

Minutes of the **meeting of the Town Council** held at the Shire Hall on **Wednesday 22nd July 2026 at 6pm**

Councillors:

Present: Cllrs. David Adelson, Ellie Beck, Sharon Miller, Eamonn O’Nolan Nigel Phipps, Simon Sadler, Robin Sanders, Michael Sutton, Katharine Turner and Martin Wilks.

Apologies: Cllrs. Sue Bale, Geoff Holdcroft, Ruth Leach, Doreen Pegg, Thomas Rogerson and Catherine Walsh, and District Councillor Stephen Molyneux.

In Attendance: Town Clerk (Mr G E Diaper), and four members of the public.

1. Apologies

The Council agreed to approve the absence of Cllrs. Sue Bale, Geoff Holdcroft, Ruth Leach, Doreen Pegg, Thomas Rogerson and Catherine Walsh.

2. Declarations of Member Interests.

No members made any declarations of interests in relation to items on the agenda.

3. Requests for dispensations.

There were no requests for a dispensation in relation to items on the agenda.

4. Public question time.

None of the members of the public present wished to address the Council at this time.

5. To agree and approve the minutes of the meeting held 17 June 2026

The Council approved the minutes of the meeting held 17 June 2026 as a true record

6. To note the receipt of the minutes from this Council’s Committees:

- a. Planning – 24.06.26

- b. Climate & Ecological Emergency – 01.07.26
- c. Amenities – 01.07.26
- d. Planning – 08.07.26
- f. Highways – 13.07.26

7. To consider and approve Town Council payments list for July 2026.

The Council approved the Accounts and Payments List for June 2026 – **£12,381.10**

The Council noted that the accounts were checked by Cllrs. Holdcroft and O’Nolan.

8. To note the following Town Council Accounts:

- a. Payments made since the June Town Council Meeting – **£38,338.13**
- b. Direct Debit payments for June 2026 – **£687.67**
- c. HSBC Corporate Card payments for June 2026 – **£1699.12**
- d. Bank Reconciliation and Supporting Statements to 30 June 2026 – **£898,489.89**
- e. Debtors report to 30 June 2026 (Confidential)

9. To note the Council’s financial position as at 30 June 2026.

- a. Income and Expenditure Report to 30.06.2026 – Income **£344,157.00** and Expenditure **£129,379.00**
- b. Balance sheet as of 30.06.2026 – **£857,354.00**

10. Openness and accountability of Woodbridge Town Council:

- a. **To receive a report from the Town Mayor** – The Mayor spoke to his list of meetings attended since the June meeting of the Council, highlighting a positive conversation with the CEO of the East Anglia Reserve Forces’ and Cadets’ Association about potential future opportunities for wider public use of potential new premises.
- b. **To receive an update from the Town Clerk** – The Town Clerk was asked to work with DCllr. Leach as a means to engage with East Suffolk Council in relation to the delays surrounding the Changing Places toilet facility at the Hamblin Road car park.
- c. **To receive a follow up from Cllr. Sadler regarding the Woodbridge Town Council ‘Public communications’ plan** – Cllr. Sadler spoke to the report which provided that there had been 79,000 views of the Council’s

videos in the past eleven months. The Council watched the July video, which is presented by Cllr. Miller and focuses on the ongoing projects of the Amenities Committee.

- d. To receive a report from Cllr. Sanders regarding matters arising from the Sizewell/ NSIP meetings. In addition, the Council will be updated on in the event of new information:**
 - i. The A12 upgrade**
 - ii. East Suffolk Rail Line services**

Cllr. Sanders reported on a positive meeting with the new SCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, Cllr. Christopher Hudson, which also included for a short time the leader, Cllr. Michael Hadwin. The new authority was supportive the ESCEP position of opposition to new and currently unapproved NSIP and energy projects in East Suffolk. The Chair reminded the meeting of the importance of getting a net infrastructure gain in terms of roads, rail and public transport for residents. This is currently not happening. Cllr. Sanders was thanked for his work on the 'Energy Projects Overload' paper which his group has prepared for submission to SCC.

