

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

- Both Councils have started to hold in person meetings but with social distancing and strict COVID rules in the council offices.
- There has been a small rise in infections in Mid Suffolk and testing has taken place in various locations.
- Education Scrutiny - the first took place last week and I have asked that the home to school transport policy is first on the agenda. Also, to receive the report from the independent review of the service for children with special needs. There is a place for a school governor on this committee, which was very useful before. Anyone interested let me know.
- Street Lighting - The council has joined with a new company; Bouygues Energies & Service to update the LED street lights across the county, to reduce light pollution and decrease energy use.
- Verge Cutting - I know this is a problem at the moment, the schedule is available online, but if there are areas of extreme danger please report them.
- Parking Issues - having arranged to meet with the SCC Highways Officer, with the Clerk and Cllr. Rainbow, we have agreed that yellow lines will be at the Fox and Hounds/Barton Road area. We looked at the junction of Cloverfields but that is a police problem to deal with. Clerk to put forward any requests to come to me for support.
- Community Land – site behind the College - I did ask for an extension of time for the PC to decide on how they wanted to proceed.

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

- Mid Suffolk District Council - As Mid Suffolk District Council did not meet in June I have included below a summary of the major updates across the district:
 - An update on Covid-19 in Suffolk - Regular bulletins continue to be produced to give a snapshot of the current Covid-19 situation in Suffolk - along with updates on the work being carried out as part of Suffolk’s Local Outbreak Control Plan. You can find the bulletins through existing fortnightly updates for councillors, or via the Suffolk County Council website.
 - An update on the vaccine rollout can be found on the SNEE NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Service website.
 - We continue to play our part in response to the pandemic, alongside public sector colleagues within the Suffolk Resilience Forum, supporting in the event of local outbreaks as well as continuing to offer support to our communities and businesses. Please see the council website for more information.
- Councils’ Joint Local Plan examination to reconvene in September - Hearing sessions for the examination of our councils’ Joint Local Plan are expected to resume again in September following a change of date – enabling them to be fully inclusive, whilst also ensuring public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that the Stage 1 sessions, originally scheduled for June and July, will now take place over a concentrated period from September, with Stage 2 hearing sessions in mid-Autumn as originally planned.
- Next steps for councils’ biodiversity and climate change plans agreed - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have given the go ahead for £97k for projects aimed at boosting biodiversity and tackling climate change across their districts.
- New ‘virtual’ high street supports market town’s recovery - Shopping in Stowmarket is now just a click away thanks to the launch of new Virtual High Street sites. Over 100 new businesses have signed up to new sites in Hadleigh and Stowmarket, joining over 130 already signed up to the platform in Sudbury.
- Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee approves CIFCO plans for 2021/22 - Councillors on the cross-party Overview & Scrutiny Committee have approved CIFCO’s annual business plan ahead of its review by Full Council, with the property investment company having now brought in more than £5.4m to help fund services and projects for residents in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- £2.2m refurbishment means healthy future for Mid Suffolk - Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre opened its doors last month on its new £2.2m upgrade and extension, supporting residents’ health and wellbeing with upgraded gym, poolside features and changing rooms.

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- Work underway on visitor centre and café for Needham Lake - Work has now started on the new café and visitor centre at Needham Lake – improving facilities at the popular tourist attraction, as well as boosting visitor numbers and spend in the local high street.
- Plans to support new businesses in Eye - Councillors on Mid Suffolk District Council cabinet have agreed to progress plans to breathe new life into a derelict building in Eye town centre – with the aim of transforming it into a supportive space for fledgling businesses.
- Changes agreed to social housing allocation system to ensure fairness and consistency - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council cabinets both recently agreed amendments to Gateway to Homechoice - the lettings system used to allocate social housing across the local authority areas of Babergh, Braintree, Colchester, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Maldon and Mid Suffolk. The changes have been made in response to national legislative and policy changes, including a new Code of Guidance issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in December 2020, and will ensure that key decisions can be made fairly and consistently by all Gateway local authorities.

Report from District Cllr. Cllr Wendy Turner to Full Council

- Member Locality grants 21-22 - MSDC has launched this year's locality grant scheme. Each district councillor has over £7k to award to community groups within their area. Although the deadline is not until 25th February 2022, it is helpful if any group wishing to apply for funding gets in touch with their district councillor as soon as possible. The minimum application is for £250, and all applicants should meet at least one of Mid Suffolk's priorities for Grant Funding. See the website for more details: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/communities/grants-and-funding/locality-awards-2021-22/>
- Sports and Leisure Strategy Refresh - Following a review of the sports and leisure provision across the district a refreshed Sports and Leisure Strategy is to be approved by Cabinet. The next step in the process is for the officers to develop a detailed action plan for the next 3 years.
- Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre extension - In June Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre opened the doors to its new £2.2m upgrade and extension. The work, funded by Mid Suffolk District Council included a range of state-of-the-art fitness equipment as well further improvements made throughout the leisure centre. The number of stations in the gym has been increased from 50 to 100.
- CIFCO - CIFCO's annual business report was on the agenda for last month's Overview and Scrutiny committee. The portfolio now consists of 21 acquisitions and does bring in funds. Last year CIFCO brought in just over £2m to be ploughed back into providing services across both districts. However, the CIFCO accounts for the last year, 2021 show a paper loss of £4.4m made up of expected one-off acquisition costs of around £2m (including stamp duty and fees) as well as a re-adjustment on the value of the portfolio as whole. The rental income the properties deliver is not affected by these fluctuations in their value. The business plan will be discussed at the next full council meeting at the end of July.
- Virtual High Street, Stowmarket - During the pandemic we have had to change the way we shop. Following on from the successful Virtual High Street in Sudbury, it has now come to both Stowmarket and Hadleigh. The aim of the Virtual High Street is to bring the local high street and market. Over 60 shops and businesses have signed up to the platform in Stowmarket. BMSDC have invested in the system and appointed a Town Centre Business Liaison Officer for the project which is due to be extended to Eye and Needham Market in due course. There is also a free digital skills programme offered to all businesses so they can make the most of the technology.
- Joint Local Plan Examination- The hearing for the Joint Local Plan examination began last month, but after one day was deferred. A new date for the hearing has yet to be determined but is likely to be in September. The Stage 2 examination is still expected to take place in the autumn as previously expected.
- Needham Lake Visitor Centre - Work has now begun on the construction of a new visitor centre and café at Needham Lake.
- Biodiversity - Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils are to fund biodiversity projects costing over £90k. These include mapping wildlife corridors, council owned public space as well as county wildlife sites

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and local nature reserves. There will also be a tree canopy survey. These projects are based on the proposals from the Biodiversity Working group.