

## Offton and Willisham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Offton and Willisham Village Hall on Monday 4th  
October 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	
	1 member of the public	Clerk - T Davis

### ACTION

<b>1</b>	<p><b><u>Meeting Administration</u></b></p> <p><b>a) Welcome by Chair and opening of the meeting</b> The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting</p> <p><b>b) To Consider &amp; Approve Apologies for absence</b> Formal apologies were sent by Cllr D Cattermole, Cllr I Gilson along with Dst Cllr K Oakes and these were accepted.</p> <p><b>c) Declarations of Interest</b> A declaration of non-pecuniary interest was given by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh for item 10.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>To Approve the draft minutes of the EGM of 6th Sept 2021 meeting and for the Chairman to sign as a true record</b> The Chair asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes.</p> <p><b>a)</b> No matters arose <i><b>It was unanimously agreed for the Chair to sign the minutes as a true record.</b></i></p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Public Participation Session (<i>To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor, and comments from the Public</i>)</b> The Chair began this item by inviting District Cllr D Pratt to speak. Cllr Pratt had forwarded a report (which can be found in the addendum) and wanted to highlight that BMSDC had now streamlined the Neighbourhood Plan Process and advised that a Neighbourhood Plan would have equal weighting with the Districts plan and provide safeguards to future planning in the area. Although not in attendance, Cty Cllr K Oakes had forwarded a report which can be found in the addendum. The Chair asked if the resident wished to speak on any matter and this was amicably declined.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Chair Report</b> The Chair confirmed they had attended the Red Lion Public Meeting. It was at this point that the Chair also advised that new planning applications had been received by the clerk and if anyone wished to hold an EGM in respect of these planning applications, for them to advise the Chair.</p>	

5	<p><b>Clerk report, with mention of emails &amp; correspondence received up to 28th Sept 2021</b></p> <p>The Chair asked if everyone had read the Clerk report, given below. A lot has happened over the last few months.</p> <p>Training has been organised with SCC for a councillor, volunteer and I for the end of October to gain insight of what is required when working on and near the road.</p> <p>I am pleased to say that the Parish Council has received more resident communication, with Items 11 - 14 and planning item 19 i, listed on the agenda.</p> <p><b>Defibrillator</b></p> <p>The defibrillator now has a new cabinet which was installed by Bannister &amp; Day. They provided an excellent service and not only informed us of a missing part from the manufacturer but also went back to fit it once the part arrived from our supplier, still keeping to their original quote.</p> <p><b>Grants</b></p> <p>Offton Church has confirmed that they do not need the second grant they applied for after all.</p> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>We have had confirmation from our External Auditors that our Exemption Certificate has been received.</p> <p>The first quarter accounts have been reviewed by Cllr A Cox, and once we receive the bank statements for September I will be preparing the 2nd quarter accounts for review.</p> <p>I have gained new quotes for a new bin for St Marys close, as well as quotes for a new dog bin by the Offton telephone box, these are items 20 g &amp; h.</p> <p><b>Offton Green</b></p> <p>Following further communication from BMSDC, a further discussion is needed for the Offton Green. Cllr A Bye has brought in draft plans (drawn up and donated by a local business) for a suggested future plan of the Offton Green to provide a better interpretation for the discussion this evening.</p> <p><b>Climate Change &amp; The Queens Canopy</b></p> <p>Dst Cllr D Pratt followed by our Chairman have requested the PC discuss the current climate situation and what could be done in a Parish setting. I would recommend that if the Parish Council decide to declare a climate emergency, then a small working party is formed (which may or may not include residents as well as councillors) to create an ethos for future plans (development, financial etc) along with practical ideas of providing this.</p> <p>I attended two webinars provided for free by SALC, one of which was a climate forum, which looks to become a regular webinar for councils to share their ideas and difficulties and link councils with the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership. There are current examples of council's who have taken up the task of 'change for the better' and their endeavours can be found on their websites, Haverhill, Woodbridge and Felixstowe. These might be a little ambitious for a small parish, however they might fuel some ideas for Councillors.</p>	
---	--	--

