

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

March 2023

Budget agreed for 2023/3	<p>At the recent full Council meeting the administration agreed our amendment to put aside £2M to help residents most in need with energy-saving measures. The MSDC council tax freeze was confirmed.</p> <p>The housing revenue account budget was also agreed, and this includes a 7% increase to council housing rents, just to try to keep pace with costs for some service soaring by almost 40% and to enable continued investment into repairs and maintenance.</p>
Possible new Joint depot for waste and building services.	<p>Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk have agreed to provide a total of £12M to improve the depot facilities. This is likely to end up with a single joint depot for the two councils. Currently the depots at Stowmarket, Sudbury and Gt Wenham are no longer fit for future purpose, and are unlikely to meet the needs of the Council and residents in the medium term.</p>
Gateway 14 officially opened	<p>Gateway 14 was officially opened representatives from Jaynic, MSDC and town and parish councils at the beginning of February. Gateway Boulevard, the main estate road is now complete. Hopefully the pedestrian and cycle links to the estate will be completed soon, and there will also be green corridors and high-quality landscaping to encourage biodiversity on the site.</p>
People and Place plans	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk are to be part of a Government pilot project which aims to get more communities shaping the places they live with a new approach to planning. People and Place Plans are simpler than full Neighbourhood Plans and should be a more accessible way to highlight local planning priorities.</p>
Community path between Elmswell and Woolpit	<p>A meeting with both SCC and MSDC officers regarding the continuation of the shared path from School Road to A1088 was held last week. SCC Highways had drawn up plans and surveys of the proposed route. They prefer the option of going in front of the church, involving some realignment of the steps to the churchyard as the gradients are easier to deal with. We were not happy with the proximity of the new path to the highway near the roundabout, so requested that if there was insufficient space to have separation, it was preferable to narrow the path in this area. Progress does seem to be happening and there was hope that a bid for CIL funding would be forthcoming in May.</p>
Lawn Farm business park	<p>The hybrid planning application for plots 4, 5 and 6 at Lawn Farm Business Park were discussed again at planning committee. Despite the committee members appricationg the concerns about traffic, permission was granted. There were some slightly tougher conditions relating to lighting and landscaping, so let's hope that they are adhered to.</p>
Elections in May	<p>The local elections are taking place on 4th May. The full election time table has now been published https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/elections/current-elections/. Nominations need to be in by 4th April.</p> <p>This year for the first time voters will need to bring photographic ID when they attend a polling station to vote. Details of the types of ID which are acceptable can be found at https://www.babergh.gov.uk/elections/voter-id/ . Residents who do not have any form of acceptable ID need to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or they can apply for a postal vote.</p>
Digital skills workshops	<p>MSDC are running sessions in local libraries to help people get online and to develop their digital skills. More information is available on the website https://www.babergh.gov.uk/the-council/digital-journey/digital-skills-events or you can phone 0300 1234 000 (Option 7) .</p>

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