

## County Councillor Report

December 2025

### LOCAL HIGHWAYS BUDGET

This is the latest position of the projects which I am funding with my budget :

#### OLD FELIXSTOWE ROAD ( SINGLE TRACK SECTION )

I have requested 14 additional cyclist warning signs along this road. These were ordered on 06 November and will be installed by 12 February 2026. The cost is **£2382.31**

#### OLD KIRTON ROAD

I am jointly funding the skirting back of 1082 metres of overgrown footpaths in the vicinity of Trimley St Martin School. This is a project shared with Councillor Patti Mulcahy, Member for Martlesham Division ( she covers Kirton ). The cost of this is **£3427.51 ( £1623.75 each )**.

#### SCHOOL WARNING SIGNS

Having received the costings for these two schemes, I have some remaining funds. I have ordered some improvement to school warning signs at Felixstowe School ( Secondary School ). Two damaged signs on Walton High Street will be repaired, and an additional school warning sign will be installed on Walton Hall Drive, where there are existing “20s plenty” signs. This will probably exhaust my remaining budget of **£1982.88**

### WINTER GRITTING

The programme of winter gritting of roads started on 01 October. There are stores of 22000 tonnes of grit in strategic locations within Suffolk. During the 2024/25 winter 10091 tonnes were used on 81484 miles of road. Also grit bins at registered locations have been filled. These are grit bins approved by Parish Councils. The gritting vehicles run on hydrotreated vegetable oil ( HVO ), reducing the environmental impact. There is a fleet of 36 vehicles, with 2 spare to cover breakdowns.

The gritting is done on a priority basis. Priority one roads ( 1259 miles ) are A and B roads, roads to fire stations, hospitals, rail stations and main bus routes. Priority two ( 843 miles ) are other bus routes, rural villages, school accesses.

## **SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET**

The process of setting our financial budget begins almost as soon as the previous year's process finishes. Each year, the pressures become greater, with demand for our services growing beyond the rate of increase of our funding. The inflationary effect on our costs is always in excess of headline inflation rates. We constantly look for efficiency savings and better ways of working through our Transformation Programmes, to ensure a balanced budget. The County Council will always prioritise our essential services to vulnerable residents.

I have been part of a budget working group this year, and for five consecutive years now. Our work has now completed. The budget will now go through several stages of finalisation. It will be examined at Conservative Group on 05 December, Scrutiny Committee on 13 January, Cabinet on 27 January, with approval at Council on 12 February.

## **NEW PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

There are two new primary schools planned for our area, one at North Felixstowe and another at Brightwell Lakes in Martlesham. On 01 July this year I was a member of the interviewing panel for the contracts to run these schools. There has been a protracted process of approval before I was able to announce our recommendations. The decision had to be examined by the Department for Education. It will now proceed to SCC Cabinet on 02 December and final approval by the Secretary of State for Education.

We interviewed three Trusts which had applied to run these schools. We have awarded a contract to Unity Schools Partnership for North Felixstowe, and to Children's Endeavour Trust for Brightwell Lakes.

May I wish all residents of the Trimley Villages a happy festive period and a happy New Year.

COUNCILLOR STUART BIRD B.A.(HONS)

COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE NORTH AND TRIMLEY DIVISION

TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE PORT WARD