

# CLlr Isabelle Reece: General Report to Parishes January 2026

## Happy New Year to Everyone in Bures St Mary and Nayland Ward!

### Council and Cabinet Meetings

There was no Council Meeting in December. The next one is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> January, when the main item on the agenda will be to set the Budget for 2026-27. As has been widely publicised in the press, at its Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January Babergh Cabinet will propose an increase in Parking Charges, including the introduction of charges on Sundays. My Group is opposed to this move, which is likely to have further detrimental impact on local businesses in an already difficult climate.

### Statutory Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation – Last Chance to Respond

There is less than a week left for residents, businesses and local organisations to have their say on the future of how council services are delivered locally in Suffolk. District and borough council leaders have urged people to not miss their chance to respond to the Government's statutory consultation into the future of local government in Suffolk and Norfolk, which closes on 11 January. The consultation seeks views on the two proposals for unitary councils in Suffolk. The district and borough councils' proposal is to replace the current six councils with three new unitary councils in the west, east and south of the county; whereas the proposal from Suffolk County Council is for a single council covering the whole of Suffolk. Visit the official consultation portal at [Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Citizen Space](https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027) to submit your feedback.

### Norwich to Tilbury Statutory Consultation

All Babergh Parish Councils should have received an email from the Town and Country Planning Association inviting attendance at webinars offering support for participation in the Examination.

- National Grid have submitted some changes to the Norwich to Tilbury project, none of which are in Babergh or Mid Suffolk. Project information, updates and documents are all available here: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027>. The next stage in the examination process, following comments on the proposed changes, is likely to be the preliminary meeting where the appointed Inspectors discuss procedures for the examination hearings. We are continuing to offer a regular drop in support session for this project which all ward members and Parish Councils should have received an invite for. This is open to anyone and the invite can be shared. The next session is on 8th January.
- Drax have notified the Secretary of State (SoS) of their intention to submit an application for a non-material change to the Progress Power consent. Mid Suffolk DC have been misrepresented in Drax's submissions and we have contacted the SoS to make them aware. We expect to see more on the application in the next few months.
- Scoping for the EcoPower project is expected this month.
- Construction of the EA3 project is nearing completion and the development is expected to be handed over to the operator in a few months.
- The 5 Estuaries project was consented in December.

We are expecting more projects / applications which may warrant a further update during a month. I will continue to review the effectiveness of this email update to keep councillors and parish councils up to date. I appreciate all feedback, thank you.

### Free Home Energy Upgrades

Suffolk residents living in properties which are not energy efficient, could be eligible for funding to make their homes warmer and reduce their energy bills, thanks to Warm Homes Suffolk. Warm Homes Suffolk is a partnership managed and delivered by Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council, working with Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, and West Suffolk Council. At the end of November 2025, Suffolk County Council secured £1.38 million from the government's Warm Homes Local Grant Fund. Residents and landlords are urged to apply quickly, as the funding must be allocated by the end of March 2026.

The fund aims to provide free energy saving improvements to energy inefficient homes if residents are on a low income, receive certain benefits or live in a certain postcode area. This could be wall and loft insulation, solar panels or air source heat pumps. There are certain conditions for eligibility. To check your eligibility, or to find out more about how Warm Homes Suffolk could help you, visit [www.warmhomessuffolk.org](http://www.warmhomessuffolk.org) or call the team on 03456 037 686.

For Further Information about Babergh District Council please see the Babergh District Council website: [Home - Babergh District Council – baberghmidsuffolk.com](http://Home - Babergh District Council – baberghmidsuffolk.com)