

Offton and Willisham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at Offton and Willisham Village Hall on Monday 5th July 2021 at 7pm.

Present:

Cllr S Warnes (Chair)	Cllr A Cox
Cllr A Bye	Cllr A Rumsey
Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh	Cllr A Chaplin
Dst Cllr D Pratt	Cty Cllr K Oaks
3 members of the public	Clerk - T Davis

ACTION

1	<p><u>Meeting Administration</u></p> <p>a) To Sign Acceptance of Declaration of Office & Data Consent Forms This was carried out and forms to be given to the Clerk</p> <p>b) To Consider & Approve Apologies for absence Formal apologies were sent by Cllr D Cattermole, Cllr I Gilson and these were accepted.</p> <p>c) Declarations of Interest A declaration of non-pecuniary interest was given by Cllr S Warnes and Cllr A Cox for item 22 i.</p>	Clerk
2	<p>To Approve the draft minutes of the 4th May 2021 meeting and for the Chairman to sign as a true record The Chair asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes.</p> <p>a) No matters arose <i>It was unanimously agreed for the Chair to sign the minutes as a true record.</i></p>	Clerk
3	<p>Public Participation Session (To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor, and comments from the Public) The Chair began this item with a declaration of sadness for the recent personal attacks in social media. The Chair made it very clear that personal comments will not be tolerated in this meeting. The Chair asked Cty Cllr K Oakes to speak. Cllr Oakes had provided her report, which can be found in the addendum. A short discussion then took place on the Quiet Lanes Scheme and public meeting on 14th July. Cllr Oakes would be writing to local farmers to clarify to them the proposed changes to the road, namely it will be used by all types of transport, including walkers, buggy's, wheelchair users, cyclists, horses, as well as vehicles and that extra care would be needed by vehicles when driving down the proposed road - no physical changes would be made to the roads themselves. The Dst Cllr D Pratt was invited to speak, the report can be found in the addendum. Cllr Pratt advised that an open consultation on Active Public Travel closes on the 22nd July and it is a good opportunity to comment on improvements to walkways/footpaths and/or cycleways in your local</p>	

	<p>area. Cllr Pratt also advised the the Joint Local Plan process had been postponed till September.</p> <p>A resident then wished to speak in respect of item 9 and hoped that the Parish Councillors have listened to those living round the Green of St Mary's Close.</p> <p>Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh then spoke in respect of the emotive response the BMSDC proposal had received and hoped that a compromise could be made, suggesting that the centre was kept for amenity use and mowed, whilst the outer fringe, like a 2m or 1.5m strip was for establishing a wildlife stepping stone. Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh asked the resident if this kind of compromise would be accepted and to Cllr Pratt if this would be a reasonable and manageable option. A proactive discussion then took place which highlighted the need for both wildlife and somewhere for children to play and a number of options were provided. The Chair then closed the discussion for when item 9 was to be addressed and moved onto the next item.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Chair Report</p> <p>The Chair confirmed they had attended limited meetings under the circumstances but had took part in the meeting with the Offton and Willisham Village Hall regarding the Open Day, along with Cllr A Cox. The Chair had met with Cty Cllr K Oakes in regard to the Quiet Lanes Scheme.</p> <p>The Chair also reported that the Defibrillator cabinet had been having difficulties, which the Chair had been looking into.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Clerk report, with mention of emails & correspondence received</p> <p>The Chair asked if everyone had read the Clerk report, given below. The Clerk also added that Thank you letters from the Offton and Willisham Village Hall and Offton Church. The ICO (Information Commissioners Office) had forwarded our Data Certificate.</p> <p><u>REPORT</u> Firstly, I hope that everyone is comfortable with the covid-19 safe arrangements that I put in place for this meeting. When creating the risk assessment I followed up-to-the minute safety precautions to ensure minimal risk is met by those attending. I also met with the safety officer for the Village Hall, who was very helpful and provided all the information I needed to ensure we followed both their and our own safety guidelines.</p> <p>I have placed the question raised at the annual parish meeting as item 6 on the agenda. Information regarding training required when working on and near the road has been forwarded to all councillors. I would like to put forward myself for the training to ensure that any work carried out by myself, volunteers or councillors is properly risk assessed prior to any work being carried out and can be recorded by me so that should anything happen our insurance is valid (insurance is only valid if a risk assessment is recorded). The Parish Council has received more resident communication over the last two months, with Items 7 - 9 along with a planning item 22 i, listed on the agenda. The</p>	