11. To consider the significant projects of the Council.

- a. The Shire Hall**
 - i. an update on the work undertaken by Chapel Properties to date, including additional work identified and agreed.**

The Council noted the completion of the project to repair the windows and other associated parts of the façade of the Shire Hall, and positive comments being received from townsfolk.

- ii. Receive an update from the Shire Hall Working Party.**

The Council considered three recommendations from the Shire Hall Working Party, who had met the previous day to consider the next steps in the Shire Hall project, as well as to discuss some further repair work not covered by the above-mentioned project. The Council agreed:

- To allocate up to a maximum of £5,000, payable from EMR 341 (Shire Hall development), to facilitate the production of

measured architectural and structural diagrams of the Shire Hall. The Shire Hall Working Party be mandated to appoint their preferred architect.

- To allocate up to a maximum of £2,500, payable from EMR 340 (Shire Hall building maintenance), to facilitate a CCTV survey of the storm and sewerage drains on the Market Hill. The Shire Hall Working Party be mandated to appoint their preferred contractor.
- To allocate up to a maximum of £10,000, payable from EMR 340 (Shire Hall building maintenance), to facilitate repairs to east arch and steps, and the repair & decoration of the 1st floor east door. The Shire Hall Working Party be mandated to appoint their preferred contractor.

b. Local Government Reform

- i. **To receive an update from the green spaces due diligence working group** – The Town Clerk reported that the Due Diligence requests made to East Suffolk Council had now been allocated internally to a member of project staff. No timescales had been provided by the authority as to an expected response.
- ii. **To receive an update on the built spaces project** – Nothing to report at this meeting – the Council will consider the matter at an upcoming meeting of the Property Working Party.

c. Greater Whisstock's area matter (Floodgate, Foreshore, POS etc)

Further to the closure of the Whisstocks floodgate during the Woodbridge Regatta, which the Council considered provided a serious risk to the health and safety of those in attendance, the Town Clerk was asked to organise a meeting with the Environment Agency via their Flood Information Duty Officer (FIDO), to consider the protocols by which the Council are required to organise a closure of the floodgate.

The Town Clerk and Town Mayor reported on their separate meetings with solicitors appointed by the Council's insurers further to the fatal accident at Whisstocks Quay earlier in the summer.

d. Kingston Field improvements

Cllr. Miller advised the Council of the work of the Amenities Committee to undertake improvements to Kingston Field further to the public engagement held last year.

With the agreement of the Council, the Mayor re-ordered the agenda to allow for the consideration of the item of interest to those members of the public present.

With the agreement of the Council, the Mayor suspended the meeting to allow for Mr Paul Finch, Director and CEO of the Community Tech Hub CIC, to address the Council regarding his funding application to be considered at item 20.

The Chair re-opened the meeting.

20. To consider a request for grant funding from the Community Tech Hub CIC.

The Council agreed to provide grant funding to the amount of £2,260, payable from expenditure code 4844 (Senior Support) to the Community Tech Hub CIC.

The Council requested that the CIC provide an update on the progress of their Woodbridge venture in six months' time and agreed that a joint press release regarding the grant award be prepared.

12. To note the receipt of a written report from County Councillor Leach.

The Council noted the receipt of a written report from County Councillor Leach.

13. To note the receipt of a written report from District Councillors Leach and Molyneux.

The Council noted the receipt of a written report from the District Councillors.

14. To question the County and District Councillors on matters contained in their written reports.

There were no direct questions for the County and District Councillors.

The Town Clerk was asked to thank CCllr. Leach for her report and to (1) seek the number of free school meals in Woodbridge and the increase from previous years and (2) prepare an item for consideration at the September meeting of the Council as to how Cllrs. can help those sleeping rough.

15. To consider the recommendations from the Policy Review Working Parties in regard of the Council's Priority Policies.

The Council agreed to defer the consideration of its Priority Policies until the September meeting of the Council.

The Town Clerk was asked to send reminders in early September to the three-policy review Working Parties.

16. To consider and agree topics to be requested as agenda items at the East Suffolk Council 'Mayors and Chairs' meeting.

The Council agreed that the attendance by the organisation would be limited to three Cllrs. plus the Town Clerk, and that that group would agree any topics to be added to the agenda for the meeting.

