

Thérèse Coffey MP

Newsletter



Sadly, 2020 has been a rather miserable year overall. It has been tough for families, businesses and for the public sector. That said, it has been exceptionally busy for constituency matters (especially energy projects) and my role in the Cabinet. I am really looking forward to 2021 (particularly Easter onwards), but as this is my last newsletter of the year, I'd like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Please find below my latest newsletter covering issues I have been dealing with and events I have attended recently. I also update my website www.theresecoffey.co.uk and Facebook regularly.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, there is a link to unsubscribe below.

1. Coronavirus

I have had regular updates with the local NHS and hospitals throughout this time as well as our councils to keep informed, which has also helped in my interaction with other parts of government. Staying in Tier 2 is not the news that our hospitality industry wants to hear, as I know just how important having a good Christmas and New Year is to them, but it is right, especially as the number of patients being admitted to hospital is rising - and we need to keep working hard to avoid going into Tier 3. Our local councils are continuing to pay out grants to businesses.

The good news is that the vaccine programme is being rolled out. Despite the storage challenges of the Pfizer vaccine, the immunisation programme will help the high priority people shortly and it will certainly be easier to roll out the full programmes when (I hope before the end of the year) the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is approved for use.

For the latest information on the restrictions and help and support available for businesses please

see - <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>.

2. Energy/Environment

Energy White Paper: The government published an Energy White Paper which sets out plans to decarbonise the UK's energy supply by 2050. As part of that process, the government will now enter into negotiations with EDF about advancing the Sizewell C project, which is not just important for the UK's future energy supply but will create thousands of local jobs, including well-paid, long term jobs.

Sizewell C: I submitted my response to the latest Sizewell C consultation. I'm pleased EDF seem to have listened to the responses, not just from me but from local councils and local residents and have come up with further changes. Rather than bringing in the majority of freight by HGV, which would've had a significant impact on our highways network, EDF are now proposing to bring in 40% of construction phase materials by road. They're able to do this by building a second beach landing facility, so a greater proportion of materials can come in via sea-borne methods, whilst further utilising rail freight. Full details of my consultation response can be seen on my website here (www.theresecoffey.co.uk/sizewell-c)

I also met the Marine Management Organisation to discuss the Sizewell C Development Consent Order application and the latest EDF consultation.



Scottish Power Renewables: My office made verbal submissions on my behalf to the Issue Specific Hearings most notably on 'developments in energy policy' and how that impacts on SPR's planning application. We need a more integrated and coordinated approach to onshore energy connections, taking into account cumulative impact. This is something that I and other colleagues have been lobbying the Energy Minister on and we submitted a joint response to the National Grid consultation. Full details here (www.theresecoffey.co.uk/news/suffolk-norfolk-mps-respond-offshore-coordination-project-consultation). The Offshore Transmission Network Review is starting to deal with this but further regulatory change is required – which the Energy White Paper will help

with. I also met National Grid to discuss the review.

3. Health & Care

Ipswich Hospital & the CCG: I attended a briefing by the Chief Executives of Ipswich Hospital and our local NHS Commissioning Group, Nick Hulme and Ed Garratt. The number of patients being admitted to hospital with coronavirus is rising. Admission testing is also identifying people coming in for other treatments as having Covid too, which is presenting its own challenges, as the subsequent rearrangement of patients is then needed to help control the transmission.

I had a similar briefing from the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership.

Mental Health Trust: I received an update from the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust, Marie Gabriel and Jonathan Warren about mental health services in Suffolk.

4. Education

Additional Funding: As we head full throttle towards the Christmas holidays, I want to take this opportunity to, once again, thank all the teachers and other staff who have done so much to keep our schools fully open in the latter half of this year. Getting out of the learning habit can have a really negative impact on children's futures which is why it is vitally important that they're back at school. The government recently announced a new funding and support programme to help schools and colleges during the pandemic. Education establishments facing the greatest combined staffing and funding pressures will be able to claim via the fund.



5. Business

Freeports: I received an update from Hutchison Ports on a potential proposal for a Freeport bid, which has now been named Freeport East. I have been working closely with the Port of Felixstowe and Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, across the water for Harwich on how we can boost our chances of Freeport status, which would be a good boost for jobs and prosperity on both sides of the Harwich Haven.



6. Constituency & Suffolk Matters:

Remembrance Sunday: I arranged for poppy wreaths to be laid on my behalf in Felixstowe, Woodbridge, Saxmundham, Leiston, Aldeburgh, Southwold and Halesworth.

7. Parliament & Ministerial Matters

Brexit: We left the European Union earlier this year and we are coming to the end of the transition period. Talks for a future trade deal are still ongoing.

Spending Review: To give people certainty, the Chancellor announced that the furlough scheme will continue until the end of March. That has now been extended again until the end of April. We also increased the support for millions more workers through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme with the third grant being calculated at 80% of average trading profits. As Secretary of State for Work & Pensions, the key Spending Review announcement that I pushed for was the £2.9

billion Restart Programme, which will provide intensive and tailored support to over 1-million unemployed people to help them find work.

Covid Winter Grant Scheme: I announced a £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme for our local councils, to ensure that vulnerable households do not go without food or other essentials. Crucially, our £220m Holiday Activities and Food programme will be rolled out across the country and I know there are many children in Suffolk Coastal who will be eligible to participate. Helping children enjoy fun, enriching activities with a good meal during the longer holidays will help them perform better at school - which is vital for improving their life chances.

Agriculture Bill: The Agriculture Bill, which transforms the way we support farmers, received Royal Assent. Outside of the EU, we have the opportunity to replace the Common Agricultural Policy with a new system that truly works for the UK. Rewarding farmers for the work they do in adopting sustainable farming practices, safeguarding the environment by creating habitats for nature recovery and supporting the establishment on new woodland to help tackle climate change. I know this will be a big change for some local farmers, so we are ensuring the changes come in over a 7-year period to give everyone time to plan and adjust.

Veterans Railcard: On Armistice Day, the government introduced a new Veterans Railcard that will provide up to a third off rail travel for veterans and their families – helping to repay the debt we all owe to those who have served our country. More information here - <https://www.veterans-railcard.co.uk>



8. Other Meetings & Events

- I was interviewed by Rendlesham Community Radio.
- I attended the Joint Local Authority Meeting on Sizewell C.

- I attended the Suffolk Coast Energy Delivery Board.
- I received an update from the Alde & Ore Estuary project.
- I attended a briefing from Highways England on measures to keep the Orwell Bridge open in high winds.
- I attended an East Suffolk Water Abstractors group briefing.
- I met the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Port of Felixstowe.
- I met the Director General from the Country Landowners Association to discuss Sizewell C.
- I met New Anglia LEP for an update.
- I met Councillor Steve Gallant, Leader of East Suffolk Council
- I met Robert Gunn, the new Station Director of Sizewell B.

9. Next Surgery

I've held a number of online surgeries throughout the coronavirus pandemic. The next one is in the New Year. Date to be announced.

To make an appointment please call the Westminster Office on 0207 219 7164.

