

## SALC "Super-Forum" - A focus on "devolution" - 2nd December 2025

### Get Ready for the Devolution Super Forum

This lively and informative session will unpack:

- What devolution really means and how it differs from local government reorganisation (LGR)
- The current timetable and next steps
- The ambitions behind the forthcoming Draft Devolution Bill

Hear from:

- Suffolk County Council officers who will be sharing what's being devolved, outline transition plans, and updates on the 2026 County Council elections and pre-election period.
- District Council representative will provide an insight on devolution from a district perspective, highlighting what it means for local communities.

Don't forget to visit the SALC website, where you can explore the aims of creating a simpler, more consistent model of devolution that reforms local government and empowers communities and find a handy link to track the Bill's progress.

[Click here to book your place.](#)

We're inviting all councils to send in their questions on devolution ahead of our Super Forum session on Tuesday 2nd December.

Please send your devolution question via this Microsoft Form by **Friday 21st November 2025**.

[Click here to access the form.](#)

We may not get to every question during the forum, but don't worry we will make sure all remaining questions are answered afterwards.

## **Consultation on Proposed Changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026 to 2027**

Dear Town / Parish Clerk,

West Suffolk Council are currently consulting on some proposed changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). Please see attached letter which I would encourage you to share within your council and to take part in the online consultation which is open from 28 October to 25 November 2025 and can be found at: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WestSuffolkLCTRS/>

I should be grateful if you would respond to the consultation by 25 November 2025. A Word version of the survey is available on request if this helps to share within your council.

Further background on the proposed changes is available in the letter attached.

Across West Suffolk, if we were to extend this targeted reduction for a further year, based on the percentage of the Council Tax bill that Town and Parish Councils receives from people on LCTRS, the total across all Town and Parish Councils would be a total £24,672 reduction for that year – 4.5 per cent of the total reduction. This sum would be divided up by all Parish and Town Councils according to the percentage of their Council Tax payers who receive a LCTR and this has already been assumed in the provisional 2026-27 council tax bases for your Town or Parish area issued to your clerk on 17 October 2025, by West Suffolk Council.

Feedback from the consultation will be considered by Councillors as they finalise the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026 to 2027. If agreed, the extension would come into effect from April next year.

## **Norwich to Tilbury - Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - opportunity to register as an interested party**

Dear all

I wanted to make your town and parish council or parish meeting aware of the opportunity to register as an interested party in relation to the Norwich to Tilbury pylon proposals.

I have already contacted some parishes direct from a list provided to me a little while ago (*so you might be getting this information twice*) but I wanted to extend the opportunity to a wider group in the Babergh/Mid Suffolk Districts to make sure no one was excluded.

At this stage any person or organisation can register as an interested party but there is a deadline of **27th November 2025**.

To help understand the process and more details of how and why councils should consider the merits of registration we have set up a workshop (two dates available) use the links below to register (you will need to be logged onto the SALC Portal to access).

[View workshop details](#)

### **About NSIPs**

Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are large-scale projects that relate to either energy, waste, transport or water and examples include roads, railway lines, nuclear power stations, solar and wind farms and electricity pylons. Because they are large and complicated they take many years to complete.

Instead of applying to the local authority for planning permission, the developer (or applicant) of an NSIP must apply to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a different kind of permission - known as a Development Consent Order (DCO). The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) is responsible for undertaking a DCO examination and writing a report with recommendations to the Secretary of State to aid their decision-making process.

### **Norwich to Tilbury pylons links**

Here are some useful hyperlinks direct to information that might be useful:

Planning Inspectorate website - [Norwich to Tilbury Project](#)

Suffolk County Council website - [Norwich to Tilbury Project](#)

SALC - [dedicated page](#) including access to the "Getting to Grips with NSIPs guidance" and quarterly newsletters from Suffolk County Council that cover all projects across Suffolk and their status.

## Website Update Request

Hi,

According to the Environment Agency, over two million people in England live and work in properties at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea, whilst more face flood threats from groundwater, surface water, sewers, and reservoirs.

