

**District councillor Susan Glossop
report for Lackford parish council March 8th 2021**

Council tax for 2021 to 2022

As part of the creation of a single West Suffolk Council, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government laid down specific referendum principles for the setting of council tax for those areas that underwent local government reorganisation on 1 April 2019 and where harmonisation of council tax was not deliverable within the first year of the newly formed authorities. The specific West Suffolk referendum principles set out a requirement on the new single council to harmonise council tax across the predecessor areas within seven years, not specifically at year seven. It is for West Suffolk Council to determine the level of council tax across its area on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process, including the scale and speed to which harmonisation is to take place (in any given year) ensuring that harmonisation has/can take place within the required seven years).

West Suffolk Council is still subject to the national referendum principles. However, the two per cent or £5 (whichever is higher) is flexible in any given year between the predecessor area's element or the average band D rate across both predecessor areas (the average across all of West Suffolk). The budget for council tax for 2021 to 2022 and future years is based on the option to harmonise the two predecessor areas (St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath) using the average band D rate across both predecessor areas, harmonising the council tax bills by 2022 to 2023, as agreed in principle February 2020, whilst maximising our council tax receipts to protect services and to support our investment plans. For 2021 to 2022 this represents an average band D weekly increase of 22 pence and three pence for the predecessor areas of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury respectively. Noting that just over 70 per cent of our residents are in bands A to C so will actually see a lower increase.

Council tax 2021-2022

- Forest Heath - £175.59 (an increase of £11.61, 7.1 per cent) 22pence per week
- St Edmundsbury - £185.40 (an increase of £1.62, 0.9 per cent) 3pence per week

Suffolk County Council met on 11 February 2021 and set its precept at £77,318,792.49 resulting in a band D council tax of £1,397.16, a 3.99 per cent increase (including two per cent increase for the Adult Social Care precept).

Suffolk Police Authority set its precept of £13,153,757.47 at the Police and Crime Panel (SCC) meeting on 29 January 2021, resulting in a band D council tax of £237.69, a 6.7 per cent increase on the 2020 to 2021 figure of £222.75

Investigating Suffolk's largest Anglo-Saxon Cemetery

The cremation cemetery at Mill Heath, Lackford was discovered after the heath was ploughed in 1945. Earlier, warreners had occasionally found complete pots. During 1947-9, Tom Lethbridge excavated over 500 cremations, but the extent of the cemetery is not known, and there are probably at least twice that. His discoveries were published in 1951 and are in the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Cremation cemeteries containing thousands of burials began to be used very soon after the end of Roman Britain. They date to the 5th and 6th centuries and are found in East Anglia and Lincolnshire. The earliest inhabitants of Anglo-Saxon West Stow may have been buried a couple of miles away across the river Lark at Lackford.

In 2015 and 2016, the Archaeological Service excavated further disturbed urns, after they were exposed by ploughing. Historic England are now funding the publication and analysis of this important site.

The new work at Lackford has allowed previous finds to be re-examined and modern scientific techniques used. We now have the first reliable evidence about both human and animal remains, as the burnt bone

was not kept in the 1940s. Radiocarbon dating confirms that most of the more recently discovered pots were buried during the second half of the 5th century.

Find out more at:

<https://heritagesuffolk.wordpress.com/2020/06/25/investigating-suffolks-largest-anglo-saxon-cemetery-lackford/>

The results of this project will be presented in a temporary exhibition at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village in spring 2021.

By Faye Minter Senior Archaeological Officer Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.



Historic England

Decarbonisation

West Suffolk Council has secured £1.43 million from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to help deliver a range of energy efficiency, decarbonisation and battery energy storage projects as part of our climate emergency action plan. The overall value of the work being carried out is £1.8 million, with the Council providing 20.5 percent match funding to secure the grant.

Campaign

A new campaign has been launched in Suffolk to help people improve their recycling. Each year more than 10,000 tonnes (about 20 percent) of recycling from Suffolk homes is rejected due to the wrong items being placed in Suffolk's recycling bins. This is the same as one in five lorries full of recycling going to waste. The cost of sorting and disposing this spoiled recycling is more than £1 million. That is of course money that could be better spent and certainly waste that could be recycled. The new awareness campaign launched by the Suffolk Waste Partnership is called Together We Can Get Our Recycling Right. It included a leaflet to all households with the do's and don'ts of what can easily be recycled at home, plus tips on how to recycle other items not accepted in home recycling bins. The campaign is supported on the Suffolk Recycling website and social media channels.

Food Savvy

Waste and recycling vehicles in West Suffolk and across the county are now displaying new artwork to help deliver food savvy message and cut food waste across the county. Over 50,000 tonnes of food is apparently thrown away in Suffolk every year, and an estimated average of £730 of edible food goes to waste per household each year. The fleet of 24 vehicles display the new banners, which have three simple messages and advice for people.

Census

Households across West Suffolk will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021. But, of course, due to COVID-19 this will be very different. The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics states: "A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed. This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That's why it is so important everyone takes part and we

have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help and paper questionnaires for those who need them". Census day will be on 21 March 2021, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March. Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years and kept safe for future generations.

Lord Lieutenant's special Certificate of Merit

The work of the Council's waste team's work through the pandemic has been recognised by Clare Countess of Euston through her Lord Lieutenant's special Certificate of Merit. This certificate, given to the Waste Disposal Team, it is a reflection of the hard work of everyone keeping services running and also reflects the gratitude of resident

New street outreach guidelines feature West Suffolk

West Suffolk has been used as a case study in good practice guide for the NHS called The Homeless and Inclusion Health Service Standards for Commissioners and Service Providers ('The Standards'). This is produced by The Faculty for Homeless and Inclusion Health as a framework for the commissioning and provision of health services for excluded people. They draw upon the latest evidence of best practice and provide quality assurance for supporting vulnerable and excluded patients with multiple and complex needs, commonly referred to as inclusion health patients. Our Multi-Disciplinary Rough Sleeper Team and their work is featured with a case study as good practice. The team brings together various disciplines and partner agencies to offer wrap-around support to rough sleepers, covering most of their needs or being able to help access services much faster. The expertise, knowledge and experience of the team as a whole has helped to achieve a deeper understanding of the issues faced by rough sleepers and how to work with them. The aim of the street outreach guidelines is to assist services to plan new health related street outreach projects, and/or to review services' existing outreach. Homeless health services cover a range of locations, and the demographics of people sleeping rough in these areas may differ widely. This outreach document is designed as a flexible tool for sharing best practice and innovative ideas, allowing services to use them as appropriate to their areas.

Community Chest

West Suffolk made £466,733 of Community Chest funding available for 2021 to 2022 and the Council received a record number of applications. More than 30 community groups, charities and voluntary organisations are to receive funding, which was agreed at Cabinet this February. Since it first launched in 2015, Community Chest has already invested more than £2.5 million in community initiatives designed to help our residents. This figure does not include 2021 to 2022 funding. A Grant Working Party had to hold three meetings totalling some 12 hours to consider the 62 applications based on the information submitted and the scheme criteria. It then made recommendations to Cabinet for Community Chest grants totalling £466,733 to be made to 33 of these organisations.