17. To consider a report and possible actions following the illegal encampment on Kingston Field.

The Council agreed a vote of thanks for Liam, Jess, Frankie and Rob following their efforts in cleaning Kingston Field following the illegal encampment in early July. The Mayor advised that he had authorised the provision of vouchers for those Officers as a further way of thanks. The Town Clerk would organise the distribution with the Estates Manager.

A round table discussion ensued which provided that a majority of the Council would support the strengthening of the security of Kingston Field in a sensitive manner that maintained the openness of the Field and a review of the Town Council estate. The Council thereafter agreed the following actions:

- The Town Clerk and Estates Manager be mandated to undertake the necessary measures to ensure the short-term security of Kingston Field – this is expected to involve the installation of posts and planters at areas where access could be gained.
- The Property Working Party be asked to provide a recommendation on the long-term security of Kingston Field and the other open spaces on the Town Council estate for consideration at the September meeting of the Council.

18. To consider expenditure recommendations from the Youth Council.

The Council approved the expenditure recommendations from the Youth Council as follows:

- War Memorial planting improvements – £750 (payable from 4841, 4842 and 4842)
- Grant funding for the Woodbridge Tide Mill Trust – £750 (payable from 4841)
- Grant funding for the Art Haven CIC – £650 (payable from 4841)

19. To receive an update on recent events in the Town partly organised by the Council (Suffolk Day and Gurkha).

There was a general agreement that the Council should support Suffolk Day and possibly seek to be the nominated town should it be possible to align a suitable event – such as the Launch of the Ship or the anniversary of the death of John Clarkson – with the Suffolk Day celebration. The Council would look to promote more engagement between the Gurkha Squadron and its wider regiment. .

21. To consider the recommendation from the Planning Committee regarding a response to the East Suffolk 'Local Plan Scoping Consultation'.

With minor amendment as agreed at the meeting, the Council mandated the Town Clerk to submit the Council's response to the East Suffolk Council 'Local Plan Scoping Consultation'.

The Council agreed that a press release be prepared to highlight four main points from the submission and that the full response be appended to these minutes and published online.

Cllrs. were requested to collaborate in their Ward groups to provide a response to Cllr. Beck on her paper on WTC priorities.

22. To consider the funding agreement provided by East Suffolk Council further the application for CIL support toward the improvement of the Fen Meadow play area.

The Council agreed that the Town Clerk may sign the funding agreement provided by East Suffolk Council.

The Deputy Town Clerk was asked to prepare signage to be installed in the Fen Meadow play area advising of the forthcoming improvements.

23. To exclude the Public and Press from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the confidential information being discussed.

The Council agreed to exclude the Public and Press from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the confidential information being discussed.

24. To appoint an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of Woodbridge.

The Council noted that two of the applications received were from individuals whose place of residence was outside of the Parish of Woodbridge and the surrounding parishes as required in the nomination criteria previously agreed by the Council and thus were removed from the voting.

The Council voted to appoint Mr Moray MacPhail as an Honorary Freeman of Woodbridge. The Mayor will present the award at an event to which existing Freepersons, Councillors, ex-Mayors, Potter Cup recipients and the other nominees to this award be invited to attend.

The Council agreed that further consideration of the nomination process should be undertaken at the September meeting of the Council.

25. To receive a recommendation from the Staffing Committee Interview Working Party as to the appointment of a person to the position of Finance and Admin. Officer to Woodbridge Town Council.

The Council voted in favour of appointing the recommended applicant to the role of Finance and Admin. Officer to Woodbridge Town Council.

26. To note a letter received from the Chair of the Woodbridge Community Hall Management Committee and to agree the next steps.

The Council noted the receipt of a letter from the Chair of the Woodbridge Community Hall Management Committee and asked that the Property Working Party to prepare a draft response for consideration.

27. Closure

The meeting was closed at 7.58pm.

Councillor Nigel Phipps
Chair

Preparing a New Local Plan in East Suffolk

Local Plan Scoping Consultation on what matters most

Response prepared by the Woodbridge Town Council Planning Committee – submitted to East Suffolk Council on 29 July 2026.

