

Mid Suffolk District Councillor’s Annual Report 2025/6
For Stowupland Parish Council on April 22nd

<p>Local Government Reorganisation</p>	<p>This year councils submitted business cases for differing proposals for how a structure might work. The government has decided that there will be 3 unitary authorities in Suffolk.</p> <p>While detailed boundaries are still being finalised, the three unitary councils, West Suffolk, Central & East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich are planned to be in place from April 2028.</p> <p>Elections for the new shadow authorities are due in May 2027. Following this there will be a transition period until vesting day on April 1st 2028 when the new unitary authorities will take over.</p> <p>The transition period is to enable detailed work for reorganisation to take place, and services will be delivered as usual throughout the process. Mayoral elections due in May 2028.</p>
<p>Planning and Housing</p>	<p>This year MSDC introduced funding of up to £20,000 to support Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans/Reviews which seek to allocate sites for housing development that make an agreed contribution to meeting the district-wide housing needs. The neighbourhood plan has statutory weight and status in the planning process – and are used to help guide and decide planning applications in conjunction with the Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan.</p> <p>The council held a briefing session for parishes following the government requirement to increase the number of dwellings in Mid Suffolk. The increase is from the previous 535 dwellings per year up to 734.</p> <p>As a result Mid Suffolk has embarked on a new Joint Local plan to keep policies up to date, this has involved a “call for sites” to help identify any land that may be required for future development as our plans progress. https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites No planning status is granted by including a site on this list. Rather, sites will now be assessed against planning policy, constraints, evidence and deliverability criteria.</p> <p>Further assessment will be published through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in Spring 2026. It is important to note that we are carrying out this work to ensure any future development is plan lead and not developer lead.</p>
<p>Budget</p>	<p>The District Council’s share of Council Tax is to be raised by 2.99%. For context, for a Band D property annual charge attributable to Mid Suffolk is £180.26, an increase of £5.23 per year or 10p per week. The previous years rise was 0% (Of the overall Council Tax, about 8% goes to Mid Suffolk District Council.)</p> <p>This rise is unavoidable as the government has now linked future grant monies to the assumption that the share of council tax has risen, so if we had not taken a small increase this year we would be facing a “cliff edge” of funding in the near future.</p>

Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 400**

Cllr Janet Pearson
Janet.Pearson@midsuffolk.gov.uk
07928 512592

Cllr Agnes Watson
Agnes.Watson@midsuffolk.gov.uk
07599 828819

	<p>In addition to the day-to-day provision of council services and activities, the 2026/27 budget includes funding for a wide range of programmes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the new food waste collection scheme • Enhancements to our current waste depot in readiness for this, plus further support for recycling education • Cost of living support • Council Tax Support scheme • Grants programmes for towns and rural communities outside of Stowmarket • Investment in leisure centre maintenance • Stowmarket sports facilities delivered through the SHELF Project, plus support for wider Stowmarket regeneration • Support for the Cosy Homes insulation scheme which has been expanded to help residents obtain solar panels • Grant funding for nature recovery and community biodiversity groups • Support for new footpaths and cycle ways • Completing the build of the Stowmarket Innovation Gateway • Expansion of the area's temporary accommodation (which avoids homeless residents being put into bed and breakfast accommodation and saves on costs going to private providers.)
A14 and litter	<p>Work has started on a clear up of the A14. Two trucks of rubbish were cleared from the side of the A14 between junctions 49 and 50 for Tot Hill and Stowmarket during planned overnight road closures. We are grateful to volunteers who have been picking litter and all the community and parish litter picks organised but we continue to urge people to only do this where it is safe and not on fast roads.</p>
Recycling and waste	<p>This year has seen the district council working on the Better Recycling scheme which is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall.</p> <p>Every home across Mid Suffolk will be receiving a new blue-lidded bin and a smaller food-waste bin and food waste caddy. Information packs are being sent out with more detail.</p> <p>The blue-lidded bin will be for glass bottles, jars, tetra pak, plastic bags, cans and plastic bottles. Paper and card will go in the existing green-lidded bin. www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk</p>
Nature Recovery	<p>This new grant launched in January offers small grants up to 2K and larger grants up to £50k for projects that protect and expand wildlife corridors and habitats within the district – including tree planting, wildflower meadow creation, or other environmental initiatives to safeguard natural spaces for future generations. Organisations such as environmental groups, schools</p>

Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 400**

Cllr Janet Pearson
Janet.Pearson@midsuffolk.gov.uk
07928 512592

Cllr Agnes Watson
Agnes.Watson@midsuffolk.gov.uk
07599 828819

	<p>and town and parish councils can apply. One application can be made per project, per year.</p> <p>MSDC has also announced a new £525,000 fund to support ambitious nature recovery, flood mitigation and water management projects across Mid Suffolk. The fund opens for applications next week. The Catchment and Landscape Nature Recovery Grant promotes larger-scale, collaborative initiatives which could span multiple sites and landowners. With a focus on river catchments, it will support projects that benefit communities as they address biodiversity loss, with a particular emphasis on priority habitats and species. It will also support natural flood management, as well as projects to improve water quality and security Funding opportunities and support - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Mid Suffolk District Council has purchased almost eight acres of land in the heart of Stowmarket to preserve it as a future riverside haven for nature and wildlife for future generations.</p> <p>The land, between Takers Lane and the River Rat, adjoins the council’s existing open space at Pikes Meadow – unlocking potential for a new riverside walk, connecting Combs Ford and Gipping Way.</p> <p>The council’s investment is a further step as part of work to enhance biodiversity and nature – protecting and strengthening the district’s wildlife and habitat diversity – and providing public green space, as well as safeguarding the land from future development.</p>
<p>CIL funding and Locality grants</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy awards this year in this ward: Church Road play area in Old Newton and Wetherden play area are receiving a share of over £50k, which are being used to upgrade play equipment making the areas more welcoming, inclusive and beneficial for a wider range of children.</p> <p>Our Locality awards have supported several projects in Stowupland this year including a mural at Freeman’s Primary School, a defibrillator for the village hall and help to purchase a new lawn mower for the Cricket club.</p>