

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

February 2020

Planning enforcement	There is currently a review of enforcement processing and procedures. The long term aim to make the enforcement service swifter, more efficient and transparent, and it is hoped that this will be completed by the end of March. However, in the meantime it may take a bit longer to respond to and acknowledge calls, so I hope that this does not cause too much problem.
Full Council meeting	There was very little on the agenda for the last full Council meeting on Thurs 23 rd Jan. The portfolio holders' reports were published but questions on these was limited to just over 30 minutes, and in future portfolio holders' reports will go to Cabinet meetings instead of full Council meetings. The only other item on the agenda was the adoption of Botesdale and Rickinghall Neighbourhood Plan.
Budget	The budget and financial strategy will be discussed at Cabinet meeting on 10 th February. It is proposed that there will be a Council Tax increase of 1.66%, this equates for a Band D property to £2.76 pa, 5p per week. Following a Cabinet recommendation the budget will be due for approval at Full Council on 27 th February.
Climate Change	The Climate Change working group have had some meetings where different aspects are discussed, but as yet disappointingly few actions or recommendations have been brought forward.
Planning	There are a number of very heavy agenda for the planning committees. On Wednesday 29 th January the planning referrals committee had 6 items on the agenda, but only 3 were discussed between 9:30 and 17:55. All three of the application sites were for sites which were not allocated in adopted neighbourhood plans, but were identified as sites in the draft Joint Local Plan. They were all recommended for approval by the officers who seemed to place more weight on the draft JLP and the housing numbers than on the adopted Neighbourhood Plans.
Stowmarket Regal	Stowmarket Town Council and MSDC are funding a refurbishment project at the Regal in Stowmarket. Work is due to begin in March and should be complete by the end of the year. During this time films will be shown at the John Peel Centre.
Planning application 19/03924	The outline planning permission for up to 65 houses to the west of the Taylor Wimpey site on the old Bacon Factory was refused unanimously at last week's development control committee, despite officer recommendation for approval.
Thedwastre Close	SCC have agreed in principal to take on the old housing units at Thedwastre Close for supported housing, but they need to be refurbished by MSDC before that can happen. I am hoping to get a regular update on progress.

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