2. What do you value most about East Suffolk and why?

Heritage landscape, Market Towns, Climate and Nature. Connection and community cohesiveness. Clean air and tranquillity.

3. How could new development make the places that are important to you better?

Reducing the use of private cars and giving residents realistic options to use active transport or public transport.

Bringing essential goods and services near to where people need them.

Dealing with waste and flood-water effectively – not just letting it overflow into watercourses.

Development that makes communities more resilient to the changing climate.

Providing enough safe space for exercise, recreation, tranquillity and connection to nature.

Allow room for street trees to grow large, safely providing shade and shelter.

Matching new building to actual housing and employment needs in the community.

New build properties that are energy positive (produces more energy than they use) and carbon negative.

Absolute minimum of high energy and water use commercial development.

Increased/ appropriate level of community dividend from any new commercial, industrial and housing development.

Refusal of conversions of garages in new developments to residential space. Provision of off-street car parking for all new commercial and residential developments.

4. Where do you think new **housing** development should be located in the district?

4. Where do you think new **housing** development should be located in the district?

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral / no opinion	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Create entirely new settlement(s) (thousands of new homes)	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Create new large-scale urban extensions (e.g. garden neighbourhoods) adjacent to large towns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Large towns and market towns with good access to everyday goods and services	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Villages with good access to everyday goods and services	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Small scale development in rural locations	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Close to train stations and rail networks	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Areas close to businesses and jobs	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Utilising opportunities on previously developed land	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Areas where local infrastructure capacity could be improved through new development	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Areas of the district with easy access to the A12/A14	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Specific locations/Other (please state below)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
I don't have a preference	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Where do you think new **employment** should be located in the district?

5. Where do you think new **employment** should be located in the district?

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral / no opinion	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Within and around villages	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Within and around market towns	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Within and around large towns	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
In or near to existing employment areas	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Utilising opportunities on previously developed land	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Areas of the district with easy access to the A12/A14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Close to the ports	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Close to nationally significant infrastructure projects	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Close to train stations and rail networks	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Specific locations / Other (please state)

Please see response to question 6

6. Do you have any other comments about your preferred location(s) for new developments?

- A. Due to the capacity constraints on the A12, we do not support development across the A12 from Woodbridge. The current SCC plans to upgrade the A12 are wholly inadequate to support such development. A much more ambitious upgrade is necessary if such developments are to be considered. In particular, the Grundisburgh roundabout would need to be re-envisioned so that local traffic is separated from through traffic on the A12. If this is not possible, as a minimum, traffic congestion issues in and around Woodbridge would need to be resolved before any further development takes place.

- B. In view of the huge expansion of housing near Woodbridge and on the Wilford peninsula, there is a need to expand the leisure facilities in Woodbridge, improve parking and deliver more facilities and housing for both young people and elder residents. WTC believes the area currently occupied by the leisure centre, the Community Hall and the station car park through to the Avenue would benefit from a regeneration scheme.
- C. The land currently occupied by BT and the Post Office between Station Road and Cumberland Street could be a site linked to B above and provide further housing opportunities and high-quality public realm improvements to better connect the station/river to the town centre.
- D. Public realm investments in Farlingaye Ward and Kyson Ward in Woodbridge are wholly inadequate. The protection of green spaces in this part of Woodbridge must be a priority and investment in everyday goods and services for residents plus leisure facilities must be made to support what is already a very dense residential area.
- E. Finally, the old Council premises on Melton Hill cannot be left undeveloped. The developer must be put under pressure to develop the site.
- F. Before utilising land adjacent to the East Suffolk line, the line needs to be dualled along its entire length to minimise additional road traffic.

7. How can the Local Plan support housing developments that meet the needs of different groups?

- A. For the centre of town, actively seek a better balance between all groups of residents covering homeowners, renters, second homes and other non-permanently occupied houses. Many residents are pushed to outlying areas with less/no public investment, a lack of green spaces and poor everyday services and facilities.
- B. Abolish the term affordable housing. It provides a veneer of acceptability for developers without actually delivering the necessary homes for many who need them. Update the concept of council housing to confront genuine need and consider policies such as ringfencing for residents only. Focus on providing housing for young people, possibly based on the Almshouse model or Community Land Trust schemes.
- C. Develop sheltered and assisted living units that are connected to communities and different age groups.

