

**Suffolk County Council Meeting Thursday 21 March 2024 - Motion 1 as amended –
Proposed by Councillor Richard Rout and seconded by Councillor Michael Ladd**

‘This Council recognises that Suffolk is being placed at the forefront of the United Kingdom’s quest for energy security and transition away from fossil fuels. Noting that, if schemes currently proposed are consented, upwards of 30% of the nation’s energy will be generated in or around, and transmitted via, Suffolk, the Council places on record its demand that schemes that must take place here are coordinated, that proper communication takes place with our communities and that Suffolk residents are treated fairly. It is the view of this Council that, too often, a high-handed approach from developers prevents this.

Therefore, the Council resolves:

- For transmission schemes, an off-shore coordinated approach must be our long-term strategic aim and, where schemes take place on-shore, undergrounding should be maximised and routes designed to minimise impacts on communities, landscapes, ecology, business and tourism.*
- For solar schemes, brownfield, rooftop, and around built infrastructure, such as warehousing, are our preferred sites. Where schemes are proposed for agricultural land, developers should commission, via the County Council, independent land quality assessments to inform our response. The Council will oppose any scheme that removes grade 1 and 2 land from food production. These principles will be further set out in our forthcoming solar guidance.*
- Suffolk, with the approval of Sizewell C now given, will be home to the UK’s foremost operational nuclear cluster. Suffolk should leverage this opportunity for economic growth and maximise the opportunity for our supply chain and workforce in the operation and maintenance of nuclear facilities in the UK and ensure those surrounding communities, who will bear the disruption of a twelve year construction period, receive in full, the mitigation measures specified in the consent, and, all other measures agreed in the deed of obligation, and elsewhere, by SZC Ltd.*
- To place on record its support for Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs), which could supplant decommissioned fossil fuel generation on brownfield sites and thus reduce the pressure on power generation in Suffolk.*
- Recognises the economic development opportunities around the offshore wind sector and seeks to maximise these for Suffolk.*
- Notes the huge contribution of the tourism sector in Suffolk and expects that all energy schemes a) scope in tourism impacts b) remove or adequately mitigate and compensate for tourism impacts and c) consider cumulative impacts of all*

schemes and give due regard for the impacts of their scheme on traffic on peak visitor days.

- To register its grave concern that through an iterative, opaque, and evolving process, involving multiple developers, and a changing regulatory regime, the village of Friston will see disproportionate harm that was not clearly defined, or explained, when the original EA1N and EA2 wind farms were being consented. The Council makes clear that this lack of transparency is unacceptable, and that the new National Energy System Operator must ensure that this failure of fair process, is not repeated.*

Finally, the Council notes it has played a key role in shaping national energy policy and recognises that, given the scale and pace of change required to meet the nation's energy security goals, it must continue to be a strong voice for Suffolk's communities and operate with speed and dexterity in ensuring a fair deal for our county.

Therefore, the Council will write to the new National Energy System Operator to ask that, given the multiple energy transmission and generation projects emerging in Suffolk, interim arrangements for communication and coordination on energy developments in the county and region, are put in place, prior to the establishment of Regional Energy System Planning, which is currently being developed by the regulator, Ofgem.

A copy of this motion will also be shared with the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP.'

On a vote being taken 54 were in favour of the motion as amended, 10 against and one abstention
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/councillor-assets/2024-03-21-votes-at-council-motion-1.pdf>