	<p>defibrillator was also reported by a resident who saw it flashing one evening. This has been looked into by the Cllr Warnes and is now under item 14.</p> <p>Two grant applications have also been received for the 2021-22 financial year, one of which has been budgeted for, the other which is repairs to a memorial, has not. I have requested further information in respect of where the memorial is situated, eg in an open or closed cemetery. Both have been placed under items 10 and 11 respectively.</p> <p>The Tye Lane Bench has been fitted by two of our Councillors and much thanks and appreciation goes to them both.</p> <p>I have published the accounts and public rights on the 1st June on the website and each noticeboard, I understand that this leaves little room for other information on the noticeboards however these are legally binding documents and must remain in situ until after 14th July 2021.</p> <p>I have not had the current bank statements for June yet and as a consequence have not yet made moves to move banks due to being unable to confirm the VAT repayment has been carried out. In the meantime I have recommended under item 23 f, that the Willisham CIL monies are moved and held separately. The Parish Council will have 5yrs to allocate and spend this money on the infrastructure of Willisham.</p> <p>I have gained quotes for a new bin for St Marys close, which have been forwarded to all councillors. Following the asset check I noted that the smaller bin was full of dog waste bags and wonder if this might be a good time to replace the small bin with a dog waste bin rather than remove it, these are under items 16 & 18.</p> <p>I contacted BMSDC regarding the unspent total of £225 of the received locality grant. They are unsure as to what to do as they have never been asked about returning monies before. I have suggested we keep the money ring fenced for the sole purpose of funding a further bench in the future, they have said this should be fine. I have placed it as item 23 e.</p> <p>Finally, I can confirm that Zoom has now been cancelled.</p>	
6	<p>APM Question from resident regarding footpath between School House & Middlewood Cottages and to discuss the Health and Safety for roadside working training detailed in the 'Red Book' and provided free by Suffolk Highways.</p> <p>The Chair asked for the councillors thoughts on this item. Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh advised that they had 6 people prepared to do the training. Discussion took place in respect of what the training would involve and who would need it. Things such as carrying out maintenance on assets near the road, cleaning signs, footpath clearing and hedge trimming might all come under this training. It was concluded that 3 people which included the clerk (who were named) would be put forward for the initial training and report back to see if further people needed to go.</p> <p>Cllr A Bye advised that the footpath specified in this item had been reported to SCC (Suffolk County Council) in April. There is a gap where a pip used to be under the path which according to the Environment</p>	Clerk