8. What do you consider to be key infrastructure? (Multiple choice)

8. What do you consider to be key infrastructure?

	Very important	Quite important	Neutral / no opinion	Not very important	Not at all important
Schools	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Healthcare	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Green open space	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Play provision / outdoor exercise provision	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Sports provision (indoor and outdoor)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Post office or parcel locker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Community centre	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Allotments and/or community gardens	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Food shops	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Crematorium, burial grounds and funeral services	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Road network	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public transport	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Walking, cycling and wheeling routes and cycle parking	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water supply and wastewater treatment	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Energy supply	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Digital connectivity (e.g. broadband and 5g)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about infrastructure?

Schools

In reading around experts predicted changes in education the way children and adults will be taught will be radically altered changing class learning to personalised education programmes so schools become a centre at which pupils met teachers on a more one-to-one basis and where they socially interact en masse. WTC thus see school attendance as no longer 5 days/week but perhaps 2 or possibly 3 days/week. This will mean existing school infrastructure can cope with a population increase without adding more schools. The importance of building new schools is thus low, however there will be significant requirements for new infrastructure to accommodate the needs of individual study and child safety.

Healthcare

With a continuing rise in population average age and medical development the needs of healthcare (and social care provision) become ever more crucial. In talking to a senior SCC strategic planner this element has been becoming increasingly under provisioned by a failure by SCC and regional strategic planners to take this into account adequately in the past. Thus the importance of new healthcare/social care infrastructure is paramount.

Green Open Spaces

With new development this is very important and care must be given to existing development to not lose such space as peripheral housing development e.e. Saxmundham South removes short access to such space. Such space needs to be open space with tranquillity and plentiful shade, shelters and hydration points. Large open green spaces with no shade will be unbearable hot in hot summers which we can expect more regularly.

Play provision/outdoor exercise provision

This is key to societal development in an age where work and learning will be a more isolated activity with home working and home schooling.

Sports provision (indoor and outdoor)

This is a hard one to assess as there is an increasing trend to rapid changes in what sports are in vogue as new alternatives arise. Facilities will need to be upgraded or rebuilt to be far more adaptable to these rapid changes and not tied to one sport. So key to keep on top of this aspect.

Post Office or parcel locker

This is aged technology and all in private hands thus very low priority for a council

Community Centre

I see these as crucial in an increasingly aged society where loneliness and the need for central controlled environment for elder residents is going to be important in extreme hot weather. Fundament upgrades to many such centres is needed, and they must also provide suitable venues for the younger age profile.

Allotment and/or community gardens

Important as local produce should be key to modern living; important for social cohesion.

Food shops

With increasing use of internet food shopping and an aged population in 2030 -2045 who will then be increasingly internet literate, the need for physical, large, out of town public access food stores is not required. The focus should be on supporting smaller, local produce-based food shops and market in towns and villages.

Crematorium, burial ground and funeral services

Needs will remain as is but importance in planning is relatively low for crematoria but additional burial site will be needed unless we start to reuse existing ones as occurs in many overseas countries.

Road network

As a rural district with only one main artery (A12) and a vast number of other low grade A, B and C roads, some well beyond capacity at peak there needs to be step change not least for emergency access and evacuation purposes with vast number of energy projects with severe outcome issues if a major risk develops. Melton bypass will be crucial. Radical revisions to urban road network are required.

Public Transport

A major upgrade of existing rail and public road transport is needed. Rail dualling of full length of Felixstowe line required. Spring Road Viaduct is a major constraint as is single line from Lime Kiln Quay to Lowestoft. A modern electric/hydrogen bus fleet with inner urban buses for market and large towns.

Walking, wheeling and cycling

Radical upgrade needed in towns – priority for non motorised vehicles.

Water supply and treatment

In theory the new Suffolk Recycling, transfer and storage project currently in consultation should address the needs for the period.

