

District Councillor's Report: Harry Richardson

Mid Suffolk District Council

Mid Suffolk held an extraordinary meeting on Monday 18th October to consider two motions that had been delayed from our regular meeting in September, owing to a lack of time on the night. Both motions were passed by the Council: the first requires the Council to consider reducing or replacing a number of streetlights where these interfere with biodiversity; the second commits the Council to writing to the relevant minister to oppose the introduction of compulsory voter ID.

In addition, it has been announced that Suffolk is to receive extra resources to fight Covid-19, having been confirmed as an 'enhanced response area' (ERA) amid increasing pressure on our hospitals and high rates of infection.

A request for additional support was submitted last week by Public Health Suffolk - on behalf of public sector partners - and is intended to secure in additional support, funding and resources to help the NHS avoid unsustainable pressure.

Suffolk now becomes an ERA from Monday (November 1st) for up to five weeks, and additional support will include:

- Support for the vaccination efforts by extending opening hours and creating pop up vaccination clinic within our communities
- Help to coordinate on the ground door knocking campaigns
- Help to reduce transmission in schools with increased testing and additional temporary powers
- Funding for Covid-19 awareness raising communications and advertising.
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This does not, however, mean any additional restrictions on people's movements or actions. It is not a lockdown or like the tiering system that was trialled in England in 2020. Instead, it will boost the county's ability to raise awareness, tackle outbreaks and encourage people to get vaccinated.

There have also been a number of initiatives launched in the previous weeks and so I have included below a summary of the major updates across the District:

Delay to the Joint Local Plan

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. It is expected that this will resume in the new year.

£1.5m funding boost for Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities

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

First Local Energy Showcase hailed a success

With more attention than ever turning to sustainability and reducing the environmental impact of energy consumption, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils hosted business owners and community groups at their first Local Energy Showcase.

Tree for Life scheme welcomes applications from new parents

Mid Suffolk's popular Tree for Life scheme, which offers a free tree for new parents, is now open for 2021 applications. The scheme, which benefits families, communities and the environment by boosting tree coverage across our districts, is open to all families in the districts who have or are welcoming a new arrival between 1st January and 31st December 2021. Parents who may have lost a child during the same period are also able to apply for a remembrance tree.

New iPad lending scheme to help residents get online

Suffolk Libraries and Mid Suffolk District Council are joining forces to help residents get online with a new iPad lending scheme – supporting those who need a little extra help to access services in an increasingly digital world.

Stowmarket business help those experiencing domestic abuse

Mid Suffolk District Council urged businesses and organisations in Stowmarket to take part in a domestic abuse awareness event last month – empowering them to spot the signs of abuse and help address it.

I hope that this report has been useful but if a member of the Parish Council wishes to discuss any of the above further then please do not hesitate to contact me via the email address below.

With kind regards,



Cllr Harry Richardson JP

Mid Suffolk District Councillor for Thurston Ward

Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

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