	Agency should be blocked off. It was concluded that Cty Cllr K Oakes and the Clerk would chase this.	Cty Cllr Oakes Clerk
7	<p>Resident Request - Tye Lane Grass Cutting</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the resident had observed that the grass had been cut since their first request, in May, and twice on June however needed to be cut more regularly at the beginning of the season. A discussion took place between the Councillors who established that the verge looked untidy compared to the other verge that was cut voluntarily by a resident who lived near to the verge. In the past the verge had been cut voluntarily by a resident, however that resident was now not able to do so. It was pointed out that the Parish Council had asked for a new volunteer last year in The Link, however no one put themselves forward. It was decided that the Clerk would find out from Suffolk County Council and Cllr D Pratt would find out from BMSDC who had cut the grass, when it should be cut and by who. The Clerk was also asked to advertise in The Link for a part-time gardener who might be interested in looking after the verge and providing a quote. The Clerk was asked to provide three quotes ready for the next meeting in October.</p>	Dst Cllr Pratt Clerk
8	<p>Resident Request - Holly Road Bank Degrading</p> <p>The Clerk advised that a resident who lived in this road had increasingly found the problems of bricks, stones and other debris falling from the bank dangerous. It was concerning that this happens every time there was heavy rain. This had been reported, however nothing seems to be happening as it was down to the landowner to repair the bank. It was asked if Cty Cllr K Oakes would look into this, especially as it was on the proposed Quiet Lane Road which needed to be safe for buggy's, wheelchair users etc. Cllr Oakes was very happy to look into this and the Clerk will email the details of the report.</p>	Cllr Oakes Clerk
9	<p>Resident Request - BMSDC Half Mow Consultation for Green at St Mary's Close</p> <p>The Chair asked the Clerk for the number of residents who had emailed for or against this idea. It was relayed that there was an even spread. Councillors have also had mixed reactions from residents of Offton. A resident had also come to the meeting. The Councillors were all saddened by the comments that had been made on social media, especially as were are not constructive or helpful to anyone. Further discussion took place into the detail of the proposal. It was established by Cllr D Pratt that costs would not be cut just by cutting less, it was a fixed cost for equipment, eg: mowers, and they are investing in better mowers, proper management and seeding. It was also confirmed that herb rich land had declined considerably, an example given by a councillor of hardly any bugs to wipe off the windscreen was given as a stark reality. BMSDC had resolved to change the way district land was managed for the betterment of the environment and had attended conferences to improve knowledge of this. The aim to reduce grass and increase more diverse plants. Biodiversity is key and that increased</p>	

	<p>urbanisation and intensive farming had stopped habitats having a connection with each other and therefore stopped the diversity in nature. The land managed by BMSDC was to create stepping stones to reconnect nature and enable diversity to thrive, hence the importance of small areas. Cllr Pratt went on to confirm that the amenity use of land remains just as important and that it would be important that a compromise was met and felt that biodiversity and amenity did not conflict.</p> <p>The resident, who was a member of the Open Space Society (but not at the meeting as a representative of that society), asked about consultation, why it had to be the green, and why not the verges around the Village Hall.</p> <p>Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh advised that the Offton and Willisham Village Hall was already planting its diversity and had had volunteers plant all kinds of wild plants and flowers round the village hall and verges. Some of the verges were not rich enough in soil to show the results yet and grass cutting had been minimised.</p> <p>Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh also wished to keep a play area on the green. This was also supported by other councillors, who gave alternative ideas of what could be done. Such as the Slope could be rewilded and stop the ball from rolling into the road, bird and insect boxes could be placed with a view to becoming an educating and fun place to be, rather than just a green. Paths could be mown through to provide fun for the children. The discussion concluded with the Chair asking in turn the opinion of the councillors. It was concluded that a compromise was the best way forward. The resident tended towards this possibility as well.</p> <p>It was confirmed that in light of the response, BMSDC had extended their consultation and had also widened those being consulted.</p> <p>Cllr Pratt advised it was a new process and this way of consulting might change in the future to improve things such as the proposal before residents are contacted in other areas for other green areas. In this case, Cllr Pratt was happy to take this information back to BMSDC.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that a link in The Link to the consultation might help gain information from residents of Offton.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Bye and unanimously agreed to be in favour of a hybrid proposal, whereby a clear area for play is evident as well as areas for wildlife to flourish.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Clerk to advise the resident. Cllr Pratt confirmed that BMSDC will come back to us if further input is needed.</p>	<p>Cllr Pratt</p> <p>Clerk</p>
10	<p>To discuss & approve the Willisham Church Grant application for 2021-2022 (budgeted for £700)</p> <p>The Chair asked if all Councillors had viewed the grant application.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Rumsey and unanimously agreed to pay the requested amount.</p>	Clerk
11	<p>To discuss & approve the Second Offton Church grant application for a further grant for 2021-2022 (not budgeted for in 2021-22)</p> <p>The Chair asked if the two members of the public represented the Church wished to speak. The Chair then asked if Cty Cllr K Oakes wished to speak.</p>	