Energy supply

Supply should not be an issue but should focus on developing self-reliant community energy infrastructure.

Digital connectivity

Upgrade already progressing and private Starlink type services will take over removing need for hard infrastructure

Other

A. Energy distribution

Upgrade needed with non national network, urban system very antiquated with above ground on solid poles often in roads/pavements restricting pavement widths and posing road safety hazard. **Very important**

B. Telephony

Removal of all above ground cabling and solid poles in urban areas as unnecessary and unsafe. **Important**

C. Surface water temporary storage

Need for extra capacity for storm events even without new development, reduces or removes combine surface/foul system overloading treatment works. Consider separating storm and sewage water in the market towns. **Important**

D. Tidal flooding

Review and upgrade to protect property or critical infrastructure **Important**

E. Town Centres

Providing resilience for town centres **Very important**

F. Public hydration points

Install a network **Important**

G. Rest areas and toilets A12 and other principal routes

Provide facilities as currently non existent **Important**

H. Budget hotel and/ or youth hostel provision

Encourage such hotels for close to tourism locations particularly for poorer tourist/hikers etc **Important**

10. How can the new Local Plan ensure new developments promote healthy environments and healthy, active lifestyles?

Providing enough safe space for exercise, recreation, tranquillity and connection to nature, which are close to people's homes.

Look into what various communities require in order to have an active lifestyle – e.g. accessibility, personal safety, public toilet provision, ability to bring dog, ability to avoid dogs, etc; and try to design that in.

Consider active hobbies/interests (such as allotment/community gardening, rambling, dog-walking etc) as well as sports, and make adequate provision for them.

Prioritise active travel routes to key nearby facilities with long way round routes for vehicles. Provide periodic shelters on active travel routes with seats to allow for protection from sudden showers/hot sun or tiredness particularly for the elderly population. Install emergency call points at these.

11. How can the new Local Plan support businesses and jobs?

The Local Plan should support and protect local, existing businesses through the reduction of business rates or, the retention of some part of that payment which could be distributed to Town and Parish Council's to support the introduction of Town Centre managers and local business groups.

It should ensure there is enough well-located employment land for businesses to grow, protect existing employment sites, and encourage investment in key sectors such as green energy, tourism, digital technology, and advanced manufacturing.

It should improve transport and digital infrastructure, link new housing with employment opportunities, and promote skills, apprenticeships, and sustainable economic growth.

By creating the right conditions for investment and innovation, the Local Plan can help generate high-quality local jobs and strengthen East Suffolk's economy for the long term.

It should develop models which encourage the employment of those currently not in employment, education, or training, and other excluded groups such as ex-offenders.

12. How can the new Local Plan help to support sustainable construction, renewable energy and address climate change?

Solar generation on all new roofs.

Develop water storage to cope with heavier winter rain and long dry summers.

Preserve and extend broadleaf wooded habitats.

Allow for street trees to provide shade and cooling – not have them removed by highways on safety grounds when they get to a decent size.

13. How can the new Local Plan help to support the district's natural environment and landscape character?

Give natural watercourses a 500m buffer zone on each bank along their full length, which gives space for nature and people.

Strongly protect the key nature sites we have already, expand and link them where possible. Rule out significant development on or near these key sites.

Pay attention to communities' most valued local nature sites and allow them to be protected for all, rather than exploited by a few.

Try to reduce and mitigate the recreational pressure that new housing developments may bring to the most popular sites.

As much of the land that is good for nature and has landscape character is along the coast, provide effective coastal erosion protection; or where this isn't possible, designate large areas for nature in coastal retreat planning.

Aim for natural areas that are as large as possible – one big area is usually better than several small "islands" for maintaining species diversity.

14. How can the new Local Plan help to support sustainable tourism and cultural facilities in the district?

WTC considers that the new Local Plan should recognise that sustainable tourism is an important contributor to the local economy, supporting jobs, independent businesses and rural communities, while ensuring that environmental and community impacts are carefully managed. The Plan should encourage tourism development that:

- Enhances rather than harms the natural environment and heritage.
- Supports year-round tourism to reduce seasonal pressures and provide more stable employment.
- Promotes low-carbon travel by improving walking, cycling and public transport connections to visitor destinations.
- Encourages high-quality visitor accommodation and attractions that are energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.
- Supports local food, crafts, cultural events and independent businesses that contribute to the distinctive character of East Suffolk.
- Important to avoid tourism becoming too dominant and thus increasing the vulnerability of the local economy.

