

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>
- Suffolk County Council Overspend - At Cabinet on 12 September my group raised concerns about the overspend predicted for the financial year 2023-24. The council is forecasting a net overspend of £22.3m, which is 3.2% of the overall budget for the year and will cut into the council’s financial reserves with a reduction of £56.9m of the council’s ‘savings’. Finance officers at the council had suggested a high council tax rise during the budget process to try and lessen the pressures on the council caused by rising inflation, energy costs and increased demands on council services such as placements for children in care, adult care and school transport for children and young people with special educational needs. The Cabinet agreed that senior leaders at the council would look at how money could be saved in each directorate to protect council reserves and prevent cuts to services wherever
- New Suffolk Fire and Rescue Control Centre - Officers from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) joined Cabinet on 12 September to explain their recommendation that the council leave the current control centre partnership with Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and open a new control centre in the county by the end of 2024. This would create significant extra cost, but it was agreed that it was necessary for the safety of Suffolk residents. A vote was held and the recommendations were approved. My group were keen to ensure that no fire stations would close and there would be no cuts to jobs or changes to work terms and conditions, but no assurances were given.
- £100k Fund for Net Zero Business Solutions - Suffolk’s Public Sector Leaders group have announced a £100k fund to spark net zero innovation across the county. The ‘Net Zero Innovation Fund’ will provide grants to businesses for innovative solutions that drive the county towards its net zero target. The fund is being coordinated by the Carbon Charter, Suffolk’s hub for sustainable business, and is part of a package of work to deliver the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, which sets out the shared ambition of a net zero county by 2030. To find out more information and to apply, businesses should visit <https://carboncharter.org/nzifs/>
- SMEs (small to medium enterprises) looking for general help to decarbonise their operations can also access grants to support this as well as free business consultancy delivered by our partners Groundwork East: Carbon Charter | Net Zero Business Advisor Service
- Network Rail - we now have a meeting booked. I have also emailed Jo Churchill MP, Richard Smith SCC Cabinet Member for Transport and the leader of the council asking them to join us in a letter to department of transport demanding money for the crossing.
- Ixworth Road - this should now be with legal to force developer to get work done.
- Great Green - I have asked highways to look to re-instate white lines and see any other traffic calming measures.
- A14 - at meeting with National Highways I have asked for a STOP sign to replace the give way at bottom of the slip road. Also that when they reverse the contra-flow that Thurston and villages west are consulted. There are also applications available for social benefit.
- A Suffolk County Council programme which supports care leavers when they reach the age of 18 has proved so successful, it is now being rolled out across the country by the government.

- Staying Close, which was launched by Suffolk County Council in 2017, provides a package of support and guidance to young people leaving care. This includes ensuring they have accommodation, resources, and practical and emotional help to help them thrive as independent adults. This support is provided by a staff member who already works with them, so they have a consistent and stable relationship as they move into adulthood. The Staying Close programme in Suffolk is currently providing approximately 150 young people with help and support.

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

- MSDC Meeting - Mid Suffolk District Council meeting held in September. The State of the District report was considered at last month's Full Council meeting, which set out an overview of Mid Suffolk. This is part of the evidence base underpinning the new Corporate Plan. Mid Suffolk Cabinet will be endorsing the engagement strategy for the development of the new Corporate Plan. It is hoped to engage with as wide a section of the district as possible, including some groups which seldom get involved, as well as businesses and Town and Parish Councils.
- At a full Council meeting last week, the CIFCO business plan was agreed. Given the change in administration this included a thorough review of operations prior to the next business case being brought to Council to inform MSDC's long term strategies.
- MSDC will be discussing the Electric Bus project at Cabinet this month. They hope to bring forward the ringfenced £820k and agree to work towards a 'grant' scheme to enhance existing rural transport provision with set routes.
- Planning - The Planning Inspectorate have finished the inspection of the BMSDC Joint Local Plan part 1 and reported that it is sound, so it now needs to be formally adopted by Full Council. Planning policy officers are now able to focus on Part 2 of the plan which will include the housing allocations. All the documentation is available on the website <http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan>
- Wellbeing for younger and older residents - MSDC are supporting an initiative with schools across the district to improve the well-being of young people. Thurston Community College, Stowmarket High School and Stowupland High School now have Youth Link workers to help pupils access community activities. This work will also spread to the feeder primary schools. MSDC is supporting Silver Sunday Campaigns to help tackle loneliness for older residents. Events are being held in Eye, Stowmarket and Needham Market over the next few weeks to bring young people into care homes for sing-alongs, games and fun.
- Autumn Tree/hedge planting - Appreciate that this is a direct repeat, however, can you please consult with your communities on potential areas for tree/hedge planting and then contact us with the details.
- Locality grants - We have agreed to support Beyton Environmental Group in their sowing of a wildflower mix on the pond spoil area of the village green.

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

Help shape our priorities for the next four years - Now both administrations have set out their initial vision and priorities for the next four years, it's time for our communities to tell us what they think... We are embarking on a major engagement exercise with residents, communities, businesses, stakeholders and partners – so they can tell us whether they think we are focusing on the right issues. Feedback will be sought in a range of ways, both online through a survey and in person workshops. This will then help shape our priorities and our refreshed Corporate Plan. We will promote any consultation through all our usual channels and would be grateful for the support of our town and parish council colleagues in helping to spread the word.

Blueprint for districts' development 'sound' - Planning Inspectors have delivered their verdict on Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council's Joint Local Plan – the blueprint for the districts' future development until 2037, providing clarity for communities and developers. [Find out more](#)

Councils bring organisations and residents together to inspire climate action - Residents can find out more about the climate action they can take within their communities at a series of community roadshow events. [Find out more](#)

Developers provide cash boost for community projects - More than £705,000 collected from developers in Babergh and Mid Suffolk is set to be injected back into communities – funding projects including play areas, cycle paths and village hall improvements. [Find out more](#)

Councils help to tackle loneliness for older residents - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are joining forces with local groups to help tackle loneliness for older residents, by bringing generations together for free sing-alongs, games and fun. [Find out more](#)

Councils introduce new project to improve wellbeing of young people - Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils have introduced a new scheme to improve the wellbeing of young people in schools and connect them with their communities. [Find out more](#)

Councils join forces with Jobcentre Plus - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have launched a new partnership with Jobcentre Plus to bolster the local economy with a series of recruitment fairs. [Find out more](#)

£50,000 awarded to help improve mental wellbeing - Mid Suffolk District Council has responded to a county-wide survey which identified Stowmarket and surrounding areas as an 'emotional and physical needs hotspot' by awarding £50,000 to local projects supporting residents' wellbeing. [Find out more](#)

Pets as prizes banned in Babergh and Mid Suffolk - The giving of live animals as prizes will be banned on land owned by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. [Find out more](#)