

Cllr Isabelle Reece: General Report to Parishes (March) April 2026

Local Government Reorganisation

The biggest news this month has been the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government's confirmation that three unitary councils will be created in Suffolk replacing the current system made up of Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough councils: Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk.

Under the new arrangements, the new councils will come into operation in April 2028, with elections scheduled for next year to establish the shadow authorities responsible for shaping and overseeing the transition. Work to examine the future structure of local government in Suffolk began with the publication of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024.

The six existing councils have already started the preparatory work, but will now begin detailed planning on the transition, with further information to be shared once plans are confirmed.

For further information about the three unitaries proposal, visit the [Three Councils for Suffolk website](#).

Full Council Meeting 24th

This was a very short meeting, one of the main agenda items having been deferred. Council agreed a draft recommendation and a consultation strategy on Community Governance Review from the CGRWG, of which I am a member. (Community Governance Review Working Group); it approved the proposed pay policy statement for 2026/2027 and noted the publication of the Council's Gender Pay Gap; Council agreed the recommendations from External Audit and the adequacy of proposed actions set out in the finance action in response. [24 Mar 2026 5.30 pm](#) - Agenda, Draft Minutes

Suffolk County Council Elections

It came as something of a surprise that Suffolk County Council Elections are going ahead. Babergh's Full Council Meeting scheduled for April had been cancelled and the next one is the Annual (General) Meeting on Tuesday 12th May. Much of Babergh's work continues as normal during the Pre-election Period, though any potentially controversial matters are postponed until after 8th May.

Defection of conservative Group Leader

The day before the Council Meeting my Group learned that our Leader, Michael Holt, had defected to Reform. This has been a great disappointment to me and to my five remaining colleagues in the Group. Michael continues to represent Chadacre Ward.

Changes to Waste Bins

A reminder that in the next few weeks residents will begin receiving through their doors information packs about the new waste and recycling systems that will come into effect later this year. There is still a great deal of concern across the District about how all our bins can be accommodated, and many more concerns about the reduction in frequency of the General Rubbish (Black) Bin collection to every three weeks. For further information, see the following link:

[Find out about the changes to waste and recycling collections starting in June 2026](#)

Nayland with Wissington Parish Council has asked me to 'talk about bins' at the Annual Parish Assembly on 20th May: I hope to be able to address some of the queries surrounding the changes.

National Landscape

On 13th March I attended the Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley Partnership Meeting at Assington Village Hall. We received reports of the activities of Natural England the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission, including about plans for celebration of the 250th Anniversary of John Constable's birth; there was an interesting presentation on Langham Hall Estate. Very Close to home, is of course the creation of England's first Dark Skies Community in Thorington Street.

For further information about the our National Landscapes see: [National Landscapes - Dedham Vale](#)

& [Dedham Vale National Landscape – Facebook](#)

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