

Key Decision Forward Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to give sufficient notice to people affected by key decisions to exercise their rights to see papers and make an input into the decision-making process.

Key Decisions

At Suffolk County Council, most key decisions are made by the Cabinet. Setting the budget is a decision of the County Council. Some key decisions may be made under specifically delegated authority as defined in the Council's [Constitution](#).

Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations Part III [Statutory Instruments 2000 No 3272] states:

8 (1) In these regulations a 'key decision' means an executive decision which is likely:

- a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

Threshold

Suffolk County Council has adopted a threshold of £500,000 for key decisions.

This plan includes decisions which the decision maker has decided are key decisions in that they:

- a) involve significant expenditure or savings; or
- b) have a significant effect on communities,

even though they are either below the adopted threshold or impact on people in one electoral division only.

Decision Makers

Cabinet:

Councillor Matthew Hicks	Leader of the Council.
Councillor Richard Smith MVO	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development and Skills.
Councillor Nadia Cenci	Cabinet Member for Communities
Councillor Chris Chambers	Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, Planning and Waste
Councillor Bobby Bennett	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services
Councillor Beccy Hopfensperger	Cabinet Member for Adult Care
Councillor Andrew Reid	Cabinet Member for SEND and Education
Councillor Richard Rout	Cabinet Member for Devolution, Local Government Reorganisation and NSIPs
Councillor Paul West	Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding.

County Council: A full list of [County Councillors](#) is available on the SCC website.

Delegated Authority: Where a key decision is to be made under delegated authority, the name and title of that individual will be provided under that item.

- The information provided for each key decision below includes a list of the documents which will be submitted to the decision maker for consideration in relation to the matter in respect of the key decision to be made. Subject to any restriction on their disclosure, copies of, or extracts from, any document listed will be available on Suffolk County Council's website or be available for inspection at Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX at least five clear days before the meeting (please contact Democratic Services on 01473 265119 or email: committee.services@suffolk.gov.uk for further information).
- Further documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker. If you wish to submit further documentation relevant to a decision being made or you require details of those documents (if any) as they become available, please contact Democratic Services (contact details above).
- The list below also includes items that are not key decisions (if any) which will be considered by the Cabinet.

Key Decision: 29 December 2025 to 27 January 2026

Subject:	20 mph Speed Limit Policy
Is this a key decision?	No
Date key decision to be made:	9 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Chris Chambers, Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, Planning and Waste
Description:	The report will seek approval to publish an updated policy on relating to 20mph limits in Suffolk. This request and additional documents outline Suffolk's updated 20mph policy, providing an opportunity to empower our local communities to improve road safety and quality of life. It is important to understand that this is not a blanket policy for a county-wide default 20mph limit. Instead, it is a toolkit designed to help communities introduce 20mph limits where they are most appropriate and have strong local support..
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure

Lead officer: Tom Fisher, Senior Strategic Transport Planner
01473 265717 Thomas.fisher@suffolk.gov.uk
On behalf of: Graeme Mateer, Head of Transport Strategy

Subject:	Devolution Priority Programme: Suffolk County Council's response to Government's statutory consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk.
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	9 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Devolution, Local Government Reorganisation and NSIPs
Description:	As a member of the Government's Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) the County Council submitted its One Suffolk Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) business case proposal for a single Suffolk unitary council on 26 September 2025. On 19 November 2025, Government launched its statutory consultation on proposals for LGR in Suffolk, which is due to close on 11 January 2026. This consultation provides key evidence for the Minister's decision on which form of LGR they are ' minded to' implement in Suffolk. Therefore, it is incumbent on the County Council to ensure a timely and robust response to it.
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure and consultation response will be submitted for consideration.
Lead officer:	Caroline Davison, Head of Corporate Strategy, 01473 264400 caroline.davison@suffolk.gov.uk

Subject:	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR): Response to Ministerial Letter of 18 December 2025.
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	12 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet

Cabinet Member: Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Devolution, Local Government Reorganisation and NSIPs

Description: On 18 December, the Minister gave a Written Ministerial Statement and wrote to Leaders of councils with elections in May 2026 where proposals for reorganisation have been submitted and decisions not yet taken. These invited those Leaders to set out views on the postponement of their local election and whether it is considered that this could release essential capacity to deliver local government reorganisation in the area.

Whilst the decision to delay elections rests with the Minister, the decision on whether or not to request a delay is an Executive decision for Cabinet.

Notice of Late Item

Documents to be submitted: Report by the Executive Director Organisational Change and Local Government Reorganisation

Lead officer: Caroline Davison, Head of Corporate Strategy, 01473 264400 caroline.davison@suffolk.gov.uk

Subject: Revenue Budget 2026-27 and Capital Programme 2026-30

Is this a key decision? No

Date key decision to be made: 27 January 2026

Decision maker: Cabinet

Cabinet Member: Councillor Richard Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development & Skills

Description: This report summarises the Council's final Revenue and Capital budget for 2026-27 and outlines the background, financial environment, scrutiny and consultation arrangements. It details the savings proposals being recommended together with the Council's Treasury Management arrangements and Prudential Indicators. It makes recommendations to Council on the budget requirement and council tax for 2026-27 together with the Capital Programme, its financing and prudential indicators.