	<p>Cty Cllr Oakes confirmed that the funds needed to repair and restore the historic monument situated in the closed churchyard of Offton would be funded by a proportion of the Locality Budget awarded to Cllr Oakes by SCC. It was then established by discussion that a further £200 was needed to apply to the Church of England Diocese for permission to carry out the works. It was hoped that these funds would not be needed as the works were so small. However, if the funds were needed for this administrative permission, would the Parish Council be able to contribute. Following Clerk advice given, namely under Section 215 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was established that a Parish Council can aid in ensuring the churchyard was kept to a minimum standard. The Clerk also advised as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), that as the amount was not in the budget for this year, the Parish Council were expecting a VAT refund which as yet had not been allocated and could be part used to fund the £200 requested without the need to use reserves. The representatives of the church confirmed Offton Church had a closed burial site and that the statue of the horse and rider was linked to the engravings found in the barn of Castle farm and of historical importance for the parish.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to aid in the help of securing the future of a significant historical structure of Offton and providing towards the upkeep of the closed churchyard.</p>	
12	<p>To discuss the Senior Citizens Christmas Party</p> <p>A renewed discussion took place in respect of the Christmas team needing a new leader to organise them. Previous mentions in the local magazine, The Link, had failed to gain a response. Therefore discussion took place over whether to do a lunch or not. Some Councillors suggested that it would be good to organise something for a wider social audience in the parish or to provide a scaled down version such as coffee, tea, mince pies and cake. Further suggestion was of a Father Christmas, which the Church representative advised they were hoping to do for the Church.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr S Warnes and unanimously agreed for the Clerk to place a new request in The Link advising of the need for a team leader to run the existing Senior Citizens Christmas Luncheon.</p> <p>If no one was forthcoming then to further discuss the matter at the next meeting.</p>	Clerk Clerk
13	<p>To discuss Speedwatch</p> <p>Cllr A Bye advised that a resident is interested in becoming part of a Speedwatch team in the parish. Especially along Middlewood Cottages. The Chair invited the Cty Cllr to speak about this topic.</p> <p>Cllr Oakes summarised by saying you needed a minimum of 3 people to volunteer, all training is given at a local police station, the area has to be safe where you stand, you have to advertise to drivers that speedwatch is being carried out (the Parish Council would need to purchase signs), a letter from the Police constable obtaining permission would need to be</p>	

