

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

An EIA helps to demonstrate how the Council meets its statutory Public Sector Equality Duty. It requires us to pay “due regard” to the impact of our decisions on people with protected characteristics in setting and implementing policies or developing services.

The law does not mean that no changes can be made, even if they have a negative effect on people. However, we must demonstrate that we have considered the impact that could happen and what steps we have put in place to mitigate against any negative impacts. We can also use an EIA screening as an opportunity to enhance positive impacts.

Please refer to the guidance on MySCC to help you complete this EIA Screening or speak to a member of the EIA Review Group.

Before this EIA screening is completed, please:

- ensure that you have used the latest EIA screening template on [MySCC](#);
- attend an EIA training session, dates on [MySCC](#);
- consider who is affected by the proposed changes to the service or policy and their protected characteristics, for example, the public and staff;
- consider including some input about the change from those affected by the proposed changes before completion of the EIA. i.e. undertake some co-production with people who will or may be affected by the proposed changes;
- make sure the EIA screening will be considered as part of the decision making process to help demonstrate how the Council meets its statutory Public Sector Equality Duty, i.e. the EIA is finalised and published before decisions are made;
- ensure that the EIA is written in plain English and content is appropriate as it will be published on the Suffolk County Council website. Please do not use any abbreviations and acronyms without explaining them;
- use links to websites, if necessary, for any supporting documents as the EIA will be converted into a pdf and published on its own so no embedded attachments will be visible;
- check that the EIA screening is accessible particularly if tables are included. Once you have completed the template, check the accessibility of the document by clicking on the ‘Review’ tab and then clicking on ‘Check Accessibility’;
- understand that this template includes terminology used in the Equality Act 2010. We appreciate that not everyone is comfortable with the term gender reassignment, but it has been used in this template as we need to reflect what the legislation says. The guidance in that section reflects the spectrum of people who are transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming who should be considered when completing the EIA.
- consider how you might be able to use the EIA process to increase our understanding of those with protected characteristics in order to improve our decision making in the future. Can this be an opportunity to gather more information and data on people with protected characteristics and understand more about their lived experiences and the impacts that changes to SCC policies, procedures and services may have on them?
- consider planning in a feedback process so that you can determine how accurately the EIA predicted impacts on those with protected characteristics so that you can improve your EIAs in the future.

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| Name of the proposed service or policy change | Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2023-28 |
| Lead officer responsible for the policy or service | Simon Amstutz, AONB Manager |
| Officers carrying out the EIA screening (at least one must have done EIA training, it is recommended that an officer responsible for the policy or service is involved in the screening) | Simon Amstutz, AONB Manager Claire Cadman, AONB Officer |
| Is this a new EIA or a revision to a previous one? (If revision, please provide date of previous EIA) | New |
| Date this EIA screening was completed | 21 June 2023 |

Part A: Background

1. What is the proposed change?

Briefly describe (max. 250 words) the service/policy and the changes that are being proposed:

An updated management plan for the period 2023-2028 for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2. Why are these changes being proposed?

Briefly describe (max. 250 words) the reasons for making these changes:

Local authorities with part of an AONB within their jurisdictions are required to prepare a management plan for the area and review it every five years. The plan should form the policy for the nationally designated landscape. See [Countryside and Rights of Way Act \(2000\)](#) section 89.

3. What will the effect of the changes be?

Describe what difference the changes will make on people, communities, localities etc.:

To ensure that the local authorities that have part of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB within their jurisdiction meet their requirements. People will experience a continuation of the delivery of AONB purpose, to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

4. Has co-production been used to help formulate the proposed changes?

(i.e. have you involved people with lived experience of the protected characteristics in the development of your proposed service/policy change etc? For example, you might talk to

current, recent or potential service users, SCC Staff Networks, Suffolk Parent Carer Forum, Healthwatch.) If so, please provide brief details:

The plan has been drafted by officers before consultation on the draft with the AONB Partnership (made up of six local authorities and organisations representing the farming, tourism, environmental sectors and government agencies including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Forestry England.

Following revisions made following that consultation, a 3-month public consultation is undertaken. This consultation was publicised through AONB networks Parish Councils in the designated area, social media posts, eNewsletters, at events and via the AONB website.

5. Who (job role or group) will make the decision about whether the proposed changes will be implemented, and when will this happen?

(Please note: this must be after the EIA screening has been published so that the impact on people from each of the Protected Characteristics identified in the EIA is considered as part of the decision making process). Please provide details:

The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB management plan 2023-28 will require endorsement from the local authorities that have part of the nationally designated landscape within their jurisdiction. These are:

- Suffolk County Council
- Essex County Council
- Tendring District Council
- Babergh District Council
- East Suffolk Council
- Ipswich Borough Council

Further endorsement will be sought from other Partnership members including:

- Natural England
 - Environment Agency
 - Suffolk Coast Limited
 - RSPB
 - The Suffolk Wildlife Trust
 - The Suffolk Association of Local Councils
 - The National Trust
 - The Suffolk Preservation Society
 - The Essex Wildlife Trust
 - The Crown Estate
 - The National Farmers' Union
 - Country Land and Business Association
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6. How will the proposed change be implemented?

