

November 2023 County Councillor Report from Cllr Stuart Bird

BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Suffolk County Council has been awarded a total of £3.6 million of additional funds for supporting bus services. This will be spent in two financial years, £1.8 million in 2023/24 and the same in 2024/25.

Part of this money will go to bus companies, and also for bus priority schemes. It is also intended to improve the bus services on a local level. Parish Councils have been contacted to submit potential projects for funding. Details of how to respond were included in the communication.

HIGHWAYS CONTRACT

The new contract for highways maintenance and repair commenced on 01 October, with the Milestone company. In due course the County Council Scrutiny Committee, of which I am a Member, will examine how the new contract has been implemented. We will look at how the service is being provided, and whether improvements have been made.

HIGHWAYS WORK AND REPAIRS

After much lobbying and negotiation I can report two issues that have been resolved. The faded white lining separating the path from the road outside the Mariners Pub was repainted on 16 October. The overgrown footpath along Kirton Road in Trimley St Martin was cut back on 26 October.

I am still seeking a resolution of the replacement tree in Faulkeners Way. In July the tree was damaged and had to be removed. Suffolk County Council are pursuing an insurance claim to fund a replacement tree.

WHITE LINING REFRESHING IN TRIMLEY ST MARY

I am meeting with St Mary Parish Councillors in November to identify faded road markings, including centre lines, give way markings, etc., in the village. We will then liaise with County Highways to discuss the costings and logistics of potential repainting of these lines.

COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET 2024/25

We have now concluded the work of the Budget Working Group, which I volunteered to join for the third consecutive year. We held a series of 10 intensive meetings with Council Officers and Cabinet Members to produce a draft budget. This will be presented to the Conservative Group for finalisation, and will then go to Scrutiny Committee in January, and Council for approval in February. We have identified potential efficiencies and savings, without compromising front line services, in order to formulate a prudent and balanced budget.

COUNCILLOR STUART BIRD B.A.(HONS)

COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE NORTH AND TRIMLEY DIVISION

TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE PORT WARD