

Appendix C – County Cllr. Penny Otton’s Report to Full Council –

- Cost of Living help and advice:
<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>
- Benefits advice and support:
<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>
- Supporting Suffolk Farmers - The council meeting on Thursday 19 October saw councillors vote to approve a motion supporting local farmers and food producers by ensuring that local meat and dairy, as well as plant-based produce, is served at council events. The council’s facilities and catering arm, Vertas, has 68% of its spend with Suffolk suppliers and 86% with regional suppliers. In order to tackle the county’s environmental priorities and boost the local economy, the council also pledged to encourage Suffolk residents to buy local produce and shop locally wherever possible.
- Walking and Bridleway Access - At Cabinet on Tuesday 10 October, members of the Suffolk Local Access Forum joined the meeting to provide their annual report, which included the work they are doing to improve and maintain footways and access around the county, particularly with Network Rail and National Highways to make sure that new developments take foot traffic and walkers into account. They are keen for the council to promote the East Anglian sections of the newly named King Charles III England Coast Path. The forum expressed concern about the significant large-scale energy infrastructure projects planned for the county and could impact on Suffolk residents’ enjoyment of the green access network and impact on the county’s natural environment.
- Suffolk Pharmacies - On 11 October, councillors from my group attended Health Scrutiny which was looking at the service provided by pharmacies in Suffolk and the challenges they face with funding, staff recruitment, medicine shortages and pharmacies closing. Representatives from the NHS, Suffolk GPs and the Suffolk Pharmaceutical Committee joined the meeting and recommendations were made to write to minister about funding, and work with local schools and the University of Suffolk to promote pharmacy as a career path. It was noted that in order to provide extra services (such as blood pressure checks, cholesterol tests and asthma advice) which take pressure off GP surgeries, more space and consulting rooms would be required than Suffolk pharmacies currently had available.
- Budget Consultation - Suffolk County Council is keen to hear from Suffolk residents, businesses and local communities as it decides how it will spend money next year and has launched an online consultation to give Suffolk residents a say in budget setting for the financial year 2024-25. There will also be a number of focus groups to explain the council’s current financial situation, along with the chance for Suffolk residents and businesses to have a say on Council Tax proposals.
- There are three key questions, the first is on which services people have recently used, the second asks for thoughts on seeking a greater contribution to Council Tax to help fund public services, and the third on which service area you would like to see more money spent. The online survey can be found at the link below – please give us your views! http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget24_25/
- Storm Babet Flooding - Suffolk County Council and my group would like to extend their thanks to those of you around the county who helped other residents whose homes and travel were affected by the rains and flooding that struck Suffolk on Friday 20 October. The way the emergency services, volunteers, farmers and local communities worked together to help children get home from school, move people to safety and protect buildings from flooding was truly inspirational.
If you have been affected by the Storm Babet and the recent flooding, please use link below for SCC support and advice: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>
I have also sent an update which includes how those effected could receive a cash payment.

Appendix C and D – Minutes of 01.11.2023

- Network Rail – at last we have some proposals on paper, there are pros and cons for all of them so I think would be a good idea for us to have a discussion as to each of them. We are still waiting for the Highways Survey, and I will chase up Steve Merry.
- Extra money for Local Highways: I have sent the details but also I will now have an extra £3000 for replacing road signs
- Great Green: I have asked that the white lines are replaced.
- Old Norton Road: I have asked again for this to be dealt with.

Appendix D - District Cllr's Report to Full Council – Cllrs. David Bradbury and Austin Davies

- MSDC Meeting - Mid Suffolk District Council meeting held in October. MSDC would like all residents views on what matters most to each of our communities. Please let MSDC know by completing the survey which is available the website until the 15th November.
- Working with Groundwork East, MSDC is providing help to local businesses to reach net zero.
- MSDC's business CIFCO is completing the purchase of the Co-Op building in Stanton.
- MSDC will be launching its 'cozy homes' initiative next month which will make insulation available to appropriate households in our District. This is the £2 million special provision set aside in our Councils 2023/24 budget.
- Council passed a planning guidance note on Solar Farms. Applicants are encouraged to work closely with local communities before making an application. Weight is given to food production and also landscapes, however, there has been no response to the request to the Minister for guidance.
- Planning - MSDC is still awaiting the outcome the legal challenge to the Planning Inspectors decision to approve the Gladman application. David and Austin have various meetings on applications DC/23/02429 and DC/23/02430.
- District CIL - Norton Village Hall request for District CIL has been supported by David and Austin. We have also supported the application of the New Green Centre to replace all the exterior doors.
- Network Rail - Participated in CIL funded feasibility study on Thurston railway crossing. Need the opinion of Thurston Parish Council on level of District CIL to be committed. Final report due by the end of November.
- Thurston Community College - Appreciate that the college has given access to various clubs to use the sports hall. Next month the fitness suite should be available for community use.
- A14 - Supporting the Tostock campaign to have the village speed limit further along Church Road.
- Locality grants - We have agreed to support Thurston Primary School as their request for Pickleball equipment.

Mid Suffolk District Council – Town and Parish Update – November 2023

Help shape the future of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts - Our consultation continues on what matters most to our communities in order to help shape future plans. [Find out more.](#)

Flood support - Emergency council teams worked to support areas impacted by floods last week in the wake of Storm Babet, offering practical support, as well as information and advice on what to do if your home or business was affected. [Find out more.](#)

We also paid tribute to our local heroes and the huge show of community spirit following the worst flooding for years in our districts. [Find out more.](#)

Your new council website - Last month saw the launch of our new council website, and we are keen for your feedback on our new look. [Find out more.](#)

£1.3m boost for Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities - Town and parish councils in Babergh and Mid Suffolk received more than £1.3 million in developer contributions last month. [Find out more.](#)

Pride in Your Place – deadline extended - The deadline for applications for Mid Suffolk District Council's 'Pride in Your Place' grant has been extended. Towns and parishes across the district now have a further month to apply, with the deadline extended to November 30.

This will allow even more parishes to take advantage of the funding for projects to improve the appearance and cleanliness of their communities, particularly in the wake of recent storm damage across the district. More information about the campaign and [an application form can be found on the council's website](#).

Transport grants to better connect rural communities - A new grants scheme was agreed last month to increase community transport options, better connect local communities, and reduce emissions. [Find out more](#).

Suffolk councils delivering project to improve private rented housing sector - 'Safe Suffolk Renters' is an initiative to support private sector tenants, landlords and other stakeholders. [Find out more](#).

Councils' set out commitment to increase EV chargers - Babergh and Mid Suffolk agreed to implement a new joint Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Implementation Plan. [Find out more](#).

Free net zero advice for Suffolk businesses and organisations - The councils partnered with an environment charity to deliver expert energy advice to businesses. [Find out more](#).

Have your say on polling arrangements - Councils are asking residents for feedback on polling districts and places across the county. [Find out more](#).

How we supported families over Halloween half term - The councils staged a range of holiday activities to keep youngsters active and entertained during half term. [Find out more](#).

Major expansion of iconic John Peel Centre hits new phase - Works to expand the John Peel Centre stepped up a gear last month, allowing it to stage even more music, events and entertainment and support Stowmarket town centre's economic and cultural growth. [Find out more](#).

Local children share their vision of 'homes in future' - Eye schoolchildren shared their visions of 'homes in future' last month to celebrate the transformation of a former care home into affordable housing. [Find out more](#).