

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

- SCC election results - I am obviously very pleased to have been re-elected as your county councillor
- Suffolk County Council’s annual general meeting took place on 27th May. where Cllr Matthew Hicks was elected council leader. He has made significant changes to cabinet members and responsibilities.
 - FINANCE AND ENVIRONMENT: Cllr Richard Rout
 - ADULT CARE: Cllr Hopfensperger
 - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: Cllr James Reeder
 - EDUCATION: Cllr Rachel Hood
 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT, WASTE: Cllr Richard Smith
 - IPSWICH, OPERATIONAL HIGHWAYS AND FLOODING: Cllr Paul West
 - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES: Cllr Andrew Reid
- GLI Group becomes official opposition - Following success at the recent election, I will again be part of a Green, Liberal Democrats and Independents Group. The Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent (GLI) Group has 15 councillors overall and will take on the role of official opposition at Suffolk County Council.
- Boundary Commission Review: consultation reopens - an additional phase of public consultation has opened in the Boundary Commission’s review of Suffolk County Council's electoral arrangements. The consultation focuses on new proposals for council division boundaries in the following (which are the nearest to Thedwastre south.)
 - Abbeygate & Tollgate
 - Barrow & Thingoe
 - Blackbourn
 - Eastgate & Moreton Hall
 - Hardwick
 - Haverhill East & Rural
 - Minden & St Olaves

The consultation closes on June 21st and can be completed at the link below:

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council>

- Launch of The Queen’s Green Canopy in Suffolk - The Queen's Green Canopy is a tree planting and preservation campaign commemorating the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Partners including Suffolk County Council are working together to preserve and enhance existing woodland while increasing both canopy cover and access to green space. Tree Wardens will work with communities and parish councils to link up existing woodland with woodland walkways and hedgerows as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy. This tree planting will create natural corridors for biodiversity and link up existing footpaths and bridleways. Different organisations are invited to get involved. Find out more at www.suffolk-lieutenancy.org.uk/queens-green-canopy
- Developers’ Guide consultation open - Suffolk County Council has launched a consultation on an updated version of the Developers’ Guide. The guide is a document to support all those involved in major planning applications in the county. To make sure that new developments result in improvements to local communities, developers must make financial contributions to local authorities, known as Section 106 agreements, or through the Community Infrastructure Levy. The updated guide aims to support developers and make them aware of what they should consider with their plans. The consultation runs from 17 May to 28 June and can be filled out at the link below:
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/developers-guide-to-infrastructure-contributions-in-suffolk/>
- Network Rail - I am appalled that yet again we are still waiting for any input from Network rail. I have been in contact on several occasions with Christine Thurlow. I have raised this with the chief executive to see if there is a problem within Mid Suffolk or is it just the lack of response from Network rail.
- Roads in Thurston - I have asked that all of the roads are considered for re-designation in order that they will then be eligible for more regular maintenance. Despite the email from John Clements there is still a problem with the state of roads where defects are happening all the time.