Documents to be submitted: Report by the Chief Executive with Annexes

Lead officer: Andrew.Filby@suffolk.gov.uk

Head of Corporate Finance

01473 260776

Subject:	Brightwell Lakes and North Felixstowe new schools presumption recommendations
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	27 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for SEND and Education
Description:	<p>The first primary schools on the North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood and Brightwell Lakes are set to open in 2027. After a strong field of applications, three multi academy trusts were shortlisted. Interviews on 1st July 2025 saw officers and local Councillors in agreement to recommend Unity Schools Partnership for the new North Felixstowe school and Children's Endeavour Trust for the new Brightwell Lakes school. Cabinet approval is now required to submit these recommendations to the Secretary of State for Education, who will make the final decision on which academy trusts will run the new schools.</p>
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services
Lead officer:	<p>Penny Bates – School Planning Manager 07514 721954 Penny.bates@suffolk.gov.uk</p>

Subject:	To Determine School Admission Arrangements for the 2027/2028 School Year
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	27 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
Description:	<p>The Local Authority's School Admission Arrangements for the 2027/2028 School Year must be determined by 28 February 2026. This includes the proposed oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers for maintained community and voluntary controlled schools.</p>

Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services
Lead officer:	Jan Scott/Angela Davey, Senior Education Officer (Admissions and School Travel)
	Jan.Scott@suffolk.gov.uk Tel 01473 264657
	Angela.Davey@suffolk.gov.uk Tel 01473 260978

Subject:	The Council's Carbon Report 2024/25
Is this a key decision?	No
Date key decision to be made:	27 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Rout for Devolution, Local Government Reorganisation and NSIPs
Description:	Following the Climate Emergency declaration in 2019, Cabinet established a Policy Development Panel (PDP) to investigate the ambition of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to develop a series of recommendations which were adopted by Cabinet in 2020. One recommendation was for the annual publication and approval of a carbon budget (footprint and reduction pathway) alongside the Council's financial budget to monitor progress against the net zero target. This report presents that commitment.
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure
Lead officer:	Ned Harrison Programme Manager 01473 264472 Ned.harrison@suffolk.gov.uk

Subject:	Dual Provision Children's Home – Saxmundham, Suffolk
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	27 January 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Bobby Bennett, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services
Description:	Approval is sought for match funding against DfE capital investment to establish a new dual provision children's home in Saxmundham, Suffolk, for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour. The project will provide purpose-built, Ofsted-registered accommodation, reduce reliance on unregistered settings, and improve outcomes for children deprived of their liberty.
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services
Lead officer:	Tina Hines, Head of Strategic Commissioning – Children and Young People Phone: 01473 265183 Email: Tina.hines@suffolk.gov.uk

Indicative Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 28 January 2025 to 24 March 2026

This section provides an indicative list of key decisions that the Cabinet, County Council or a delegated officer is likely to make between the dates indicated above. Suffolk County Council aims to keep to the dates shown below however as new circumstances come to light, it may be necessary to reschedule some items and add or remove others.

The list below also includes items that are not key decisions (if any) which may be considered by the Cabinet.

Subject:	Revenue Budget 2026-27 and Capital Programme 2026-30
Is this a key decision?	No
Date key decision to be made:	12 February 2026
Decision maker:	County Council
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development & Skills
Description:	This report summarises the Council's final Revenue and Capital budget for 2026-27 and outlines the background, financial environment, scrutiny and consultation arrangements. It details the savings proposals being recommended together with the Council's Treasury Management arrangements and Prudential Indicators. It makes recommendations to Council on the budget

requirement and council tax for 2026-27 together with the Capital Programme, its financing and prudential indicators.

Documents to be submitted: Report by the Chief Executive with Annexes

Lead officer: Andrew.Filby@Suffolk.gov.uk

Head of Corporate Finance
01473 260776

Subject:	2025-26 Budget – Quarter 3 Monitoring Report
Is this a key decision?	No
Date key decision to be made:	24 February 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development & Skills
Description:	This report summarises the Council's forecast performance against its 2025-26 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme as at Quarter 1. It includes an explanation of budget variances compared to the budget. The report will also show the Council's reserves, virements and the Council's Treasury Management Activities.
Documents to be submitted:	Report by the Chief Executive with Annexes
Lead officer:	Andrew.Filby@Suffolk.gov.uk
	Head of Corporate Finance
	01473 260776

Subject:	SCC LionLink s42 Statutory Consultation Response
Is this a key decision?	Yes
Date key decision to be made:	24 February 2026
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Cabinet Member:	Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Devolution, Local Government Reform and NSIPs
Description:	This LionLink is a proposed electricity grid interconnector scheme which will create an undersea link between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. It is a Nationally

Significant Infrastructure Project due to the scale of the proposals.

This report covers SCC's s42 Statutory Consultation response to the LionLink interconnector proposals.

Documents to be submitted: Report by the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Growth, Highways, and Infrastructure

Lead officer: Roly Arbon, Project Manager (PMO)
roland.arbon@suffolk.gov.uk
01473 260013

Subject: Revision of Suffolk County Council's Energy and Climate Adaptive Infrastructure Policy

Is this a key decision? Yes

Date key decision to be made: 24 February 2026

Decision maker: Cabinet

Cabinet Member: Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Devolution, Local Government Reform and NSIPs

Description: This report sets out the proposals, and rationale, for amendments to Suffolk County Council's Energy and Climate Adaptive Infrastructure Policy, following a review, undertaken two years after the policy was approved, in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet on 16th May 2023.

Documents to be submitted: Report by the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Growth, Highways, and Infrastructure

Lead officer: Phil Watson Strategic Energy Projects Manager
01473264777

There are currently no items for the Cabinet meeting on 24 March.