	<p>asked for - establishing the right to carry out the speedwatch, the radar gun is possibly given for free, a form needs to be completed on the day it is done, all drivers over 35mph are recorded, details are sent online to the police, HiVis jackets must be worn and the Police calibrate the gun periodically. In the first instance you contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team, who would then liaise with the Police to see if any road in the parish would be suitable, eg: a straight line of sight.</p> <p>After discussion it was decided that a straight line of sight might be an issue and agreed it was best to obtain a Police Assessment before making any decisions. Cllr Oakes will forward to the Clerk contact details for this.</p>	<p>Cty Cllr Oakes Clerk</p>
14	<p>To discuss & resolve the registration and maintenance of the Willisham Defibrillator and Cabinet</p> <p>Both the Chair and Clerk gave a summary of the recent resident reports and current state of the Defibrillator and Cabinet. The Chair advised that to have full confidence that the Defibrillator was going to be freely available to those in need a new cabinet was recommended.</p> <p>Councillors agreed that from the incidents happening since May that a new cabinet is purchased and fitted as soon as practicable.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to authorise the Clerk to carry out the replacement purchase up to the value of £500 and arrange the fitting by a qualified electrician of up to £100.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
15	<p>To confirm & formalise agreement to the Public Meeting for Holly Road as a Quiet Lane</p> <p>The Chair advised that SCC will require that the Parish Council gives full backing to the recently organised Public meeting being chaired by Cty Cllr K Oakes and that confirmation of this is sent to them.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr S Warnes, Seconded by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh and unanimously agreed that if the outcome of the public meeting being held for the Quiet Lanes Scheme proposal for the Offton Road/Holly Road is positive, then the proposal has the full backing of the Parish Council.</p> <p>The Chair advised that Cty Cllr Oakes will email to the Clerk the Outcome and the Clerk will then email details to SCC, QLS.</p>	<p>Cty Cllr Oakes Clerk</p>
16	<p>To discuss the Clerk's Asset report, including the condition of both Village Signs</p> <p>The Chair asked if everyone had read the Clerks Asset Report of June 2021, which can now be found on the website.</p> <p>Cllr A Bye advised of the current need for the Village Sign post to be painted in Offton, after discussion it was highlighted that both posts were in need of painting. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain some quotes for the repainting of both village sign posts, details of known local tradesmen would be forwarded to the Clerk to aid her in obtaining the quotes. Further discussion continued on the asset report.</p> <p>Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh also volunteered to look into the extent of the movement of the bench in Offton by Flint Cottage. Both Cllr A Cox and Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh would look at the Offton Noticeboard on Castle</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh</p>

	<p>Road, and the Clerk would look to provide quotes for a Dog Waste Bin to replace the small existing bin by the Offton Telephone Box.</p> <p>It was also noted that some of the Salt Bins are in varying degrees of fullness and the Clerk will check with SCC regarding them being filled in October.</p>	<p>Cllr Cox Clerk Clerk Clerk</p>
17	<p>To discuss the Locality Budget as a source of funding for replacement of assets</p> <p>There was some confusion regarding this item and it was established by discussion that both the District Councillor and County Councillor have a locality budget that can be applied for, such as for a capital purchase, from the parishes within their remit if the parish needs help with costs. The Councillors agreed that this maybe something for the future.</p>	Clerk
18	<p>To discuss and approve new Bin purchase for St Mary's Close Offton</p> <p>The Chair asked if everyone had looked at the quotes sent out by the Clerk. A short discussion took place with Councillors and Dst Cllr Pratt, especially in light of the current uncertainty with the green.</p> <p>It was agreed that a bin more in keeping with a more rural and green area was looked into and that Cllr Pratt will provide some ideas to the Clerk that would also comply with BMSDC's bin collection criteria.</p>	Dst Cllr Pratt Clerk
19	<p>To discuss the Footpath Fingerpost Plaques</p> <p>This was part of the Discovering Suffolk Project based within the Green Access Team at Suffolk County Council, who were looking for volunteers who might help install new plaques onto roadside ROW fingerposts. These plaques will provide links to both the Discover Suffolk website and promote the countryside code.</p> <p>Cllr D Cattermole and Cllr A Chaplin were volunteered for this task with a provisional volunteer in the form of Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh.</p> <p>The Clerk will forward this information to the Green Access Team.</p>	Clerk
20	<p>To discuss & approve a Councillor for quarterly audit checks on the accounts for 2021-22</p> <p>Cllr A Cox had carried out this task last year and it was hoped by the Council that Cllr Cox would do so again this year. Cllr Cox agreed.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Bye and unanimously agreed for Cllr Cox to carry out the quarterly checks on the accounts for 2021-22.</p>	Cllr Cox
21	<p>To discuss & approve support for the Village Hall Summer Open Day</p> <p>Discussion took place in regards to the Village Hall Open day. Both Cllr Warnes and Cllr Cox had attended the Village Hall meeting and were very positive about the outcome. It was agreed that the Parish Council would move funds held in reserves (that had not been used for the Senior Citizens Christmas Luncheon last year) of £500 would be moved to this years spending and set aside for the Village Hall.</p> <p>This was Proposed by Cllr A Cox, Seconded by Cllr S Warnes and unanimously agreed based on a 50/50 spend between the Village Hall and the Parish Council</p>	