Appendix D – District Cllr. Harry Richardson’s Report to Full Council

- Mid Suffolk Annual Council Meeting - Mid Suffolk District Council met on Monday 24th May for its Annual Council Meeting, the first meeting of the District Council that has taken place in person since February last year.
- The Council named Cllr Paul Ekpenyong as its new Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year. Cllr Ekpenyong, who represents St Peters Ward, Stowmarket, served as Vice Chair supporting Cllr Barry Humphreys MBE, as Chairman during his 2020/21 term in office. Cllr Barry Humphreys MBE has been selected to serve as the new Vice-Chair. As Chairman, Cllr Ekpenyong has selected East Anglia’s Children’s Hospices as his chosen charity for the year. Cllr Ekpenyong was first elected to Mid Suffolk District Council in 2015. He has since served on the Licensing & Regulatory committee, Suffolk Joint Standards Board, and the council’s Overview & Scrutiny committee.
- In addition, elections were held to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions for Mid Suffolk’s committees, including Development Control A and B; Licencing and Regulatory; Overview and Scrutiny; and Joint Audit and Standards. The majority of these roles will be retained by their respective incumbents.
- Since my previous report to Thurston’s Annual Parish Meeting there has only been one substantive update for the District more broadly, a summary of which I have included below:
 - Red carpet rolls out at the Regal Theatre - The first guests have been welcomed to the Regal Theatre to mark its official opening following an extensive renovation and expansion. Councillors from Mid Suffolk District Council and Stowmarket Town Council gathered for the first time for a tour of the brand-new café and bar area, welcoming front of house as well as the three new auditoria with plush seating and state- of-the-art audio-visual technology. Significant work was undertaken to restore and preserve many of the original features of the existing building built in 1936. In addition, an improved entrance, new toilet facilities and car park including EV charging points from the £3.6m investment will all enhance the visitor experience. The doors formally opened to the public on Friday 28th May and online tickets sales have been going well as eager residents look forward to returning to enjoy the big screen cinema experience. The Regal Theatre will employ over 20 people in both full and part time roles including a customer experience manager and commercial manager as well as in front of house and the café and bar. The new look theatre will also provide a valuable asset for community groups including the Stowmarket Operatic & Dramatic Society and the Stowmarket Local History Group and for businesses looking for a unique space for conferences and events as well as attracting an audience from the wider mid Suffolk area. The investment in the Regal Theatre is part of the wider vision for Stowmarket, which aims to improve and increase leisure provision for the community and attract more visitors to enjoy the town’s shopping and attractions as well as the bars and restaurants that Stowmarket has to offer.

Report from District Cllr. Cllr Wendy Turner to Full Council

- Election of MSDC Roles for 2021/22 - The Conservative and Independent group elected Conservative Paul Ekpenyong as the new Chairman of Mid Suffolk District Council, having served as vice chair last year. Chairman, Conservative Barry Humphreys was elected vice chair having served as Chairman last year. Both elected by the chairman’s casting vote as the political situation is still deadlocked. There are 17 Councillors on both sides therefore the chairman’s casting vote becomes crucial for decision-making. All cabinet and vice cabinets positions, bar the chair of The Overview and Scrutiny, were filled by Conservatives with the chairman’s casting vote being used. Mr Ekpenyong’s chosen charity will be East Anglia’s Children’s Hospices.
- Covid 19 and the Indian Variant - Due to a small outbreak of the Indian variant Tactical Management Teams sprung into action, to support the arrival of mobile testing units in Needham Market’s ex council offices in Hurstlea Road, with 2,000 tests completed in 3 days. The testing unit will stay in place with no appointment needed. Suffolk’s director of public health Stuart Keeble has urged Needham Market residents to keep getting tested to prevent further spreading of the variant. All other community testing sites closed on the 28th of May 2021.

Appendix C and D – Minutes of 05.05.2021

- The Regal Theatre - The £3.6 million refurbishment of The Regal Theatre has been completed with the venue offering, three screens, new café and bar area as well as improved parking and toilet facilities.
- Woolpit homes and primary school extension - MSDC development control committee passed plans by Pigeon Capital Management Ltd to build 40 homes next to the development of 120 homes where construction is underway. The plans allocate land for an extension of Woolpit Primary.
- Free Fitness classes - 'Our Parks' is running free fitness classes at venues across Suffolk, all venues are Covid secure see website for more information. <https://ourparks.org.uk/borough/babergh-mid-suffolk-district-council>
- Potholes – New Road Thurston - Some of the cavernous potholes were filled in on New Road following much negative press publicity surrounding the rude drawings that had appeared on the road near the potholes. The smaller holes will be repaired in due course.
- Active Travel - A 2-month public consultation was launched on walking and cycling infrastructure allowing residents to share their ideas about current facilities and what they want to see in the future.