

# Parish Report – May 2022

Councillor: PENNY OTTON

Divisions: THEDWASTRE SOUTH

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## COVID-19

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Latest Government advice is available here: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

### **1) No Government Funding for Bus Back Better**

The Department for Transport have confirmed Suffolk County Council will not receive any funding for their Bus Back Better strategy. The strategy was aimed to improve and expand bus services in Suffolk, connecting rural areas to local and important towns, as well as reduce carbon emissions in line with the goal to become net zero by 2050.

### **2) Cabinet Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> April**

The Cabinet met to discuss Suffolk County Council's Post-16 Travel Policy for 2022-23. The policy outlines all the support offered to those who struggle to afford the travel sending their child to education, training, or an apprenticeship. The Cabinet voted to freeze the increase in costs to parents/guardians, meaning the price remains at £930 per year for a Mainstream Seat, and £750 for a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Seat.

I still say this is a LOT of money for many parents and students.

The Cabinet discussed the positive report Suffolk County Council received from Ofsted's inspection into Care Leaver services. And have successfully helped them transition to independence.

### **3) County Deal – Key Communications**

Back in February, Suffolk was announced as one of nine county areas to be invited to negotiate a County Deal – a deal that would see Suffolk have more control over decisions in transport, education, skills, housing, and planning. The administration announced Suffolk would be pursuing a deal without the recommendation of a Mayor. Our Group agrees with this position. The Council has confirmed that discussions with ministers are expected soon, and they will be responding with their expectations of what Suffolk would achieve in terms of the government's Levelling-up strategy.

**UKRAINE REFUGEES;** at a meeting with the head of social care it is obvious that the council and families prepared to take refugees are still finding it very difficult. There has been a real concern about accompanied children and offers by the very elderly to house male refugees. I am happy to pass on any specific concerns.

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING;** 19<sup>th</sup> May. I intend to put a motion calling for support for the Environment Agency and others to stop the sewerage being pumped into rivers.

**TCC LIASON GROUP;** am still waiting for Jean Wheeler to come back on this.

**LOCALITY FUND;** I have helped TCC with the cost of a wildflower garden at the Thurston campus