	It was Proposed by Cllr S Warnes, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to place the CIL funds into this account (minus 34p) to ensure the Willisham CIL monies were clearly separate.	
24	Next meeting 4th October 2021 at 7pm at Offton & Willisham Village Hall	

Meeting end 9:50pm

ADDENDUM

1. County Council Report

It has been announced that a multi-agency team from Lincolnshire will carry out an independent review into SEND provision.

This review will be carried out by a senior professional with no links to, or direct involvement with, Suffolk's provision and will focus on the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council.

The SEND (special educational needs and disability) review will focus on the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council. It will not look at specific cases or the provision given to specific children.

The review will start next week and will be completed within six weeks. The report, with any recommendations, will be published on Suffolk County Council's website, shared with those who contributed to it and also scrutinised, in public, by the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.

The review team from Lincolnshire will consist of two senior officers from Lincolnshire County Council, performance analysts and the chair of the county's parent carer network.

Councillor Rachel Hood, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for education, SEND and skills, said:

"Lincolnshire has excellent SEND provision and the team has kindly agreed to review certain elements of our service and will make recommendations based on their findings which will be of great value to us.

"Families with experience of Suffolk's SEND may share their feedback of the communication process for the review, but we ask that this is relevant to the scope of the review. We have set up an email account for families to feed in their comments. It is important that a range of stakeholders are heard so we can fully understand our strengths and weaknesses and identify next steps. Ofsted have confirmed that we have made significant improvement in this area, and the findings of this review will enable this improvement to continue."

SEND services in Suffolk are delivered in partnership by Suffolk County Council, Suffolk's NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and education settings.

The review will look at:

The effective flow of cases

Communication with young people and families

Processes for dealing with incoming enquiries from young people and families in a timely manner

A focus on the family-facing elements of the service

The allocation of provision and, where appropriate, placement in a timely way for children

In recent weeks, there have been calls from some parents and carers of children with SEND - known as the Campaign for Change (SEND Suffolk) - for a lawyer-led audit of the council's compliance with the legal requirements set out for the service. Suffolk County Council has considered this request, but has decided not to move forward with it because:

It is the role of Ofsted to inspect all aspects of SEND provision, including those that would be included in such an audit. Ofsted and CQC has already made two monitoring visits to Suffolk and have identified areas of progress as well as areas of improvement

A new national SEND inspection framework is being launched, meaning further detailed inspections will take place

The county council already has an internal and external auditing process for Education, Health and Care Plans

There is an established complaints procedure for parents and carers who feel that the service they are receiving is not appropriate or sufficient

Suffolk County Council is eager to work collaboratively and productively with the Campaign for Change group, and parents and carers not involved or represented by the group, to make improvements in SEND services.

Councillor Hood added:

“We know that every parent and carer wants the best for their children, especially when it comes to education and care. Suffolk County Council wants the same and must strive to provide the very best services we can.

“This review will be immediate, in depth and independent and we will act on the recommendations made as swiftly and thoroughly as we can.

“We want to reassure parents and carers that this is a priority and we will make improvements where they are needed as quickly as possible.”

In Suffolk nearly 18,000 young people are supported in some way through local SEND services, including 5,900 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or those receiving support in education settings. Demand has grown very significantly. Prior to the 2014 national SEND reforms, Suffolk held approximately 3,000 statements of SEND.

If you would like to participate in this review then please share your experiences of the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council at SendReview@suffolk.gov.uk.

Suffolk County Council launches the new Cassius service

On June 1st, Suffolk County Council launched the new Cassius service.

We're partnering with Alcove, Rethink Partners and Provide CIC to deliver their innovative care technology service to people in Suffolk over the next 3 years.

