that further revelations are to come.

When high profile cases of sexual exploitation and trafficking dominate the country's media cycle, services provided for survivors see a spike in the number of new referrals, requests for re-engagement from former clients, and an increased number of contacts from current clients.

Moments like this highlight to all of us in public service that sexual harm and exploitation are long-term public health issues.

The council recognises the need to provide signposting information for residents who feel ready to share their experiences and access support, and also to provide guidance to friends, family and professionals on how to respond when disclosures of abuse are made to them.

The council therefore resolves to:

- Release a statement of support publicly acknowledge that intense media coverage of sexual harm and trafficking cases can be distressing or triggering for survivors, and reaffirm the Council's commitment to supporting those affected through an informative social media campaign
- This campaign will provide signposting to support via local charity Survivors in Transition, with guidance on how to access it
- It will affirm that this council will continue to work with partners across health, education, policing, and the voluntary sector to ensure that information about available support services for survivors of sexual abuse is clearly signposted through Council communications and public-facing channels.
- Request that the council to write to the relevant Government departments to highlight the importance of sustained national support for specialist sexual harm services and to ensure that survivors across the country can access timely, trauma-informed assistance.
- Do everything it can to reduce stigma and normalise seeking help.'

Members present agreed the motion by general assent.