

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

October 2022

Planning application DC/21/06333	The planning application for the petrol station and drive-thru restaurants was discussed at planning committee on Wed 28 th Sept. The Committee were minded to refuse the application and asked for more independent advice regarding both highway and heritage issues.
Draft Housing Land Supply Statement	There will be a technical consultation on the draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Housing Land Supply Statements in the next few days. Indicatively, the draft housing land supply figures are 7 years for Babergh and 10.5 years for Mid Suffolk.
Car Parking Strategy	<p>Cabinet approved a Joint Car Parking Strategy which has the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure that everyone has access to sufficient, good quality, safe and welcoming car parking opportunities;• Make a real difference to how we plan for the future;• Supports economic growth opportunities;• Reduces the impact of our lives on the environment. <p>Unfortunately, the strategy has no provisions for discouraging use of the private car or improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The data collected for the study showed that around 50% of car trips to council owned car parks were of less than 1.5 miles. We consider that the impact on the environment would be reduced by using a bus, a cycle or walking.</p>
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Cabinet also considered proposals to amend the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Cabinet agreed to consult on a scheme to increase the council tax reduction for eligible household from 95% to 100%. Currently households who receive benefits such as Universal Credit have reduced council tax bills depending on the amount of benefit they receive; benefits may change from one month to the next and MSDC is then required to send a new council tax bill. Many households enter arrears and the cost of collecting arrears is often greater than the arrears themselves.
CIL funding	Over £420,000 in developer contributions is to be ploughed back into communities. There is some funding for a feasibility study into improvements at Thurston railway station.
Electric Bus Project	A Task and Finish Group of six MSDC Councillors has commenced work on planning how best to serve our residents with the two electric minibuses which are to be acquired by MSDC as a result of a Green and Liberal Democrat proposed budget amendment. Both Keith Welham and Andrew Stringer are members of that working group.
Suffolk Climate Change Partnership	The Partnership, which includes MSDC, is hosting a Suffolk Retrofit Conference on 13 October. The event is aimed at architects, engineers, contractors, consultants, surveyors and landlords among others. The hope is to unite local businesses, public sector leaders and training providers to explore the commercial, environmental, public health and socio-economic benefits of retrofitting homes at-scale and deliver a carbon-neutral Suffolk by 2030 in line with Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan.
Locality Funding	We still have funds available and would welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project.

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