

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

May 2021

6 th May Elections	<p>Election day was 6th May. We have a new Green Party County Councillor – Andy Mellen. Tim Passmore was re-elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner.</p> <p>Due to the elections, no MSDC Council meetings took place during the purdah period other than regulatory committee meetings.</p>
Future format of Council Meetings	<p>The legislation allowing virtual meetings for local government expired on 7th May, but the COVID regulations do not allow meetings in person until after 17th May. Governance Officers have now made arrangements for the forthcoming meetings. Development control meetings are to be held in person in Endeavour House, and the Annual Council meeting is to be held at Wherstead Park on Monday 24th May.</p>
COVID community testing	<p>The first phase of COVID community testing ended on 31st March, and an altered programme is now in place until the end of June. Local testing sites at Elmswell, Needham Market, Eye and Debenham were due to close on 16th April. Lateral flow testing kits are now available in many libraries and pharmacies and people should be able to get twice weekly tests to do at home.</p>
Business Support Grants	<p>A significant new grant fund has just been launched by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. This is to support the recovery of local businesses reopening after lockdown but unable to access the Government's Restart Grant scheme.</p> <p>The grant will be a one-off payment of up to £18,000 for eligible businesses depending on the scale and size of business, impact of Covid, permitted opening dates and anticipated reopening costs. More details are available on the website. https://www.babergh.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/</p>
Council support for members of the public.	<p>Despite the closure of our customer access points, our Customer Service team has continued to offer emergency face-to-face appointments for those who, for whatever reason, cannot be helped over the phone or remotely. Now that lockdown is easing, more face-to-face appointments will be available to book. Perspex screens have been installed at the customer contact office in Stowmarket and staff will be regularly tested.</p>
TPO on Elmswell Oak Tree	<p>A TPO has been served to protect an oak tree on School Road, Elmswell which was at risk due to highways improvements necessary to enable the development of up to 86 new homes north of School Road.</p>
Woolpit Health Centre car park	<p>Plans to construct the new car park for the Health Centre are progressing. A planning application is imminent and It is hoped that a bid for the majority of the funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy will take place in the next couple of months.</p>

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