
Report on ESPA (East Suffolk Planning Alliance) Meeting.

18 February 2024

Held at the all new Grundisburgh village hall on 17th February 2024.

The leveling up and regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) intends to empower local communities. It is a program of change in how local/central government and private sector operate. ESPA objectives are to develop a framework in which community groups can work with local government in resolving planning issues. Thinking this meeting was going to be a dry typical planning type meeting I couldn't be more wrong.

The meeting was well attended by local parish cllrs and interested individuals from communities around east Suffolk. Seven panellists all advocates of Suffolk (ie: professor of Biodiversity/conservation & sustainability, East Suffolk Council CEO, Ex MP for Suffolk, and a BBC journalist).

Questions had been sent in before the meeting and randomly chosen to be put before the panel. The views were varied and occasionally clashed, but the information was very interesting and useful.

Overall opinion was that :

The present planning system wasn't working ie: Framlingham build program.

A neighbourhood plan is only as good as the community up holds it's responsibility on choices for the whole community. Should flooding be included as a material consideration in planning - It is, but with recent events can be improved a lot more.

The need of housing in East Suffolk has promoted the decision on 100% council tax premium to be placed on 2nd homes as from 2025.

These were a few of the subjects covered, but it would be useful for cllrs to attend the next forum.