

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

- COVID-19 - Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>. Latest Government advice is available here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus. Vaccination Appointments can be booked here: www.sneevaccine.org.uk
- Budget Scrutiny Meeting, 11th January - The Scrutiny Committee met on 11th January to discuss the Conservative’s budget proposals for this year. Our Group believes the budget did not raise the Social Care Precept tax to the necessary amount. Suffolk GLI believes this needs to be raised to a 3% increase, to aid in Suffolk’s social care crisis. This recommendation was rejected by the Conservatives. Furthermore, the council failed to deliver on providing a Carbon Budget to work alongside the core budget. The Carbon Budget is aimed to help us understand the level of emissions the Council are responsible for and helps to achieve the Council’s ambition of being carbon-neutral by 2030.
- Cabinet Meeting, 1st February - The Cabinet will meet to discuss the core budget, and vote on whether to pass the budget through to Full Council to be finalised on 17th February. The Cabinet are also voting on adopting the Carbon Budget, as well as the recommendations to enhance Suffolk Biodiversity – making this a key priority moving forward. After the Cabinet meeting, you will be updated on the decisions made. Cabinet documents can be found here: [https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(01-02-2022\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(01-02-2022),%20The%20Cabinet)
- Transport East - Suffolk County Council’s regional transport body, Transport East, has drafted its new strategy for the future. It explains the investment and priorities Transport East aims to provide, to develop a leading transportation network. Suffolk GLI are concerned with the emphasis on profit and growth. Instead, a strategy for the future should focus on improved public transportation, greener energy, and walking and cycling infrastructure. Suffolk GLI submitted their comments to Transport East, in the hope they reconsider their strategy. Visit the Suffolk GLI website for our response. I have raised the issue of the crossing in Thurston! For more information, visit: <https://www.transporteast.org.uk/>
- Meeting with Christine Thurlow, BMSDC - following a question about CIL funding for the library, I have had an on line meeting with Christine, who is back to work part time, she has also promised to contact Network Rail. She will also contact the PC to arrange any updates on the various projects in Thurston.
- Road Works on A14 - Highways England are planning various works between junctions 43 to 52. Parish councils will be informed. Starting 14th February, including survey of the concrete section 44 to 49 starting in March. Official diversions will be from 8pm to 6am.
- Suffolk Libraries Day 2022 - Suffolk Libraries is running an online book festival in March, as part of Suffolk Libraries Day 2022. Suffolk Libraries Day is a celebration of the county’s library service and the organisation’s main fundraising event. Libraries will also be confirming special events nearer the time. Thurston Friends group will be having some activities. For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/festival/suffolk-libraries-day-book-festival>

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

- Mid Suffolk District Council – Mid Suffolk held our first full Council meeting of the New Year on Thursday 27th January, during which we approved the meeting dates for the municipal year 2022 / 23, agreed the Gambling Act 2005 ‘Statement of Principles’, and received an update on the development of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plans.
- Within Thurston in particular, discussions are ongoing with Suffolk County Council to understand their exact needs for the old primary school site given their intention to use this

for a new SEND facility. They have not yet confirmed whether all of the existing site will be required and so Mid Suffolk's officers are seeking to gain further clarification on this.

- Draft budget proposals for 2022 / 23 - Mid Suffolk District Council is considering freezing its element of council tax this year – helping residents through post-pandemic recovery, while still investing in priority areas to improve quality of life. A budget report going before Cabinet next month proposes no increase to council tax – despite the impact of Covid-19 and the additional demands and challenges caused by the pandemic over the last two financial years. The freeze would mean the annual Mid Suffolk proportion of the council tax bill for a Band D property would remain at £171.59.
- Sheltered housing charges and garage rents also remain frozen at 2021/22 levels, but Mid Suffolk District Council tenants face a proposed increase of 4.1% to their rents, to cover inflationary pressures and allow investment in improving the quality of council homes. This means average weekly social rent would increase by £3.45 from £84.42 to £87.84. For affordable housing, weekly rents would increase by £4.99 from £121.34 to £126.33.
- Update on Gateway 14 - Gateway 14 is set to have a significant impact on the wider Mid Suffolk district as well as Stowmarket and surrounding villages - bringing in £75-250m per year and creating between 1,800 and 6,200 direct and indirect jobs. In order to keep everyone updated on progress, a new quarterly bulletin has been launched to keep local residents, businesses and stakeholders fully informed and can be found on the Gateway 14 website: <https://gateway14.com/>.
- A warmer, energy efficient future secured for residents in low-income homes - Residents in low-income homes across Babergh and Mid Suffolk can look forward to a warmer, more energy efficient future thanks to £1.9m in Government funding. Neighbouring West Suffolk Council led a successful £7.1m bid, on behalf of all of Suffolk's district councils, for money from the Government's Sustainable Warmth Competition – designed to support improvements to low income, low energy efficiency rated homes. The money will enable work to be carried out to 750 homes in Suffolk. In Babergh and Mid Suffolk, £1.9m of the funds will be targeted at installing green measures in around 80 of the districts' least energy efficient homes. The range measures include solar panels, air source heat pumps, as well as a variety of home insulation. Initial surveys have now been carried out on the first eligible properties identified and occupiers are due to be contacted soon.