



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Parish Council Meeting - 9th January

It was good to welcome in person, our councillors Beccy Hopfensperger and Andrew Speed, who spoke about the proposed County Council cost cuts specific to West Suffolk, which have been in the media recently.

Credit should go to Sam and Ben at The Bull Inn for their efforts with the Christmas Tree, sponsored by Troston Parish Council, erected in front of the pub, it made a really, festive focal point.

With Christmas overindulgence, in mind, funding is available from Active Suffolk, who are looking for new projects for their Fit Villages project. The funding could be used to set up physical activities for the over 55's, using local facilities. If you are interested in finding out more or setting up a group using either our playing field or village hall, please email the clerk for further details.

A reminder to residents with regarding to parking in the village, please do not park on the pavements.

As always if you have any ideas or issues you would like raised please contact the Clerk Vicki Gay trostonpc@outlook.com

The full minutes for the meeting are available as on the website <https://troston.onesuffolk.net>

Date of the next meeting **March 5th 2024**

From Sue Rose, Chair Troston PC

Difficult Decisions

Along with local authorities up and down the country, Suffolk County Council has been hit hard by inflation and rising demand for services such as children's care, special educational needs and disabilities and home to school transport. It means having to make difficult decisions about the services it provides, including £64.7 million of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The two-year savings proposals, include:

- £11 million of staffing cuts through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology.

- £0.5 million of savings by stopping core funding to Art and Museum sector organisations.
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk.

Also £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

We are a well-run council but following the recent funding announcement from the Government, Suffolk County Council will not receive enough funding to keep pace with inflation or the level of demand for services. The council has joined national calls for additional funding, and lobbied the Chancellor of the Exchequer direct.

Our proposed budget will require a 5% increase in council tax in next year. This means the costs for the two most common household bands in Suffolk will be:

- Band B property: £23.50 per week (£1.12 per week increase from 2023/24)
- Band D property: £30.21 per week (£1.43 per week increase from 2023/24)

These budget proposals will be discussed at the council's Scrutiny Committee and then presented at the Cabinet meeting on 30 January. At the Full Council meeting on 15 February, the proposals will be debated, with a vote taking place on the budget for 2024/25 – the first year of the two-year budget proposals.

The Scrutiny Committee meeting will be available to stream on Suffolk County Council's YouTube channel, and public questions can be submitted in advance, details available at www.suffolk.gov.uk

Local government is funded from three main taxation/finance settlement sources; council tax, a share of business rates income and, to a lesser extent, government general grants. Council tax income continues to be the main source of funding, in total value, for local authorities. Council tax income represents just under 20 per cent of West Suffolk's annual income.

It is expected that each of these funding streams will continue in 2024 to 2025. However, beyond this there is significant uncertainty about the money we can retain from business rates and government general grants. The people of Suffolk face a difficult future.

From Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's deputy leader and cabinet member for finance and environment

Precept Survey

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, setting the policing budget is one of my most important responsibilities. I must ensure that the Chief Constable has the resources required to provide an efficient and effective service.

Later this month I will need to make a decision about the policing element of the council tax precept. I am planning to ask the Police and Crime Panel to support my proposal to raise the policing element of the precept by £13 a year (for a Band D property) to enable us to maintain the standard of service that the public expect.

I would be very grateful if you could take part in the survey [PCCPreceptSurvey2024](#) and let me know what you think.

From Tim Passmore, Police & Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

The WI

We are a group of 40 lively ladies from the surrounding villages. Six of us are from Troston.

This December we of course, sat down to a Christmas dinner - enjoyed by all, followed by an entertaining magician. The Hall looked stunning with all the Christmas decorations including a fireplace for Santa (that wasn't there before!) .

This month, January 9th we are having a talk by Sally Fogden who used to be the Vicar here in Troston. Sally is very much involved with the well being of farmers and isolated people. After there will be a discussion on which resolution we should debate at the Annual General Meeting in London's Albert Hall in June. The result of which will be handed to the Government. So we influence policy too, as well as enjoying ourselves.

Contact me on 07979 808606 if you would like some information. Or just come along to Sapiston Village Hall at 7-30 on the second Tuesday of the month. ie Troston's coffee morning day usually!

Hope to see you at our next meeting (Feb 13th).

From Anne Walker

Church News

Three services a month are held in St Mary's Church, Troston and you are most welcome to any or all of them. On the second Sunday of the month, there is a Service of Holy Communion at 11am and on the fourth Sunday there is a much less formal service, followed by refreshments, at 3pm. This service is known as T@3 and is growing in popularity. A short, "said" Morning Prayer service is also held at 9am on the 4th Friday of the month.

Please be aware that even if the church door is closed, the church is always open. The latch is rather stiff, just pull it toward you and press down and it will open. Many people enjoy the wall paintings and others just come to sit and enjoy a time of reflection or prayer.

You are always welcome.

From Jane Harland

Village Hall

The Committee would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2024!

Why not make a resolution to support your Village Hall by making a regular or occasional booking? Ideal for all types of activity, from birthdays to weddings,

christenings or just a family and friends get together. Who needs an excuse for a “do”?

Good news....it has been decided not to raise our rates for villagers. It's a bargain at just £10 an hour! To check availability, book or have a look round, please contact me on 269467.

