

with David  
Henshall



EST

...ing the increase.

London and the home counties.  
"Lots of people were selling up, cashing in and moving to Suffolk," he added.

"Places like Aldeburgh, Thorpeness and Southwold along the

ing the increase.  
Mike Deacon, who represents Felixstowe at Suffolk Coastal District Council, said the increasing house prices could be a "tragedy" for first time buyers and highlighted the importance of ensuring developers

Often we are seeing developers, who are supposed to make a third of their homes affordable, coming to the council and trying to back out of their obligations, which we cannot allow to continue," he added.

Suffolk Coastal's cabinet member

# Cabinet approves idea of changes to town's Park and Ride service

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Leading Ipswich politicians have raised concerns about the future of the Park and Ride service – just as proposed changes to it are put forward at a cabinet meeting.

Both Ben Gummer, the town's MP, and borough council leader David Ellesmere wrote to the cabinet to voice fears that improvements to infrastructure – such as taking out laybys, remodelling junctions and phasing in traffic lights – will not be completed in time for the launch of the new service in January 2017.

Despite Suffolk County Council (SCC) leader Colin Noble suggesting at yesterday's cabinet meeting that Mr Ellesmere had given the proposals a "ringing endorsement", the borough council leader said he had sent a letter to the cabinet beforehand highlighting his concerns.

"The county council have said that the improvements to infrastructure may need to be implemented on a phased basis – I have a real problem



■ Jo Martin and Brooke Taylor hand a petition over Park and Ride changes to James Finch, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for highways and transportation.

Picture: SU ANDERSON

with that phrase," said Mr Ellesmere.

"Park and Ride will lose passengers if they are unable to make changes to infrastructure before January. Yes, the proposals may work, but only if infrastructure is improved – and fast."

The proposed changes to the service could make bus journeys longer but more frequent, SCC's cabinet member for highways James Finch announced at the meeting.

Existing, commercially-run buses operated by Ipswich Buses and First Buses will be re-routed under the

plans in a bid to save the "valuable" service, and will arrive every six to seven minutes instead of every 12.

Journey times to the town centre will increase, however, from 19 minutes to 26 from London Road and up to 26 minutes from Martlesham as additional stops are phased in.

Mr Finch said: "Ipswich Park and Ride is an extremely important service, not only as a means of reducing town-centre traffic but also as a convenient way of getting into town."

He went on to explain how he and his officers wish to introduce a self-

funded Park and Ride. The current service costs the county council £500,000 to run.

Ben Gummer said the proposals were heading "in the right direction" – but said he was concerned that the plans were a "bit up in the air".

"People need reassurance that the service will not collapse if improvements to town-centre traffic and the roads themselves are not made in time," he said.

"That is my main concern, that the bus companies – who desperately need these improvements to be made to be able to provide an effective services – will not get them in time."

The cabinet unanimously approved the principles of the new operating model, and delegated authority to Mr Finch and the director of resource management.

Sarah Stamp, cabinet member for communities, said: "This is a great example of Suffolk County Council protecting, not cutting, a service."

A petition was handed in ahead of the meeting by local businesses calling for improvements to the service.

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