Briefly describe the timescales and process for implementation:

The local authorities that are required to endorse the plan, undertake this in different ways, including:

Cabinet sign off
Environment Portfolio Holder Sign off
Senior Officer sign off

7. When is it due to start?

(Planned start of new/revised policy/service). Please provide details:

The revised Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB management Plan 2023-2028 will need to be endorsed by 31 December 2023.

8. Any other relevant details

Additional information that will help to explain your plans; may be left blank:

9. Current service users

What do you know about your current service users by protected characteristics (where this data is available)?

- If it is not currently available state any plans to collect more information so that you are able to use it in future when it is relevant to do so

Please describe below:

No data available as data not cut to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB boundary. The AONB is not sufficiently resourced to collect such data.

10. Potential service users and the community

What do you know about your potential service users and the wider community by protected characteristics (where this data is available)?

- Who will use the service or be subject to the policy after the change?
- Provide a brief overview of quantitative data (numbers) used and any research undertaken, including customer surveys and focus groups, plus links to reports, local or national data that you have used.

- The [Suffolk Observatory](#) has a prepared EIA profile available at a variety of geographical levels if required.

Please describe below:

The data is not available for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB geography. Access to the nationally designated landscape is equal to all members of society, albeit some publicly accessible areas are not accessible for those with access needs.

Part B: Impact on people with protected characteristics

Implications for communities/service users/customers impacted by the proposed changes and workforce/staff, where they may be impacted by the proposed changes:

Describe how your plans will specifically affect (or not) people from each of the protected characteristics within the boxes below.

- Any positive or negative impact not specific to any of the protected characteristics should be covered above in answer to the “What will the effect of the changes be?” section (Question 3 above).
- If both service users and staff will be affected, please ensure the impacts on each are listed separately in each box.
- It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact.

1. Disability:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people with <u>any</u> disability and what evidence do you have? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. | | | |
| Funds secured from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for access enhancements, Farming in Protected Landscapes grants (that includes an access element) and engagement with underrepresented groups, that may include those with a disability. | | | |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no expected impact, select N/A. • It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. | | | |
| Positive impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like | | | |
| Minor positive. The AONB team seek to increase access to the nationally designated landscape where possible by securing external funds to deliver physical improvements and encouraging those with protected characteristics to access the AONB through the work of the staff teams Access for All officer. Grants received from Defra have required the AONB team to provide feedback on the impact of the grant given. | | | |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you expect no impact, put N/A. | | | |
| Low impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> | High impact <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |

What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact?

- If you expect no impact, put N/A.

Increased resources to understand any negative impacts relating to disability and for putting in measures to address any inequalities. Additional resources would enable the AONB Partnership to undertake monitoring by questionnaires and other survey to access the effectiveness of the work

2. Age:

What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to their age and what evidence do you have?

- If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not.

Funds secured from Defra for access enhancements, Farming in Protected Landscapes grants (that includes an access element) and engagement with underrepresented groups. The AONB team's Landscape for All officer will develop projects to engage more people of differing ages. The AONB team targets young people through its programme of 'youth Rangers' and older people via its own grants to the BeachBonkers programme that visits people in residential care. Regular volunteer groups regularly attract retired people although the AONB team does not collect information relating to explicit age. The AONB team and many of its partners work with education groups to help facilitate forest schools and environmental education via funding partners through its own grants schemes. The AONB funded a programme of parents with prams self guided trails.

Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact

- If there is no expected impact, select N/A.
- It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact.

Positive impact

Negative impact

N/A

If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like

More accessible routes and information about the AONB. The AONB team seek to increase access to the nationally designated landscape where possible by securing external funds to deliver physical improvements and encouraging those with protected characteristics to access the AONB through the work of the staff teams Access for All officer.

Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?

- If you expect no impact, put N/A.

Low impact

Medium impact

High impact

N/A

What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact?

- If you expect no impact, put N/A.

Increased resources to understand any negative impacts relating to age and for putting in measures to address any inequalities.

