

Lavenham Parish Council annual report by Robert Lindsay County Cllr 21.5.26

I am pleased to have been re-elected as Lavenham's County Councillor and look forward to continue representing the village's residents for the remaining two years of the County Council's life.

Some highlights of the year:

Footway on Melford Road

I was pleased to be able to help get this long desired pavement built to allow residents of Green Willows to walk or wheel into the rest of the village.

The project was one of the first to use Babergh District Council developer levy money to pay for Suffolk County Council to build a pavement. As such Babergh needed reassurance over cost over runs and some extra funds from my locality budget to cover an investigation by BT to check their inspection hatch would not be impaired by the pavement.

Bus 51

During the year I was delighted that my and Parish Councils combined requests and lobbying for a bus service between Hadleigh and Stowmarket came to fruition in April with a six times a day service, running every week day. It appears to have already attracted a core of regulars and has been widely welcomed.

The County Council has had no serious plan for prioritising where bus investment needs to go and so when bus investment money does become available, it is left to County Councillors and Parish Councils to lobby for the services they want.

Wattisham airbase sewage sludge processing site shut down

Residents and local workmen at a business park had been complaining of a stench from a sewage sludge processing site near Wattisham Air Base which had been causing retching.

After lobbying the Council's enforcement team I'm pleased that the County Council issued a full stop notice to this site earlier in the new year and the company, a contractor to Thames Water cleared the site and departed, without appealing the notice.

Government's council merger plan

The Government's plan to force local councils to merge into much larger councils and install a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk has dominated much of the council agenda during the year.

I am pleased that the Government has chosen what I consider the least bad option of three unitary councils rather than one (as proposed by Suffolk County Council).

I note that the new Reform administration at the county council is now threatening a judicial review of this decision. However, they are not clear what they think is wrong with it and they will have to continue negotiations with the Government to prepare for three unitaries in case their legal action fails. I hope they will also work the district councils who drew up the business case for three unitaries that was approved