	<p>The second webinar gave details of The Queens Canopy, which was launched in May 2021. Every tree that is planted under this initiative will be placed on a map and given to the queen for the Platinum Jubilee. Speakers were there from The Suffolk Tree Warden Network, The Woodland Trust and The Lord Lieutenant, who spoke about the scale of the operation and how Suffolk could take part.</p> <p>As we have had a resident who has suggested that 4 acres of their land could be used to plant trees, I thought it important to advise this evening that 75% of the cost could be funded by The Woodland Trust and that they would come to visit the site to provide guidance and recommendations and maybe some support.</p> <p>I also obtained some practical advice during the webinar, such as:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It would take approx 10hrs a week in maintenance in the first 2yrs of growth, dependent on rainfall, for 4 acres.</li> <li>2. 300-700 trees could be planted per acre giving other spaces to diversify</li> <li>3. 20-60cm tree sapling is more likely to survive in the long term</li> </ol> <p>As the resident is not online and the long term intentions have not been discussed with the landowner, this is maybe something that can now be done face to face should the Parish Council wish to pursue it.</p> <p><b>Annual Litter Pick</b></p> <p>The Litter Pick has not been organised as we need to find an organiser/volunteer who would like to run it each year.</p> <p><b>Tye Lane Grass Cutting</b></p> <p>After identifying and requesting four quotes for cutting the grass on the two verges, we received one reply who advised they were not qualified to work by the road. Thankfully, a local resident has volunteered to cut the grass and once we are trained will be able to ensure full safety for our volunteer.</p> <p><b>Three Year Forecast</b></p> <p>I have drafted a 3yr forecast for you to review. As you will note, you do have some financial decisions this evening that will influence the forecast and once decided I will make the amendments accordingly.</p> <p>Whilst compiling the forecast I have noticed that costs are rising and that it might be necessary to raise the precept higher than the normally recommended 3%, especially as we are beginning to earmark the reserves in a more planned and prudent way for the parish.</p> <p><b>Pensioners Christmas Luncheon</b></p> <p>I can confirm that I have had no volunteers to take on the task of organiser for this year.</p> <p><b>Quiet Lanes</b></p> <p>I can confirm that Cty Cllr Oakes' efforts have taken this project through to the next step.</p> <p><b>Assets</b></p> <p>Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh has taken on the task of dealing with the village sign post in Offton and has also looked at the bench by Flint Cottage. A resident has kindly re-varnished the Offton Noticeboard, however I noticed today that one of the posts is very wobbly which will need monitoring.</p> <p>SCC have confirmed that they will be refilling the Salt Bins.</p>	
--	--	--

	<p><b>Village Hall Open Day</b> The Village Hall held their open day and forwarded the total costs. As agreed, the Parish Council offered to pay 50% which equates to £411.54. The Village Hall have purchased and fitted an air conditioning unit, which they would also like to ask if the Parish Council could fund 50% of the cost.</p> <p><b>Outstanding Items</b> The only outstanding items I have to follow up on is the broken pipe under the footpath between school house and middlewood cottages, the degrading bank on Holly Road and the unpaid reimbursement for the litter hoops. I am not sure if Cty Cllr Oakes has had any further information on these items.</p>	
6	<p><b>To discuss Co-opting a new Councillor</b> No one was present from the public who wanted to be co-opted. It was suggested that this would be put on the next agenda.</p>	Clerk
7	<p><b>To Discuss and Confirm Parish Council plan in response to the BMSDC Half Mow proposal (plans will be at the meeting to view)</b> The plans that had been drawn up were discussed at the meeting. It was advised that the current plan put forward would entail some initial costs and participation. A short discussion then ensued. The Chair then established that two questions need to be answered before anything happens, Q1 Are the Parish Council happy with the plans and Q2 Are BMSDC happy with the plans. A further discussion ensued. It was established that a bench, bug house and 3 trees would need to be purchased. Cllr D Pratt then relayed the history from BMSDC point of view and concluded that BMSDC were waiting for the Parish Council to come back to them with a plan. <b>The Plans were Proposed by Cllr A Cox, Seconded by Cllr A Bye and unanimously agreed in principle subject to costs and it was Resolved for Cllr D Pratt to put forward the drawn up plans to BMSDC and await feedback from them.</b></p>	Dst Cllr D Pratt
8	<p><b>To discuss Speedwatch Update following July's meeting</b> The Clerk had forwarded site criteria from Community Speedwatch Suffolk to all Councillors. After discussion it was deemed that no site in the Parish would meet the site criteria, and that volunteers would not be safe to carry out the task. It was concluded that the Parish could not apply.</p>	
9	<p><b>To discuss &amp; declare a climate and nature state of emergency for Offton &amp; Willisham</b> The Chair opened this item with a suggestion that a working party is set up to investigate the benefits of what a parish could do. This was met with a positive response and after short discussion it was concluded that Cllr A Bye, Cllr A Chaplin, Cllr S Warnes and Dst Cllr D Pratt form a small working party to report back to the next meeting any practical applications that would benefit.</p>	WParty
10	<p><b>To discuss &amp; decide on the Village Hall request to contribute 50% of the £303.94 Air Conditioner cost</b></p>	