From July, the Cassius service will give our social work practitioners, occupational therapists and other front line professionals, new ways to support people to live better and independent lives.

Initially the service will launch with a high impact, targeted range of technology that will continue to grow into the full Cassius collection. This means that the technology can be customised to meet people's needs and to address individual challenges which will help them live independently at home for longer.

Cllr Beccy Hopfensberger, cabinet member for Adult Social Care at Suffolk County Council said:

“We're really excited to launch this new service with our partners. It will offer a simple, accessible, seamless and flexible approach which will help people to embrace the benefits of care technology and provide better outcomes.

“Our teams have worked hard over the last couple of years to create a vision of how we would like our digital care model to be – setting us aside from other local authorities. As we move away from the

traditional analogue approach, we are embracing this opportunity to provide a pioneering and intelligent service that will evolve and adapt alongside societal needs.”

Cassius will focus on technology that promotes independence and provides monitoring and assessment in the first instance, but that is data driven to provide impactful insights into people's needs – this will help inform

more targeted care and support where it is needed, and give people, loved ones and care providers peace of mind, real-time information and back-up support if it is needed.

In the coming months, this will develop into a wider, more integrated package of technology that will support additional needs and opportunities.

Suffolk County Council launches public consultation on potential housing development in Bramford

It was announced on June 11th that as part of its priority to deliver more sustainable housing in Suffolk, the council is looking for people's views of a potential new housing development.

Suffolk County Council is intending to submit a planning application for a residential development on land it owns to the east of Bramford Road. Development on land owned by the county council, is one of the council's priorities and is part of the council's wider housing approach to help provide new housing in Suffolk.

The current proposals set out a development of up to 120 highly sustainable homes, surrounded by significant green space, accessed from Bramford Road.

The proposals for the development include:

Low carbon heating via heat pumps.

Local energy generation through solar panels.

Grey water recycling, where water used in items such as sinks, dishwashers, showers, and baths is cleaned and returned for use in toilets or washing machines.

A focus on increased biodiversity and increasing green spaces.

Speaking about the proposals, Councillor Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Housing said:

"It is absolutely vital that Suffolk has more sustainable homes, and as a council and as a landowner we are determined to play our part in delivering that objective

"We also recognise the importance of involving existing communities in developing their local area. I do hope that as many people as possible take this opportunity to engage with us on this development via the consultation."

A public consultation will take place this month from 14th to 21st June, followed by a planning application later in the summer. It is intended that the site would be developed through Suffolk County Council's new housing joint venture partnership, which was approved by the council last year.

Just one jab is half a job – keep testing and get second vaccination

Suffolk residents are being encouraged to jab, test, protect the rest as lockdown easing is delayed by four weeks. Health bosses in Suffolk are urging people waiting for their second COVID-19 vaccination to take regular tests to help curb the spread of the virus.

People are being asked to test twice a week and to take their vaccine as soon as it is offered to them.

Of the Suffolk population of 761,350, a total of 629,889 are eligible to receive the vaccine.

NHS vaccination figures show that of those eligible, 62% (393,477) have had two doses, but 38% (236,412) have only had one dose - or no vaccine at all. That figure does not even include children who are not eligible for a vaccine but can - and do - get infected.

This means that almost four in ten people in Suffolk have had either one or no jabs at all and therefore risk catching the virus or passing it on to other people.

The Delta variant of the virus is now the most prevalent in the UK and the concern for health bosses is that although the vaccine is highly effective - more than 80% after two doses – one dose is only around 33% effective. (2)

The figures do not record how many eligible people have refused a vaccine, but Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health for Suffolk, said they showed the importance of getting both vaccinations when offered and testing regularly to break its spread.

“If you have both vaccinations you reduce considerably the chances of it harming you but if you only have one and think you are safe then my advice would be ‘please think again’. A single vaccine on its own is not enough. “The Delta variant is now widespread in the UK and the data shows you are more likely to need hospital if you develop it, so please make sure you get both vaccinations.

