

District Council Report

September 2024

Car Parking Charges

A review of the affordability of making the first hour of parking free, in Hadleigh and Sudbury was considered by cabinet in August. Additional information was included in the new report, but it recommended that the one-hour free option was not implemented because it is unaffordable.

This means the council will proceed with the charges originally agreed in April – which at £1 for short stay parking for the first hour, or £1 for two hours in long stay, are below those of neighbouring authorities. There are no plans to introduce charges for parking on Sundays or Bank Holidays, and Blue Badge holders would continue to be allowed to park for free for up to three hours in all council car parks.

New Waste Collection Plans

The number of waste bins and collections is due to be considered by Cabinet soon. Residents in Babergh will not only see the introduction of new weekly food waste collections from 2026 but could also enjoy a 'recycling revolution' under new plans.

Plans will enable residents to recycle more items in their household recycling bin from 2026 to meet new government legislation where glass and cartons such as Tetra Pak will be included. A separate bin, box or bag would be provided for paper and cardboard.

This change will increase the number of bins each home has but the councils' waste team would be sympathetic to those with exceptional needs on a case-by-case basis.

Call for Land Summit

The Council hosted a free event in September for local landowners in the districts to help put them in touch with organisations that can support them in managing their land better for wildlife. Attendees at the event included environmental organisations such as the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, and Forestry Commission, among others.

Advice was offered to landowners regarding support, funding, and resources to help ensure their land best supports our native wildlife. This could be tree planting, hedge planting, meadow creation or allowing land to develop naturally.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylons

Following on from the National Grid consultation Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils, who are both affected by the route, have submitted a response. The councils continue to object to the "considerable and potentially devastating impacts" of the proposals to the districts.

Whilst it is important to acknowledge the government's net zero commitment and the need to tackle energy security, carbon reduction and energy poverty – the council has pointed out the impact of strategic energy development which affects our districts' communities, heritage, and environment. Our districts are currently receiving a lot of renewable energy applications.

In a joint response, the councils call for a pause to the scheme so alternatives can be fully considered and consulted upon.

Kingfisher Leisure centre repairs

The pool in Sudbury was initially closed in August to allow for work to be carried out after damage to a glass panel above the pool. It was hoped that the work would be quickly, and the pool would quickly re-open. Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that the complexity of the repair and time would mean a longer closure.

Now further investigations have revealed additional work to the roof is needed – meaning the pool will be closed for at least a further 12 weeks.

All other facilities at Kingfisher, including the gym and sauna, remain open as usual. While the pool is closed, the council will also take the opportunity to carry out additional surveys and maintenance work. We are asking questions concerning this work considering £2.3m was spent on the leisure centre in 2019.

Sports and recreation in Babergh get £118K boost.

Two separate sports and recreational projects in Babergh are to receive an injection of more than £118k from Babergh District Council, thanks to funds collected from developers. This includes £100K from CIL funding that has been allocated to Layham Road Sports Ground Pavilion in Hadleigh.