3. Sex (gender):

What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to their sex (gender) and what evidence do you have?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| <p>There is no differential impact on people due to their sex. The AONB team does not have any evidence to suggest that women and men access the countryside in different ways, although there is some anecdotal evidence that some women do feel more vulnerable in the countryside, including the AONBs.</p> |
| <p>Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like</p> |
| N/A |
| <p>Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

4. Gender reassignment:

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| <p>What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people who are transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming and what evidence do you have?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| <p>There is no differential impact on people who are transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming.</p> |
| <p>Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like</p> |
| N/A |
| <p>Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

5. Sexual orientation:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to their sexual orientation and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| There is no differential impact on people due to their sexual orientation. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| N/A |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

6. Race:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to their race and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| There is no differential impact on people due to their race. AONB teams Landscape for All officer will develop projects to engage more people from minority ethnic groups. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| N/A |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

7. Religion or belief:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to their religion or belief and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| There is no differential impact on people due to their religion. AONB teams Landscape for All officer will develop projects to engage more people with a religion or belief. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| N/A |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

8. Marriage/civil partnership:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people who are married or in a civil partnership and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| There is no differential impact on people who are married or in a civil partnership. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| N/A |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| N/A |

9. Pregnancy/maternity:

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| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people who are pregnant or those with a young child and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| There is no differential impact on people who are pregnant or those with a young child. The AONB team and its partners work on projects to improve accessibility for people who are pregnant or with a young child. This includes improving path surfaces and using more accessible venues. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| N/A |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Increased resources to understand any negative impacts relating to pregnancy/maternity and for putting in measures to address any inequalities. |

Part C: Assessment of additional impacts relating to rurality and socio-economic disadvantage

In addition to the protected characteristics above, you should consider the impact of living in a rural area as part of this assessment, as well as how a proposed service or policy change might impact on people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

These are not characteristics protected by law, but SCC has determined that it is good practice to consider carefully how they may affect people's experience of a policy or service.

1. Rurality:

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| The Rural-Urban definition (DEFRA) introduced in 2004, defines urban areas as settlements of over 10,000 people. Other settlements are defined as one of three rural types: town and fringe, village or hamlet, and dispersed. |
| What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people who live in an urban or rural area and what evidence do you have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB management plan 2023-2028 should have a positive impact on those living and visiting the rural area. The nationally designated landscape is a |

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| <p>rural area and this management plan delivers the AONB purpose on conserving and enhancing natural beauty that has environmental, economic and social benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing inward investment to deliver AONB purpose, for example grants from Defra, Ofgem and others. • Awarding grants through the AONB programmes such as Sustainable Development Fund, Access and Amenity Fund, Community Conservation Fund and Galloper Wind Farm Fund. • Enhancing access to the area. • Supporting sustainable businesses • Delivering a Landscapes for All programme |
| <p>Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no expected impact, select N/A. • It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| <p>Positive impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like</p> <p>Projects to enhance access to all sections of our communities including all protected characteristics, sustainable businesses and the environment.</p> |
| <p>Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| <p>Low impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| <p>Increased resources to deliver more.</p> |

2. Socio-economic disadvantage:

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| <p>To enable SCC to tackle poverty in Suffolk it is important that due consideration is given to socio-economic disadvantage when considering changes to services, developing new services, procuring services etc. For instance, complicated or time-consuming application processes can have a negative impact on take-up from people in poor socio-economic situations. In terms of access there can often be barriers to accessing services that are very specific to people in socio-economic disadvantage which if thought through and overcome can ensure greater take-up.</p> |
| <p>What is the impact of the proposed service or policy on people due to socio-economic disadvantage and what evidence do you have?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not believe there is any impact briefly describe why not. |
| <p>The aspiration is to improve conditions for those that are at a socio-economic disadvantage. Programmes designed to support those from a socio-economic disadvantage by enhancing access, improving the environment, supporting sustainable businesses are undertaken but evidence not available to assess merits of the projects due to lack of resources to undertake the required assessments. Funds have been provided by AONB grants to support economic activity, bids are made to recruit apprentices from groups that are currently underrepresented in the industry (New to Nature project), and</p> |

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| grants made available to charitable organisations to enhance their offer or provide supported places at events. |
| Please select whether there is a positive or negative impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is no expected impact, select N/A. It is possible to have both a positive and negative impact. |
| Positive impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If there will be a positive or negative impact, please describe what this will look like |
| Greater employment opportunities (from delivering grant activity and improving viability of sustainable business activity). |
| Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| Low impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium impact <input type="checkbox"/> High impact <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What could be done to mitigate any negative impact or further promote positive impact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you expect no impact, put N/A. |
| More resources to deliver and assess project activity. The AONB team has secured a grant to enable people with socio economic disadvantage to visit the nationally designated landscape. |

Part D: Recommendation to EIA Review Group

In your opinion, should a full EIA* be carried out for this policy or service change?

Yes No

Briefly give your reasoning for this:

The majority of equality impacts identified are either no differential impact or positive.

- Much of the AONB is in private ownership so assessing public good from benefits accruing from delivering statutory purpose (to conserve and enhance natural beauty) is complex.
- Delivery of AONB purpose as reflected in the management plan 2023-2028 is designed to ensure discrimination is avoided and that the AONB encourages people from all protected characteristics to access and enjoy the AONB

*A full EIA involves consultation with all stakeholders, which may include actual and potential service users, community groups, staff and managers, partner agencies and trade unions. For guidance contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead EIA.mailbox@suffolk.gov.uk.