In regard of cultural facilities, WTC considers that the new Local Plan should place significant emphasis on the role of culture in creating healthy, vibrant and resilient communities. Cultural facilities such as museums, theatres, libraries, galleries, arts venues, and village halls make an important contribution to education, wellbeing, tourism and the local economy. Existing

facilities should be protected from unnecessary loss, while opportunities should be created for new cultural and creative spaces, including through the reuse of historic buildings and regeneration projects.

15. How can the new Local Plan support the district's historic environments?

WTC considers that the historic buildings, conservation areas, archaeological sites, parks and gardens, historic landscapes, and beautiful and extension coastline are fundamental to the identity of East Suffolk as a place to live, work and visit.

The new Local Plan should recognise that the historic environment is not simply something to be preserved, but an asset that can contribute positively to sustainable development, and requires regular investment.

Heritage-led regeneration can revitalise town centres and support local businesses – the Local Plan should therefore include policies which:

- Protect designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, ensuring development conserves or enhances their significance.
- Require high-quality design that responds positively to the character, history and distinctiveness of local places.
- Encourage the sensitive reuse and adaptation of historic buildings where this secures their long-term future while retaining their architectural and historic significance.
- Safeguard historic parks, gardens, landscapes and other features.
- Ensure that new development respects traditional settlement patterns, important views and local building materials where appropriate.

16. How can the new Local Plan support thriving town centres and neighbourhoods?

- Diversity of residents.
- Balanced development between residential and non-permanently occupied housing.
- Good connectivity between the town centre and all parts of a town.
 - Walking routes
 - Car free routes
 - Public transport
 - Wide pavements
- Diversity of shopping outlets for food.
- A portion of business rates staying in the community to support connectivity and engagement with the town centre.

17. Is there anything else we should consider in preparing the new Local Plan?

Re-think the hard infrastructure required to support education and learning in the modern world – see response to 'Schools', question 9.

WTC has a specific request that ESC pay significant attention to undeveloped, brownfield sites for consideration for housing development before approving the building upon of agricultural

land in the District. Furthermore, the authority should consider using the compulsory purchase rights provided to the authority to purchase such land for development.

Continued engagement with local communities and businesses will be essential to ensure the Plan reflects local needs and aspirations.

18. How and where can we best reach people about the new Local Plan? (Multiple choice)

	Very effective	Quite effective	Neutral / no opinion	Not very effective	Not at all effective
Emails	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Letters	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Social media	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Videos	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
East Suffolk Council website	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
The East Suffolk app	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Events	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Leisure centres	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Webinars	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Advertising in public locations (e.g. bus shelters)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Libraries	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Community centres / village halls	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

We've had indications that the new East Suffolk app appears to have been downloaded by a lot of Woodbridge residents as a reminder of bin collections. It could be used sparingly to highlight important local issues such as this – but need to be careful to not overload with too many marketing messages.

19. What social media platform(s) would you prefer we used?

19. Which social media platform(s) would you prefer we used?

Please tick all that apply.

☒ Facebook

☐ LinkedIn

☒ Next Door

☒ Instagram

☒ TikTok

☐ I don't use social media

20. How could we better reach under-represented groups in East Suffolk (such as young people and young adults)?

Ensure properly funded Youth Councils guided by Parish and Town Clerks.

Provide venues for young people to congregate so that it provides a platform to act for community benefit.

For young adults, provide heavily subsidised childcare to allow them to engage in community activity.

21. Do you have anything else to add on how we can involve you throughout the Local Plan preparation process?

Show how our involvement can be assessed and incorporated into the plan.

Provide feedback on the process.

Seek further views and permit further engagement to develop views expressed in the response.

22. Do you have any comments on how this consultation has been publicised?

Consider video communications which can be broadcast in public venues and social media.