“Everyone can also do their bit in curbing the spread by testing regularly. The more cases of infection that can be identified and isolated the harder we make it for the virus to spread throughout Suffolk.”

Suffolk County Council launches Ipswich’s first Park & Cycle initiative

On June 15th it was announced that commuters are now welcome to park at Martlesham Park & Ride site for FREE and cycle into Ipswich Town Centre.

Working in partnership with First Eastern Counties, the Park & Ride site has put in place a [cycle map](#) which details three dedicated routes into the centre of Ipswich, and there is a route suitable for every ability:

Green route – direct route into the town centre. 29 mins – 8.5km / 5.3 miles

Yellow route – direct /low traffic route into the town centre - 32 mins – 9.3km / 5.8 miles

Blue route – low traffic route into the town centre - 39 mins – 11km / 6.8 miles

As part of the scheme, there is also available for use Sheffield bike stands, and 24hr security patrols complemented by CCTV coverage for bikes left over night.

Councillor Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member responsible for Transport Strategy, Economic Development and Waste, said:

“Park & Cycle is another way Suffolk County Council is supporting more sustainable travel in to Ipswich as we ease out of lockdown.

“The dedicated cycle routes will reduce some of the barriers members of the public have said stops them choosing to cycle into the town centre.

“By embedding cycling as a regular option for travelling into Ipswich’s town centre many will reap the associated health, air quality and congestion benefits of sustainable travel.”

To find out more details visit www.suffolkonboard.com/parkandcycle and follow @suffolkonboard on Twitter.

2. District Council Report

Annual Council Meeting

Due to the COVID restrictions the Annual Council Meeting was held on 24th May at Wherstead Park, the only place large enough to enable social distancing. The Conservative and Independent group elected Conservative Paul Ekpenyong as the new Chairman of MSDC, having served as vice chair last year. The Conservative-led administration and opposition each have 17 councillors, so the Chairman’s casting vote becomes crucial for decision-making. All cabinet and vice cabinet positions, bar the chair of Overview and Scrutiny, were filled by Conservatives, all with the chairman’s casting vote being used.

Active Travel Public Consultation

The district council has launched an online consultation to provide communities an opportunity to comment on walking and cycling routes in their area. Users can also identify preferences for new routes for future investment. The consultation is being held on a public mapping tool called ‘Commonplace’ which can be found on the council website or via the link: <https://babergmidssuffolkactivetravel.commonplace.is/>

Trees and Hedgerows Programme

As part of the District Council's plan to help improve and strengthen biodiversity in Mid Suffolk, we are offering free trees, hedgerow plants, and wildflower seeds. Trees can be planted on parish, church or private land. Applications can be completed online and must be submitted by Wednesday 30 June 2021.

https://babergh-self.achieveservice.com/service/Tree_and_Hedge_Planting_Application

Let jays, thrushes, and squirrels plant your trees – and get paid for it

A new study shows that jays have planted more than half the trees in two new woodlands, and can help rapidly regenerate former fields into native forests. Through passive re-wilding, thrushes spread seeds of blackthorn, bramble and hawthorn, and this scrub provides thorny tree guards for acorns planted by jays. In the meantime, the shrubland or scrub provides a transitional habitat that is a bonanza for insects, birds and all kinds of wildlife. The Forestry Commission is offering landowners, land managers and public bodies funds to support the creation of new woodland, including through natural regeneration, on areas as small as 1 hectare. The fund is called the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO). For more information follow the link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer>

The Regal Theatre

The £3.6 million refurbishment of The Regal Theatre has been completed with the venue offering three screens, a new café and bar area, and improved parking and toilet facilities.

Neighbourhood planning

Three Mid Suffolk parishes held referenda for Neighbourhood Plans last month and these have now been formally adopted as planning policy for Eye, Drinkstone and Wilby.

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