	<p>Councillors discussed this. The Village Hall had had the Air Conditioner unit installed initially for the Open Day. It was established that under LGA 1976 s.19 &amp; LGA 1972 s.133 the Council could contribute. Of the £500 the Parish Council had said it would contribute to the Open Day, only £411.34 had been spent. 50% of the cost of the Air Conditioner would be £101.97.</p> <p><b>It was Proposed by Cllr A Cox, Seconded by Cllr S Warnes and unanimously agreed with 1 abstention to pay 50% of the Air Conditioner, £88.66 from the remaining pledged £500 and £13.31 from general reserves.</b></p>	Clerk
11	<p><b>Resident Request: Can something be done about green waste Fly Tipping in The Channel</b></p> <p>The discussion regarding dumping waste in The Channel was revisited following an email received from a resident. It had been established that BMSDC housing backed onto some of The Channel and that BMSDC should arrange for this to be cleared. Councillors listed items that had been seen in The Channel, from Grass Cuttings to toys, plastic bags.. Previously the Parish Council had asked if the Environment Agency could distribute letters to households along the waterway to advise of the responsibility to keep the river clear of waste. Unfortunately this was not something the Environment Agency would do.</p> <p>It was agreed that Cllr D Pratt would contact the dept at BMSDC to see if a letter/leaflet could be sent to those households detailing riparian rights and responsibilities along The Channel regarding the dangers of waste.</p>	Cllr D Pratt
12	<p><b>Resident Request: Can something be done about the increasing Dog Mess</b></p> <p>Councillors discussed the latest information on routes about the Parish and it was confirmed that they too had seen an increase in dog waste during the summer which seemed to have lessened now. Castle Lane in particular seems to be v.poor in having a clear walk without dog mess. It was concluded that a request would be placed in The Link.</p>	Clerk
13	<p><b>Two Resident Requests: To discuss the request to reduce the speed limit and or speeding on Bildeston Road, Holly Road and other roads in the Parish</b></p> <p>The Council discussed the roads and the resident requests. It was established that Holly Road now had the protection of the Quiet Lanes Scheme and it was hoped that this would ensure the speeding would reduce over time and would be monitored.</p> <p>In respect of Bildeston Road it was suggested that the first step was to ask the police to place a speed monitor on the road.</p> <p><b>It was Resolved that the Clerk would contact the Police.</b></p>	Clerk
14	<p><b>Resident Request: To discuss the potential offer of land to plant four acres of trees and the Queens Canopy Campaign which launched in May 2021</b></p> <p>The Council referred to the Clerk report in respect of this item and a short positive discussion took place. It was established that the Clerk would speak to the landowner to find out what their terms of use might</p>	

