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Sent: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 5:21 pm
To: lavinia.hadingham@gmail.com
Subject: MSDC Report to Parishes November 2021 mark2

Dear all,

Here's my report for the month and I admit that it's not a big news month but I plan to attend all the PC meetings and so will be able to verbally add to it!

See you all soon,

Lavinia.

An update on Covid-19 in Suffolk

Suffolk's public health bosses have asked the Government for extra help to fight Covid amid increasing pressure on our county's hospitals and some of the highest rates of infection in the country.

The request for Suffolk to become an 'enhanced response area' (ERA) for up to five weeks is being submitted by Public Health Suffolk on behalf of public sector partners - and is intended to secure additional support, funding and resources to help the NHS avoid unsustainable pressure.

To help respond to queries regarding vaccinations, including boosters and jabs for 12 to 15-year-olds, our NHS partners have created a new look homepage for their vaccination website including information about all the clinics they offer, together with FAQs and eligibility criteria.

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 Working Together, the monthly Councillor Update or via the Suffolk County Council website.

November 2021

In the meantime, we continue to play our part in response to the pandemic, alongside public sector colleagues within the Suffolk Resilience Forum and continuing to offer support to our communities and businesses. Please see the council website for more.

Work to continue on blueprint for districts' future development

Public examination of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council's Joint Local Plan – the strategic blueprint for future development of the districts - has been paused by the Planning Inspector to allow the councils further time to review its evidence.

Work on the Joint Local Plan began in 2016 when the councils began gathering a range of evidence to help inform its preparation, including studies on retail, economic land needs, housing land availability and housing market assessments. The plan was then further developed following consultation with submission of more than 14,000 comments from over 1,300 people and input from both statutory consultees and cross-party councillors.

The plan – which outlines housing requirements and considers the long-term impact of climate change, including flooding risk, water supply and biodiversity – is now in the final stage of the process. This involves submitting to the Secretary of State, who appoints a Planning Inspector to carry out an independent examination before recommending whether or not it can be adopted.

The total process is lengthy. According to the Government's Planning for the Future White Paper, development of a Local Plan takes on average seven years, with the examination element usually taking around 18 months – often with requests for further work or clarification.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council's Plan is therefore progressing faster than average, with work having started in 2016 and the Plan being submitted for examination in March this year.

Assistant Director of Planning at Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Tom Barker said: "We would like to thank everyone involved to date in the development of our Joint Local Plan which, when adopted, will provide a clear and transparent guide to future development in our districts, balancing the needs of all our communities.

"It is not unusual for examinations to reveal matters that need further work and, by agreeing to consider pausing the examination, the Planning Inspectors are allowing us the opportunity to review parts of our evidence so everyone can be sure that it is thorough and robust when adopted.

"This delay will take us beyond our ambitious initial target of winter 2021/22, but we are still making good progress, despite the complexities of this being a joint plan between two authorities spanning a large rural area."

£1.5m funding boost for Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities

Town and Parish Councils across Babergh and Mid Suffolk will receive £1.5 million in neighbourhood CIL this month – paving the way for a range of vital community facilities and projects.

Developers are charged Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) when building new homes in the districts – enabling local infrastructure to keep pace with housing growth, as well as supporting the councils' vision for its communities to be attractive, successful and connected places for people to live and work.

A proportion of this funding is automatically paid to town and parish councils, who are eligible for up to 15% of collected funds from their area, subject to a financial cap, with the potential for this to increase to 25% if they have successfully adopted a Neighbourhood Plan.

They can then decide how to spend this money to support the development of their local area – ensuring that the funding best meets the needs of the community.

The latest payments, set to be made shortly, will see £1,542,380 distributed to 79 town and parish councils across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. Of this £1,119,655 will be allocated to 47 town and parish councils in Mid Suffolk, whilst 32 of Babergh's town and parish councils will receive a share of £422,725.

This follows much-needed neighbourhood CIL funding totalling £1,417,226 being awarded to town and parish councils across both districts last financial year, supporting projects such as the extension of Hadleigh Skatepark, a new community hub in Hitcham, the redevelopment of Stowmarket's Regal Theatre and a community defibrillator for Palgrave.

Tree for Life scheme welcomes applications from new parents

A Tree for Life scheme in Babergh and Mid Suffolk which offers a free tree for new parents, is open for 2021 applications.

The scheme is open to all families in the districts who have or are welcoming a new arrival between 1 January and 31 December 2021. Parents who may have lost a child during the same period are also able to apply for a remembrance tree.

The initiative offers parents with a new born or newly adopted child the chance to mark their arrival by planting a tree. It aims to benefit families, communities and the environment by boosting tree coverage across the district.

So far the councils have given out over a thousand trees through Tree for Life, with 2020 applicants collecting their trees last month following a necessary delay to allow the council to prioritise essential services during the pandemic. Expert help is always on hand on collection to advise families on their tree choice and aftercare at home.

Also open to those without a garden, a selection of the trees continue to be planted at key locations in the districts including Needham Lake, Shotley Golden Wood, Broom Hill in Hadleigh, Gallowsfield Wood in Haughley and Sproughton Millennium Green.

Over 100 families have already applied to the 2021 scheme, but the councils are encouraging even more people to [apply for their tree on the councils' website](#) before the 10 January 2022 deadline.

Cllr Jessica Fleming, Mid Suffolk District Council's cabinet member for environment, said:

“This wonderful scheme continues to be popular in Mid Suffolk, but of course we still want even more families to take up the opportunity to apply.

“Through gifting these trees for such a special occasion we also help families give back to our communities by making sure our environment can be enjoyed by future generations - supporting our commitment to tackle climate change and strengthening our biodiversity.”

The trees must be planted within the two districts and eligible applicants will be invited to choose and collect their tree in early 2022. Applications will be processed after the closing date.