

# Thérèse Coffey MP

## Newsletter



***Please find below my latest newsletter covering issues I've been dealing with and events I have attended since the beginning of the year. I also update my website [www.theresecoffey.co.uk](http://www.theresecoffey.co.uk) and Facebook regularly. If you no longer wish to receive my newsletter, there is a link to unsubscribe below.***

### **1. Coronavirus**

Although infection rates are continuing to fall in Suffolk, it is still really important we all follow the rules and do what we can to limit journeys away from our homes. The Prime Minister will be making a speech on the 22nd of February setting out the roadmap for how the current restrictions can start to be relaxed in a managed way.

**Vaccines:** After a steady start, vaccinations are now happening at pace in Suffolk with our area contributing to the successful national effort in vaccinating the first 4 priority cohorts by last weekend. Previously, I raised concerns when it was clear that the cohort priority was not being followed unanimously. As an MP, I think it right to let the NHS get on with the programme but I also have a duty to hold them to account, which I have done. I'm pleased that saw a rapid response.

Whilst the Beast from the East led to some unavoidable closures, a special thanks go to the hardy team at Felixstowe, who shovelled away the snow to keep their vaccine programme running.

Due to the largely rural nature of Suffolk Coastal, I'm also pressing the Vaccines Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, for more doses of AstraZeneca as unlike the Pfizer vaccine, it doesn't have to be stored at such low temperatures and you can split the vials, meaning it is easier to take out to housebound patients.

I have also visited vaccine centres in Felixstowe, Saxmundham, Leiston, Trinity Park and Ipswich.

For the latest information on the restrictions and help and support available for businesses please see [here](#).



### **2. Energy/Environment**

**Scottish Power Renewables:** I'm continuing to engage with the Planning Inspectorate hearings into the SPR proposal for huge substations at Friston and the associated cabling corridor from Thorpeness. I have made both written and verbal submissions against the proposal, which, if approved, would have a devastating impact on the local area including elements of the AONB. Instead, I continue to suggest more appropriate locations like the brownfield site at Bradwell.

### 3. Health & Care

**NHS Briefings:** I've attended numerous briefings from the Chief Executive of Ipswich Hospital, Nick Hulme and Ed Garratt and Melanie Craig who head up our local NHS Commissioning Groups. It is good news that hospital admissions are continuing to decrease. It's reassuring that our hospitals are still carrying out all cancer treatments too.

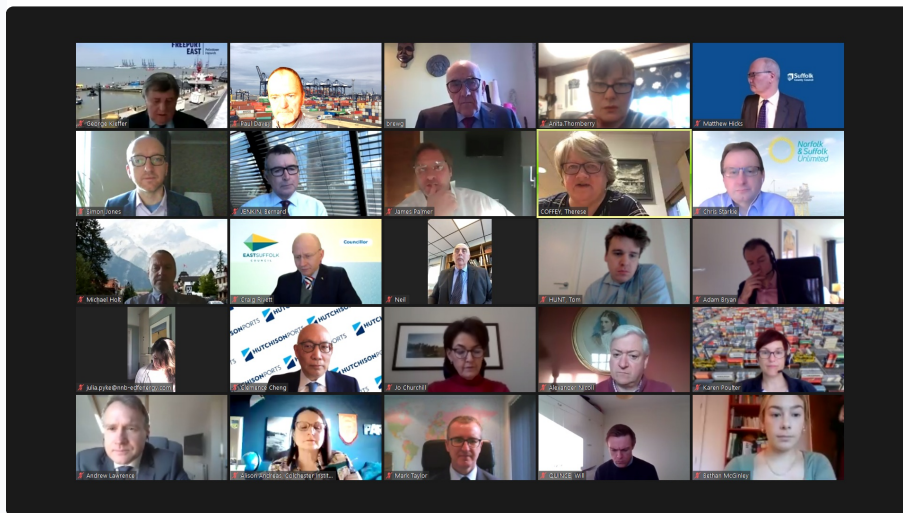
**NHS Dentists:** I met the Head of Commissioning for NHS England, David Barter to discuss NHS dentist provision in Suffolk Coastal, which is especially important following the closure of (My)Dentist in Leiston. NHS England is developing a new Dental Strategy for the East of England.

### 4. Education

Schools will not fully re-open until at least the 8th of March. More detail will be set out on this shortly. In the meantime, a huge thank you to our teachers who are keeping schools open for the children of critical workers and to those parents who are homeschooling.

### 5. Business

**Freeports:** I was proud to host the launch of Freeport East alongside Clemence Cheng, Executive Director of Hutchison Ports. Freeport East is a collaboration between the Ports of Felixstowe & Harwich, EDF and Ryse Hydrogen to create a single customs zone alongside innovative plans for green energy. Felixstowe is, of course, the UK's largest container port and Harwich an important terminal for roll-on/roll-off non-containerised freight. The government is looking to create 10 freeports across the UK and are due to make an announcement soon. If successful, Freeport East would be a great boost for employment and prosperity on both sides of the Harwich Haven with over 13,500 jobs created.



### 6. Constituency & Suffolk Matters

**Howard House Surgery:** I visited the Felixstowe GP Surgery to meet the team and thank them for their Covid-19 response.

**Halesworth Community Larder:** I visited the community larder in St Mary's Church to thank the volunteers who run this vital service.



## 7. Parliament & Ministerial Matters

**Brexit:** We left the EU on the 31st December 2020 with the Prime Minister able to negotiate a free trade deal based on zero-tariffs. Meaning that not only are businesses able to continue to trade smoothly within the EU, the UK is also free to strike free trade deals with non-EU countries, opening up new markets. An example of our new freedoms is no longer having VAT on women's sanitary products, rather than the 5% which was the lowest rate we could have while operating under EU rules. I know many will welcome the complete ban on pulse fishing in our waters and no longer will new migrants be able to export child benefit. Now that the comprehensive deal with the EU has been done, I hope we will unite as a country and make our nation an even greater place to live, work and enjoy.

**Kickstart:** As Secretary of State for Work & Pensions, I'm pleased that our Kickstart Scheme, launched in September, has now created more than 120,000 job placements for young people - with their wages paid for by the government. To encourage more employers of all sizes to join our scheme, I am removing the minimum 30 vacancies requirement to enable more employers to apply directly to the Kickstart programme.

## 8. Other Meetings & Events

- I attended various meetings to discuss the Freeport bid.
- I attended the Joint Local Authority meeting on Sizewell C.
- I attended a roundtable to discuss digital connectivity in the eastern region.
- I attended a County Landowners Association meeting to discuss Sizewell C.
- I visited the rapid Covid-19 test centre in Brackenbury Sports Centre in Felixstowe.
- I attended a SEAS (Suffolk Energy Action Solutions) campaign meeting to discuss the EA1N and EA2 wind farm projects.

## 9. Next Surgery

I've held a number of online surgeries throughout the coronavirus pandemic. To make an appointment please call my office on 0207 219 7164.

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