From Sue Bishop

Farm News

Troston Farms like other farming businesses has been impacted by the weather during the last six months, the rainfall for the year has been 777mm (30.5 inches) 67% of this fell between July and December, this follows a very dry year last year, the weather is certainly changing, reacting and coping with that change is an ever present challenge. The farm will continue to grow sunflowers for bird seed, a relatively low risk crop that relishes the dry weather during the summer along with a select area of sugar beet on more bodied land, a very high risk crop with significant growing costs.

All farming businesses in England are being weaned off direct government support which has been in existence for many years, I have no issue with this as long as the price we receive for the commodities we produce is a fair one, all too often the 'race to the bottom' in terms of price by the major supermarkets is the default position and although appealing to their customers the food producer all too often loses out.

Government support is being channelled into more environmental schemes some of which don't relate to the Suffolk landscape other which do we are already subscribing to under existing schemes, all this means that government support for farming is on a slippery slope and the importance of UK produce is not being given enough priority when importing food is often the easy alternative.

I would ask when next food shopping the produce that you buy is produced in the UK - and support UK agriculture safe in the knowledge that it has been produced under industry standard assurance schemes which some other countries don't subscribe.

From Edward Vipond

School News

Christmas certainly came to the school in December! We were so busy rehearsing for our two school performances - our younger years performed Baarmy Bethlehem and our older children performed Bethlehem Ballroom to family and friends. They worked so hard acting, learning lines and singing the wonderful songs - we are very proud of each and every one of them.

We also held a very successful Christmas Fayre in December, where even Santa was able to pay us a visit! We thank the Friends of Honington School who organised the event and to staff who helped.

From Carol King

Leisure Activities

The hope of many New Year Resolutions is often to get fitter - get out more with the family - be more sociable. This February Half-Term and during the Easter Holidays, Abbeycroft Leisure will run a range of activities like Family Park Cooking, Children's Adventure Days, Teen Challenges and Swimming.

The number and locations varies with each holiday depending on funding. All the sessions are free for young people entitled to means tested free school meals or families in financial hardship. The closest venues to Troston being in, Bury St Edmunds, Brandon, Newmarket, Stanton, Woolpit, and Eye.

Family Park Cooking Days (Children aged 5-16 years with their parents/carers). A full day out for the family in a local green space or country park. Take part in a cooking master class. All locations have indoor or covered areas. Every family takes home a giant box of ingredients and recipe cards.

Adventure Days (Children must be aged between 8-12 years) 8:30am-5:30pm. The day takes place inside our leisure centres with extra-long hours to make them more accessible for working parents. Activities include from team games, fire-lighting, axe throwing, archery, swimming and loads more! Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks provided.

(We also have paid spaces available on our Adventure Days for families looking for a cost effective childcare alternative).

Teen Challenge Days (Children must be aged between 11-16 years) 10am-2pm. Young people take part in a range of exciting activities such as: Snorkelling, Rock Climbing, Axe Throwing, Combat Archery, cinema visits. Hot Lunch and snacks are provided.

Family & Junior Free Swimming: Abbeycroft Leisure is offering free swim and lunch to eligible children from 5-16 years old. Subject dates apply.

Book by visiting www.acleisure.com/HAF

From Frank Carn-Pryor, Sports & Outdoor Activity Officer

Ixworth Surgery's Patient Association

Dr Cook had returned to Canada but a replacement GP is starting in January.

The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme had enabled the Practice to hire two Nurse Practitioners and an Apprentice Nurse Associate - plus a Social Prescriber.

The telephone system was being upgraded to a Cloud-based service offering better call answering.

The ability to use eConsult via the Surgery's website is being extended. It is an online artificial intelligence program designed by the NHS which enables patients to informally but confidentially check their symptoms, find verified NHS self-help information - and find, where appropriate, local or self-referral services.

A Health Kiosk has been installed in Reception to offer blood-pressure readings, weight and height measurement for BMI calculations and ability for patients to see their health record and, where appropriate, update it.

The GPs are keen to add the use of an AF Monitor to the Kiosk to detect early signs of possible heart failure in the future.

At sixteen years old, patients become responsible for their own medical record. A guide "@16" has been drafted by the Association on a range of subjects and places young people can go to for help and support. A guide for children on going into hospital and the experience of anaesthetics had also been drafted.

The Practice Managers of the Blackbourne Primary Care Network (Ixworth, Stanton, Botesdale and Woolpit GP Surgeries) were meeting every two weeks to exchange best practice and identify topics for mutual development. Tackling health inequalities was regarded a priority, in particular, among farm workers where the incidence of respiratory illness, MSK (muscle and limb) disorders and mental health concerns were high. Your experience of the health care you receive and ideas on what works well - and not so well - would be appreciated

The next meeting of the Association, which all patients registered with the Surgery are invited, is scheduled for **14.00 21st February 2024** in the Surgery. Please let me know if you wish to attend: graemenorris46@gmail.com

Next Newsletter?

Please email me or the Parish Clerk possible items you think would interest local residents for the next Newsletter. The deadline is mid-day 7th March. Articles may be edited, of course, to fit the space available.

Any opinions expressed in these articles will be solely the author's and do not necessarily reflect my opinions or of the Parish Council.

From Graeme Norris, Editor