At Gocompare, we have put together a guide to preparing for a flood and protecting your property - <https://www.gocompare.com/home-insurance/guide/flood-damage-repair-and-prevention/>

In extreme conditions you won't be able to stop flood water, and you should always put personal safety above attempts to protect property and possessions. Despite this, there are steps that you can take to keep water out, to buy yourself time to preserve property and possessions, and to limit the damage that flood water does.

We think this information would be useful for your readers and wonder if you would consider linking to our guide at your page <https://flemptoncumhengraveparish.gov.uk/usefulcontacts/>

Thank you for your support, we're extremely grateful.

## Postal vote reapplication

Good afternoon,

I am writing to share with you that residents who applied for their postal vote on or before 31 January 2024 and wish to continue with this arrangement will need to reapply for their postal vote before 31 January 2026.

The implementation of Elections Act 2022 means that a postal vote can only be held for a maximum of three years. Some residents will have already been contacted digitally via the Gov.Uk notify service and those that have not re-applied will be invited to re-apply again. For those residents that we do not hold email addresses for or who have not re-applied will be sent a written notice to their registered address inviting them to re-apply.

Any electors that do not re-apply for their postal vote, will have their postal vote removed on 31 January 2026.

We will be inviting residents who we hold email addresses for to reapply – the communication will come from the GOV.UK service from 20 October 2025. Written notices will be sent from 17 November. We are encouraging early and online re-applications.

Additionally, we will be posting information on our social media sites, intranet news and a press release has been issued ([Have your say - postal vote reapplications are due!](#))

Any assistance you can give in informing residents that they will need to reapply for their postal vote, would be most helpful.

Residents can reapply for their postal vote by visiting: [Apply for a postal vote - GOV.UK](#), or returning the postal vote application form on reverse side of the written notice.

Please note this email has been sent to all Town and Parish Councils.

## **Financial Inclusion Service**

Hello the message below and printable PDF leaflet attached are sent to all town and parish councils in West Suffolk on behalf of West Suffolk Cllr Donna Higgins, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities

Good afternoon

Our aim is for a thriving West Suffolk for all of our residents.

We know that there are households both in West Suffolk and nationally who are simply surviving. They include residents who for whatever reason, haven't come forward for the support they can access. It could be pride; it could be that they simply don't realise that they could ask for support.

That is why West Suffolk Council has set up a Financial Inclusion Service so that, using data, we can target households who we believe may be eligible for support. That will include people who are retired, working and others who are looking to return to work. We can then help them check they are receiving support and to reduce their outgoings such as utility bills wherever possible.

## **Pension credits**

Initially we are targeting households in West Suffolk who we believe may not be claiming their full Pension Credits. The Government estimates that nationally in 2023 £1.5 billion in pension credits went unclaimed. If they successfully apply, they may also be eligible for further help to boost their income.

We are writing to households we have identified. We are also offering 1-1 support over a phone call. Alongside this, we will also be attending community groups, events and activities to promote the support that is available to residents. We have attached a leaflet that can be used to help promote the service locally.

Letters will shortly be arriving at the households in West Suffolk that we have identified as likely to be eligible for unclaimed pension credits. Households that haven't received a letter can still enquire about Pension Credits at [www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/cost-of-living) or by phoning West Suffolk Council's Financial Inclusion Service on **01284 757660**.

## **Community Governance Review**

Dear Parish/Town Clerk,

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 West Suffolk Council is responsible for parish governance arrangements and can review the arrangements through a Community Governance Review (CGR) process. West Suffolk Council carried out a CGR in 2021/22 prior to the elections to parish/town councils in May 2023 and there has been interest from some parish/town councils for potential governance changes ahead of the next elections in May 2027.

The next CGR process will formally start in December 2025, and all parish and town councils will be contacted in December with an invitation to put forward any issues that they wish to be considered and resolved as part of the review process. In the meantime, your parish/town council may wish to start thinking about any issues or small anomalies that you would like to be included as part of the review. The attached briefing note sets out the areas of parish governance that could be considered, the requirements for submissions and the timetable for the review.

If you have any questions regarding the review process, then please email [cgr@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:cgr@westsuffolk.gov.uk).