

PAUL CLOVER/MARGARET MAYBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7TH AUGUST 2025.

Local Govt Reorganisation

Babergh District Council has now passed a Motion on Notice to develop the option of a proposal for three Unitary Councils to serve Suffolk. This was for debate only with no questions allowed. However, no costings have been presented which precludes any level of informed debate.

This Motion conflicts with the decision taken in March to look at the option of two or three Unitary authorities.

The survey on LGR has only secured approx. 1,800 responses (approx. 2%) of the population. As you may be aware the survey requested the participant to rank generic statements in a priority list and therefore it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions as to the general preferences for the number of unitary authorities desired. It should be noted that any proposal for a unitary authority also has to contain robust evidence based reasoning for discarding alternative options.

In terms of serving local communities, we understand that it is proposed to introduce various forms of Neighbourhood Area Committees (NAC's). In this system local Unitary Councillors will hold the decision making powers and the committee can include other stakeholders, service providers, parish/town councillors etc. The aim being that the local views and interests of residents are best protected and represented.

It has yet to be confirmed whether County Council Elections will go ahead next May, however that is the date set for the Mayoral elections. According to County Council literature the greatest savings will be secured by the development of one unitary authority. This is in the absence of any data from BDC.

Neighbourhood Plan Funding

You are probably aware that the Government has withdrawn funding for Neighbourhood Development preparation.

BDC have announced that they are currently exploring what other funding could be made available to those parishes wishing to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

BDC will also review their Joint Local Plan and this will help inform those seeking to allocate sites for residential development. Those with Neighbourhood Plans not yet submitted should contact BDC to discuss the best way forward in the absence of Government funding. This also applies to those considering producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor David Busby

We are very sorry to report the death of Councillor David Busby, representative for the Copdock and Washbrook ward. Despite a cancer diagnosis in 2023 David continued his work as a councillor until very recently. David was a very experienced Councillor and highly regarded for his commitment and humour. He will be sadly missed.

Tour of Britain Cycle Race

We are delighted to announce that the Tour of Britain cycle race is scheduled to come through Suffolk visiting a number of towns and villages in the first week of September. The route is still under embargo however it should help to boost trade and visitor numbers for those in the vicinity of the route. Packs to encourage involvement of local businesses and groups should be available soon.

Resident Survey

14,000 letters are being sent out to households as part of the annual resident's survey. The survey is conducted by an independent agency: Opinion Research Services (ORS) and provides residents with a chance to present their views on what they require and what they would like to see improve. The survey goes out to a representative cross section of the communities.

Simpler Recycling Survey

With the new recycling and food waste collections coming in 2026, the Suffolk Waste Partnership is asking residents how they would like to be contacted about the upcoming changes. The short survey must be completed by 31st August.

Big Suffolk Weekend

The dates for the Big Suffolk Weekend have now been announced as the 18th-19th October and this year, will be county wide across multiple venues. There will be many attractions and opportunities to win a variety of prizes. Entrance by ticket is free and the ballot for applications will open on the 2nd September.