

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT JUNE 26

Local Government Reorganisation

A website on the above, Future Suffolk, has been launched by the county's six councils, i.e.

<https://www.suffolkgrhub.gov.uk>

It gives details of the three new unitary councils: Ipswich and South Suffolk, Central and East Suffolk and West Suffolk with the ability to input an address and find which of the new councils it will be in. There is also a detailed map of the new areas.

New Recycling Collections in Suffolk

The new recycling regime will be active from this week on. We should now have a new blue-lidded bin (for recycling glass, plastics, metal and cartons) and two new food bins (the smaller one for inside, the larger for outside). The black refuse bin is still for general rubbish whilst the old green-lidded recycling bin is now for paper and card. The collection for the first week will be the blue bin and the food bin. See

www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling

Oliver Faiers, Head of Waste, Recycling and Fleet at MSDC has asked councillors and residents to report any missing bins or caddies to

recycling@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Gateway 14

Construction work on the new skills and innovation centre at Gateway 14 is now complete and the centre will be ready to open its doors this summer. It will provide office space for high - growth start-ups , collaboration and innovation areas , meeting rooms , a cafe and training facilities . The £ 16.66 million project was funded through a Freeport East agreement with the remainder of costs covered by the council.

Stowmarket Armed Forces Day celebrations Saturday 27th June at Stowmarket Recreation Ground

This will be a free event and is organised by Mid Suffolk District Council in partnership with Stowmarket Town Council. It will bring together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community for a day of fun and reflection.

The programme , running from 11am to 3pm , will include speeches, tributes to local military bases and a ceremonial salute featuring detachments from Wattisham , RAF Honington and Rock Barracks in Woodbridge . Historic military vehicles will also be on display throughout the event . Visitors will also be able to enjoy live performances from a number of acts including a 30 -piece brass band , the Honington Military Wives choir and swing duo The Vibettes . A range of family-friendly attractions , including face painting, inflatables and soft play , will run alongside stalls hosted by businesses , charities and community organisations.

Mid Suffolk Youth Council

Debenham High School have elected three students as members of this council, whilst Claydon High School, Finborough School, Hartismere School and Thurston Community College are all in various stages of appointing students.

Cheryl Schidt, Assistant Head at Debenham High School, said

“The students have really bought into the process and it has been great to see them all taking an interest.”

From the start of the next school year, the youth councillors will be invited into Mid Suffolk District Council HQ to take part in meetings which will follow the same format as formal council meetings.

Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund

This fund opened for applications on 1st June. Details are available on Mid Suffolk's Community Funding page:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding>

It's suitable to charities and organisations such as village halls voluntary and community groups, town and parish councils and sports clubs. Up to £2,000 can be applied for.

Pride in Your Place

Applications for this grant have reopened, offering funding to projects that enhance their local area and environment, bolster community pride and celebrate the heritage of towns and villages across the district. Between £250 and £5,000 is available to parish and town councils, voluntary and community groups (see the Community Funding page above).

Council Procurement Processes

At the last meeting of the Joint Audit and Standards meeting for Babergh and Mid Suffolk we discussed the results of internal audits of the organisations. An assessment of "limited assurance" was given to the procurement process. The published contract registers did not contain all required information according to the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. For the chosen sample of contracts to be reviewed, multiple documents could not be obtained so that Internal Audit could not give assurances required by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. However, it is hoped that such problems will be addressed by the new Procurement Dashboard which has been running since February 2026.

Bramford Solar Farm: Verdant Energy

This solar farm is on land on Burstall Hill but is very near to Flowton and not far from Somersham, both in my ward. I have been attending meetings on progress and on public concerns, held at Burstall Village Hall and occasionally online. We are told that the Farm has now moved into its main construction phase.

Concerns had been raised regarding noise generated by piling works and by onsite generators, out-of-hours activities and late-night deliveries. In the latter case a contractor had been issued with a verbal warning. The project team had advised that mitigation measures including temporary acoustic enclosures, were being explored. They had also explored using a transformer instead of a generator but that would result in long lead-in times. Concerns had also been raised about lighting being on for four nights in a row but the project team had ensured that lights were now switched off.

The Project Team confirmed that applications relating to community benefit are currently under review, including a proposal for a landscape study assessing environmental and social impacts of the substation.

It was noted that a community benefit contribution has been provided towards Burstall Village Hall, supporting planned renovation works. This was acknowledged and welcomed by stakeholders.

The Project Team confirmed that the process for applying for community benefit funding is still open, with applications submitted directly via email for review. It was also noted that separate funding opportunities may be available through other infrastructure projects in the area.

Domestic abusers to be evicted under new housing law

The government has announced that abusers will be evicted from social homes and victims will be able to stay safely in their communities. Under new protections, landlords and courts will be able

to evict perpetrators of domestic abuse from social housing – without the victim having to leave first.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/domestic-abusers-to-be-evicted-under-new-landmark-housing-law>

Currently, landlords can only evict a perpetrator after the victim has already left the home, and in joint tenancies, the only option for the victim is to end the tenancy entirely – potentially leaving them homeless.

The Bill also closes a loophole that lets abusers serve a Notice to Quit to make victims homeless. Under the proposed new law, a Notice to Quit served by a perpetrator will not end the social housing joint tenancy while court proceedings are ongoing.

In addition, for joint tenancies, courts will be able to transfer the tenancy into the victim's sole name, or where staying is not appropriate, require the landlord to provide suitable alternative accommodation where available.

Reminder: Pet owners urged to take care when using flea and tick treatments to help protect our waterways

On 13 May, the government launched a campaign on protecting UK waterways from contamination from flea and tick treatments.

Cat and dog owners are being urged to safely use flea and tick spot-on treatments. Spot-on treatments are used to protect the UK's 21 million pet cats and dogs from fleas and ticks, but there are concerns that these medicines are not always used in line with the instructions in the product leaflet, which can cause harm to the natural environment.

Pet owners are encouraged to follow three simple steps (Plan, Apply and Protect) when using flea and tick spot-ons to help limit environmental impacts while continuing to protect animal health.

The government has published a dedicated website to help pet owners to follow some simple steps.

<https://bespotonaware.campaign.gov.uk/>

*Adrienne Marriott
Blakenham District Councillor
02/06/26*