

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

February 2024

MSDC Plan	<p>At the January Council meeting, the priorities for Mid Suffolk District Council were agreed. There was extensive consultation to ensure a wide range of views were considered. The core of the plan is putting environmental and social responsibilities at the heart of everything we do, “helping to create thriving and resilient communities in Mid Suffolk”. This encompasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Housing and infrastructure- Resilience- Community wellbeing; and- Environmental sustainability. <p>A key principle is to work collaboratively with communities.</p>
MSDC 2024/25 Budget	<p>At Mid Suffolk’s Cabinet meeting this week, the draft budget for 2024/25 will be discussed. This includes a 2% council tax increase to ensure financial stability for day-to-day services in the wake of shrinking government grants.</p> <p>A financial reserve has been built up over the last eight years and this will be spent on areas to benefit Mid Suffolk residents including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bringing disused land back into use for amenity or other uses- Land for biodiversity and to meet Biodiversity Net Gain- Stowmarket town centre regeneration- New foot/cycle paths to improve connectivity. <p>In the housing budget, to be able to fund improvements to the Council’s housing stock, it is proposed that rents increase by 7.7% (in line with the Government formula – CPI+1%). Many tenants receive housing benefit or universal credit and due to recent increases in the rent portion of this, the major of tenants will not see an increase in rent.</p>
Gateway 14	<p>The proposed Green Skills and Innovation Centre business plan was approved by Council subject to funding from Freeport East.</p>
Flooding	<p>The Council agreed a motion to support communities on flooding and to help with emergency plans.</p> <p>In Debenham a community meeting was held, organised by an MSDC Councillor, attended by the Environment Agency, Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council amongst others. From this, various initiatives are now underway.</p>
Locality Award	<p>A reminder that this year’s locality awards are still open for applications. Any group or organisation can apply for amounts of £250 or more. Please contact one of us for an application form.</p>
Councillor drop-in sessions	<p>Jen and Sarah hold monthly drop-in sessions, alternating between Woolpit Teacups and Wesley Café in Elmswell. The next two sessions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 21st March 10-12 Wesley Café.• Thursday 25th April 10-12 Teacups Café.

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