	<p>be eg: if it was to be for public access or not. Once this information is gathered, then the Council would be in a position to discuss things further.</p>	Clerk
15	<p><b>To discuss and approve the purchase of two wreaths for Offton &amp; Willisham Churches for Remembrance, suggested donation of £25 for each wreath to the Royal British Legion</b>  Councillors were happy with this.  <b>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to purchase the wreaths as suggested.</b></p>	Clerk
16	<p><b>To discuss and decide on future Litter Picks and a Litter Pick Organiser</b>  Councillors discussed the situation with Willisham Litter Picking. Currently Offton Litter Picking has 5 regular households volunteering to litter pick throughout the year and they each store the Parish Council's equipment in their home. It was decided that the Clerk would put a request in The Link asking for regular litter pickers who wanted to litter pick in Willisham.</p>	Clerk
17	<p><b>To discuss and decide on purchasing a Parish Council mobile phone</b>  A short report had been distributed to Council by the RFO regarding the benefits of the Council having a phone.  The chair reiterated that in the past the Council had agreed to purchase a phone and felt the benefits would outweigh the costs. A short discussion took place.  It was concluded that a phone would be purchased for no more than £100 and a Pay As you Go sim card obtained for the telephone number. It was also agreed that the phone would be a running agenda item to ensure it was topped up to retain the telephone number.  <b>This was Proposed by Cllr S Warnes, Seconded by Cllr A Rumsey and unanimously agreed</b></p>	Clerk
18	<p><b>Policy Review - to review and readopt the following:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>NALC Standing Orders 2020</b></li> <li>b) <b>Financial Protocol</b></li> <li>c) <b>Risk Assessment &amp; Management Policy</b></li> <li>d) <b>Internal Control Statement</b></li> <li>e) <b>2019 Cookies Policy</b></li> <li>f) <b>2019 Privacy Notice</b></li> <li>g) <b>Data Retention Policy</b></li> <li>h) <b>ICO Model Publication Scheme</b></li> <li>i) <b>Information Policy &amp; Fees Schedule</b></li> <li>J) <b>Website Accessibility Statement</b></li> <li>K) <b>Grants &amp; Donations Policy</b></li> <li>L) <b>Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</b></li> <li>M) <b>Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities</b></li> <li>N) <b>Suffolk County Council Code of Conduct</b></li> </ul>	

	<p>It was suggested by the Chair that if no one had any objections to any of the Policies, then they would re-adopt them as a whole.</p> <p><b>It was Proposed by Cllr S Warnes, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to re-adopt the existing policies and codes of practice.</b></p>	Clerk
19	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>The Chair suggested that item iv) was brought forward to discuss alongside item i).</p> <p><b>i) &amp; iv) Resident Requests and carried from EGM - To Discuss and Decide on a Housing Needs Survey &amp; To discuss and decide on a Parish Survey/Plan</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that they had feedback from some residents who are unhappy with what is not done and what is done and is now mindful that if a Parish Plan was conducted it would find out what the Parish wants now and if this has changed in the last 10yrs. It was the past Parish Plan that caused the 2015 Housing Needs Survey.</p> <p>The Pro's and Con's of both Plan and Survey were discussed by Council. Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh stated that following a resident's email he wished to be minuted that he had and would fight and had fought against any unnecessary or overdevelopment of the parish over the last 30yrs as a councillor.</p> <p>During discussion it was highlighted that in the 2015 survey, of the 108 households that responded to the Housing Need Survey, 87.5% were in favour of a small affordable housing development in the parish. The housing need back then was 5-6 houses. It was confirmed that figures had been sent by BMSDC and that there were a total of 4 households linked to Offton &amp; Willisham who were on the housing register as of Sept 2021. Some of whom were quite low on the ranking list and none of which were in category A.</p> <p>The time spent previously was 3-4yrs to complete the survey. In addition, by conducting a Parish Plan it would aid Council in obtaining what the residents want, not just for housing, but for other things that may need budgeting for in the future, such as benches, green spaces, utilities etc. Council discussion continued. It was noted that a good first step would be to put together a Parish Plan questionnaire for the residents, along with costs. Some councillors volunteered to post through people's letterboxes, it was also suggested that there was an online option.</p> <p>It was concluded that a housing need survey was not needed at present and it would be decided by the results of the Parish Plan. The Chair along with the Clerk would put together a questionnaire for residents along with costs for the next meeting to begin the first step of forming a Parish Plan.</p>	Chair & Clerk
	<p><b>ii) &amp; iii) Red Lion Inn Appeal Notice AP/21/00039 Listed Building Consent</b></p> <p><b>Red Lion Inn Appeal Notice AP/21/00040 Change of Use</b></p> <p>The Chair asked if anyone had any further comments to make in addition to those already made for the original planning applications. No comments were given.</p>	

