

## **District Councillor Report (April 2024)**

Dear Councillors,

At long last, a dry 'ish' spell and its starting to really feel like spring is on the doorstep...!

Brockley Wood Mineral Extraction Site Application to SCC – The application consideration took place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March at the meeting of the Suffolk County Council Development and Regulation Committee. Unfortunately, the application was approved by SCC by 6 votes to 2. This was a somewhat surprising outcome, particularly in view of the overwhelming opposition to the development by all the neighbouring communities, the well documented and presented parish council officers and the lack of demand for another aggregate extraction site in the district. I'm in the process of undertaking a 'call for action' from the most effected community PC's along with pledging the full support of the ward district councillors in those communities to consider actions that would mitigate the traffic and environmental impacts.

I attended the Town & Parish Police Forum meeting in Hadleigh town hall on 20<sup>th</sup> March. There were representatives from many parishes and towns from across the district. I reminded the police officers present that policing in all our villages and communities is important and including us in their 'drive through's' is welcome. Drug dealing seems to be a bit of a growing problem in Hadleigh, something we need to be aware and mindful of. The next meeting will be held at Pinewood Community Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Babergh Notes**

On a delightfully positive note, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils have taken the top honour at a prestigious local government awards ceremony in March. It's easy to sometimes be pre-occupied with less than good news and overlook the positive performance and impact the district authority has in communities.

We have an upcoming election in the district on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May for the role of Police & Crime Commissioner for Suffolk. Please remember to bring your appropriate voter ID.

We have pledged £3.8m for energy efficient council homes. This will make our council homes warmer and bring down energy bills for tenants across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. The funding is to be added to the £2.25m already committed by the councils to install energy saving measures in social housing for retrofitting heating systems and decarbonising both districts.

We are continuing to reduce and prevent more than 1,500 households at risk of homelessness and have been helped to keep a roof over their heads by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils since 2019, with both councils pledging further support as part of their joint homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy.

Babergh District Council has formally objected to National Grid's plans for more electricity pylons between Bramford and Twinstead – saying the impact on the countryside is too great.

The car parking consultation period has closed. The full report along with the recommendations to tariff changes was presented to BDC Overview & Scrutiny meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> March. O&S scrutinised the report along with the processes that underpinned the recommendations made by officers. Committee members made additional recommendations that will be included in the next stage of this process as the report goes to BDC Cabinet. The decision lies with BDC Cabinet as to whether the recommendations are accepted or rejected.

Babergh planning committee met this month to consider the two developments in Leavenheath for a total of 63 additional homes. Both applications were refused with the Leavenheath Neighbourhood plan being sited as the principle weighted policy discriminator.

The BMSDC (Joint) Overview and Scrutiny committee met on the 14<sup>th</sup> March when we considered the Culture, Heritage & Visitor Strategy and Customer Services Performance. As ever, I remain open to any residents who would like to be briefed on specific anonymised examples of the council's work, in this area, please let me know. These meetings are also open to parish councillors and members of the public wishing to attend either in person or online.

The full Council meeting, due to be held in April, has been cancelled due to the impending P&CC election along with a by-election in MSDC for one of the Stowmarket wards following the resignation of its Green ward Councillor.

## **District Councillor Resident Surgeries**

My regular meeting opportunity for residents in Capel library. The next meet up will be Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 10-12. No appointment is necessary, but if residents need more of a confidential chat, please let them know beforehand so I can arrange some privacy.

John (Whyman) Cllr - Babergh Council Member – Capel St. Mary

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