

## Saxmundham Town Council

Committee Meeting	Town Council
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Item Number	12
Report Title	Energy Projects Update
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### East Suffolk Council

The Green Party, Liberal Democrats and Independent formed a coalition group following the recent East Suffolk Council elections. A member of the coalition reported that there will be a greater focus on energy projects with the Green Party leading. They hope for more transparent processes on mitigation, more deliberation, and working together with the knowledge and insight of Town and Parish Councils and campaign groups.

The planning department intend to launch a specialised website to track all planning application movements for Sizewell C. Currently, all applications cannot be grouped and viewed as a whole and must be searched for individually. It is hoped that this launch will occur before construction begins and an alert function will be built in to inform interested parties of changes occurring with Sizewell C planning applications.

### Sizewell C

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) are seeking views on a recommended approach to community benefits for electricity transmission network infrastructure. The consultation is proposing to create voluntary guidance for industry and communities when developing individual community benefit packages as currently there is no framework for this sector. The guidance will cover how to deliver direct benefit payments to eligible individuals and wider community benefits. They also recommend establishing a recommended level of funding for community benefits in agreement with Ofgem. Energy Minister, Andrew Bowie, met with representatives from Town and Parish Councils, campaign groups and our MP on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The stakeholders raised the importance of the community being involved in developing the benefits packages, ensuring they are tailored to local communities, and asked how they can be supported in developing benefit packages. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) responded to the consultation on behalf of Town and Parish Councils (copy available on request from the RFO).

During his visit to the region, Minister Bowie visited the Sizewell B relocated facilities project and was shown the Sizewell C development site. He also visited Suffolk New College's Net Zero Centre which opened earlier this month. The centre will train young people so they are prepared for the upcoming job opportunities at Sizewell C and other energy projects in the region.

Marjorie Barnes, Head of Regional External Affairs of Sizewell C, attended the recent SALC East Suffolk Forum. She shared a project update via a slideshow and answered questions from the Town and Parish Councillors present. Questions included the strategy for sustainable water for the development, the 'temporary' removal of the trees at Goose Hill, the Property Price Support Scheme for Theberton, the funding model for the development, particularly the RAB model and whether the government (i.e. the public) will be liable for the development costs even if they overrun, the disparity in the publications

regarding the number of the jobs proposed to be created, whether nuclear energy is necessary with the rise in renewable energy, and whether the supply chain and the skills development is in place for the construction phase. The recording of the forum is available here: [AREA FORUM - East Suffolk | SALC Website](#).

Three important permits required for Sizewell C to operate were granted by the Environment Agency earlier this year, making a significant step forward for the project. The permits allow Sizewell C to dispose of and discharge radioactive waste, to operate standby power systems using diesel generators, and to discharge returned abstracted seawater and other liquid trade effluents to the Greater Sizewell Bay in the North Sea.

### **Sizewell B**

The station is back on the grid following the successful completion of a planned maintenance and £80 million investment programme bringing the outage to an end on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

### **Scottish Power Renewables**

An application for planning consent will shortly be submitted for a temporary compound near the old airstrip in Theberton parish for a park and ride facility for 100 cars and equipment for archaeology works in connection with the sub-station at Friston. It is deemed to be a practical location due to its concrete base and its proximity to the development site. Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council have suggested to the developer an alternative vehicular access route to the site which may impact Saxmundham. The developer is meeting with Kelsale Parish Council and has asked for a meeting with Saxmundham Town Council to discuss the proposed vehicular routes to the compound. A suitable date and time are to be confirmed.

Campaign group Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS) was due to hear on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 whether its Judicial Review had been successful in the High Court. However, the presiding judge has a high workload, and a decision could take months, not weeks, to be made. The same judge also has jurisdiction over a legal challenge brought by Together Against Sizewell C (TASC) over the environmental impact of Sizewell C.