20	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>a) <b>Current Bank Balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021:-</b>  <b>Community Account = £6,838.31</b>  <b>Premium Account = £0.34</b>  <b>Premium Savings Account = £9,003.96</b></p> <p>b) <b>To advise Payments made up to 30th Sept 2021 -</b>  <b>Clerk Wages for July - £352.95</b>  <b>Clerk Wages for August - £352.95</b>  <b>Community Heartbeat (defibrillator Cabinet £450 b4 VAT) - £570.00</b>  <b>Bannister &amp; Day (fitting new cabinet) - £48.00</b>  <b>Clerk Wages for September - £352.95</b></p> <p>c) <b>To approve payments and authorise cheques for signature (Resolution required)</b>  <b>Village Hall Open Day - £411.54</b>  <b>Clerk's Mileage Expenses &amp; Office allowance - £108.10</b>  <b>S Warnes (Stamps) - £19.49</b></p> <p><b>It was Proposed by Cllr A Bye, Seconded by Cllr A Chaplin and unanimously agreed to approve and authorise payments.</b></p> <p>e) <b>Report from Cllr Cox on 1st Quarter accounts</b>  A copy of the RFO's 1st Quarter reconciliation with a bank statement summary had been forwarded to all councillors. Cllr A Cox confirmed that the 1st Quarter accounts had been checked and were all as they should be. The Chair expressed the thanks of the Council for undertaking this.</p> <p>f) <b>To discuss and approve the 3yr Forecast</b>  The forecast was discussed by Council, it was suggested that an overall rise of 4% would be prudent in the current climate of inflation and this was agreed and for the clerk to make amendments to this effect. It was also resolved at this time to take the Village Hall Open Day contribution out of the reserves held for BMSDC Covid -19 grant, to include a column for the Wreaths donations to the Royal British Legion, and increase for the Office Phone soon to be purchased and the dog bin waste clearance by BMSDC.  Due to not having any volunteers to be organiser of the Pensioners Xmas Luncheon, it would not go ahead this year. It was concluded that funds budgeted for the luncheon should be placed in the community fund instead, ready for when the Parish Council would be in a position to provide something, maybe for all residents.  <b>This was Proposed by Cllr A Bye, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed.</b></p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
----	--	---------------------------



g)	<p><b>To discuss and agree the purchase of a Waste Bin (quotes given to councillors)</b></p> <p>The quotes were reviewed by the councillors and a quote from Glasdon was suggested for £354.97+VAT Sherwood Bin.</p> <p><b>It was Proposed by Cllr A Bye, Seconded by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh and unanimously agreed for the Clerk to order the Sherwood Bin by Glasdon</b></p>	Clerk
h)	<p><b>To discuss and agree the purchase of a Dog Waste Bin (quotes given to councillors)</b></p> <p>The quotes were reviewed along with a short discussion on replacement of the small old bin by the Telephone box in Offton, colour and type.</p> <p><b>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr A Bye and unanimously agreed for the Clerk to order the Glasdon Dog Bin, costs dependent on type of post fitting.</b></p>	Clerk
21	<p><b>Next meeting 6th December 2021 at 7pm at Offton &amp; Willisham Village Hall</b></p>	

**Meeting end 9:05pm**

## **ADDENDUM**

### **1. County Council Report - October 2021**

#### **Suffolk's first 'healing woods' locations announced.**

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, four locations were announced by Suffolk County Council as 'healing woods and spaces'.

They will offer people better access to nature and provide a positive legacy to the pandemic.

The healing woods and spaces will be located in:

Bury St Edmunds, Combs and Little Finborough, Eye, Hopton

The council's healing woods project connects with the motion unanimously passed by the county's councillors earlier this year, to commit to developing mental health support in Suffolk, in response to the impacts of the pandemic.

Research, such as that recently published by the University of Essex with The Green Light Trust, demonstrated that access to woodlands and green space can significantly improve people's wellbeing.

The four sites will develop unused spaces and existing green areas, to make them more accessible and offer dedicated places for peaceful reflection and a positive focus.

"I'm really grateful to the parish councils, local councillors, and volunteers for all they have done to make these projects a reality - demonstrating the fantastic community ethos we have here in Suffolk.

"The inspiration for healing woods was as a memorial to those we have lost during the pandemic. These spaces will offer that opportunity for reflection, whilst also showing that nature is accessible to everyone and our mental health can benefit from being in touch with these outdoor spaces.

"Thank you to everyone who has contacted us with suggestions for sites. We're still hoping to create more sites, and would very much welcome suggestions for Ipswich, East Suffolk, and anywhere else in the county that may

be interested. Not every location can be suitable, but we will look into every site, and I hope to be able to announce more soon.”

If you would like to propose a suitable site which could be developed as healing woods or spaces, email [HealingWoods@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:HealingWoods@suffolk.gov.uk).

## Showcasing Suffolk’s environmental achievements as the UK hosts COP26

On September 8<sup>th</sup> Suffolk County Council launched Creating the Greenest County Awards 2021.

Creating the Greenest County is now more important and more relevant than ever - going green, reducing carbon and protecting biodiversity are choices we must all be making.

The United Nations COP26 event in November will rightly focus on the international agreements that need to be in place, and the 2021 Creating the Greenest County Awards will bring this huge issue into a Suffolk focus and give us encouragement and inspiration to make changes to how we live our lives and secure a better future.

As Suffolk works hard towards its net zero carbon 2030 target, the Awards provide an excellent opportunity for individuals, businesses, communities, schools and voluntary organisations to be celebrated for the environmental work they do to combat climate change, or simply for improving the area where they live.

Nominations for the Creating the Greenest County Awards are now open and close on Thursday 14 October 2021. Nominations can be submitted online at [greensuffolk.org/awards](https://greensuffolk.org/awards).

This year’s categories will include biodiversity and landscape, business, community, schools and waste and recycling, and we will be recognising our county’s green heroes. Many individuals have taken it on themselves to lead the way in making change, voluntary organisations have formed to help transform their local communities and businesses are taking their environmental responsibilities even more seriously.

Since its inception in 2007, Creating the Greenest County has seen Solar PV generation becoming mainstream without government subsidy, the world’s largest wind farm operating from our coast and virtually no waste going to landfill. 500 businesses have been accredited and over 900 supported to develop carbon reduction plans and the county is embracing the move towards electric vehicles.

## Work begins to replace streetlights in Suffolk and save energy in the County

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, Suffolk County Council and Bouygues Energies & Services (Bouygues E&S) have started work replacing 43,400 street lighting lanterns in Suffolk with LED lanterns.

The picture shows the team installing some of the first lanterns on Bergamot Close, Red Lodge on Friday, 10th September.

SCC and Bouygues E&S joined forces to create a flagship partnership with the aim of reducing energy, minimising light pollution, bringing down ongoing maintenance costs for the Authority and providing the best value to residents. SCC expects to reduce its annual electricity costs on these assets by around 76 percent, saving more than 1.7 million pounds a year.

The upgrade of the lighting system will include a further rollout of SCC’s central management system which will allow lights to be switched on or off and dim individual or groups of lights. This smart technology will increase the control the Authority has over its power consumption which will further reduce costs. The system will also automatically flag any lights that are not working which reduces the need for night-time inspections.

The Street Lighting LED Upgrade contract commenced in May 2021 and the scope of works includes:

- Survey

- Design to latest British and European Standards

- Supply and installation of new LED Street Lighting with wireless control system

Removal of existing luminaires

Updating inventory

Verification.

All roles are being advertised locally to Suffolk and social value activities undertaken throughout the period of the contract will include volunteering days, tree planting and presentations to local school children.

## Youth Focus Suffolk puts young people at the heart

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, it was announced by Suffolk County Council that 18 youth projects from across the county have been awarded a share of just under £240,000.

This is in response to the gaps faced after Covid-19 for activities and services for young people.

Almost 2.5 times over-subscribed, the Youth Intervention Fund, hosted by Suffolk Community Foundation, attracted an array of bids and has successfully granted both rural and urban projects from Lowestoft to Newmarket, Hadleigh to Eye.

It is expected that an additional 1,900 young people will benefit from these activities offered through the voluntary and community sector over the next 12 months and the schemes include performing arts to increase confidence, mentoring programmes to support mental health, forest schools and construction skills.

## HRH The Duke of Gloucester officially opens The Hold

His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester has officially opened The Hold, a new archives and heritage centre on Ipswich's Waterfront.

The Duke was given a tour of the £20million building, a partnership between Suffolk County Council and the University of Suffolk, which is home to more than nine centuries of history safely preserved by Suffolk Archives. His Royal Highness was greeted by Suffolk's Lord Lieutenant, Clare, Countess of Euston, as well as a line-up of civic guests, and was then shown round by Kate Chantry, Strategic Manager of Suffolk Archives.

During the visit The Duke met Tim Greenacre, Chief Operating Officer at the University of Suffolk, Dr Harvey Osborne, Course Leader for BA (Hons) History and students, and saw the state-of-the-art teaching facilities including a 200-seat auditorium and seminar rooms.

Lord Lieutenant, Clare, Countess of Euston then gave a short history of the Suffolk Medal, including showing a replica which is on display in the building's main street.

Representatives from local history groups were introduced to The Duke in the John Blatchly Local Studies Library, named in honour of the esteemed local educator, author and historian.

The Duke was shown treasures from the Suffolk Archives collections spanning 900 years of Suffolk's history, including the oldest document - a Charter of King Henry I granting churches and property to the monks of Eye Priory from around 1119 - and the newest contemporary collections of Black Lives Matter protest placards.

His Royal Highness also met representatives from organisations which contributed to The Hold, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund which awarded nearly £11million to make the project possible, as well as those involved in the design and construction of the building.

To complete the visit to The Hold, His Royal Highness unveiled a plaque to declare the building officially open and signed a book which will be added to the archive as a record of the visit.

Now that The Hold is officially open, appointments can be booked to view printed local studies materials in the John Blatchly Local Studies Library or archives in the Searchroom. Visit [www.suffolkarchives.co.uk](http://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk) for more information or to make a booking.

## New Suffolk Recycling Centres online booking system improvements to deliver greater customer experience

On September 20<sup>th</sup> it was announced that Suffolk County Council has developed a new, more user-friendly booking system which enables residents to book slots for recycling.

For bookings from 27 September, people can view all available time slots in real time, to see which booking slots are free at any given moment. The system allows you to book up to seven days in advance. If circumstances change, you can easily cancel your slot up to one hour beforehand or equally, you can click to amend your booking if required.

The system is also able to advise customers on which sites accept specific materials, such as plasterboard to ensure the correct type of booking is made to save customers' time, and it can also be used to share real time messages with customers, for example if any site needs to close due to adverse weather or emergency situations. The new booking system is connected to automated numberplate recognition to allow for a trial of automatic entry gates.

Customer survey results show overwhelming support for the use of a booking system and the Council has gathered feedback from customers and site staff on how the booking system can be further improved, which have shaped the design of this new system. Through the use of bookings the council can avoid the frustration of long queues at peak times and increase the overall throughput and efficiency of the service for residents.

## **2. District Council Report**

### **October 2021**

#### **MSDC Council Meeting**

Council meeting was on 23rd September with a very full agenda due to the cancellation of the July meeting. Items included: a 'No Casino' resolution, senior staff pay review, CIFCO business plan, changes to Neighbourhood Plan procedures, wellbeing strategy, wildlife friendly streetlighting motion and a motion on proposed voter ID. The meeting adjourned after 4.5 hours meaning the last two items were not heard.

The senior staff pay review was withdrawn after Babergh District Council voted against it two days earlier. The proposal was to significantly increase senior staff pay but not increase pay across all levels.

The Wellbeing Strategy is very welcome and received unanimous approval

#### **'No Casino' resolution**

Councillors defeated the Administration motion which was advising against having a "No Casino" policy. Nonetheless, the majority voted in favour of the 'No Casino' resolution to give certainty to both residents and developers that we do not welcome casinos in Mid Suffolk.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

Proposals to streamline the Neighbourhood Plan process were approved. Candidate Neighbour Plans now automatically proceed to referendum after examination – subject to the implementation of any required modifications agreed by the parish and district councils – rather than having to seek approval at Cabinet. Neighbourhood Plans provide communities with the opportunity to develop a shared vision for their area – ensuring that everyone can have their say on where future growth, to meet Government housing targets, takes place. The plans can also include guidance on what new homes should look like, which open spaces the community would like to preserve and where they would like new shops or businesses to be located.

### **CIFCO**

The business plan for CIFCO, the Council's property investment arm, was discussed. The commercial property portfolio is from an investment of £100 million by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils in which each council had £5 million equity. This equity is now at zero although expected to improve over the next 10 years. There is currently a book value of £83 million on this portfolio. The business plan was approved by a margin of six votes.

### **Joint Local Plan examination**

The public hearing for the draft Joint Local Plan has re-started and all sessions are online via Microsoft Teams. For details on how to take part, go to [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk) and search for Joint Local Plan. Once complete, a report from the Planning Inspectors will then be provided to the Council for Mid Suffolk to act on.

**Dr Daniel Pratt**  
**Mid Suffolk District Councillor**

Email: [daniel.pratt@midsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.pratt@midsuffolk.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 07775389193