

Mid Suffolk District Councillor's Report – Palgrave Parish Council, April 2024

<p>Council of the Year award</p>	<p>In March the councils of Mid Suffolk and Babergh were jointly awarded <i>Council of the Year</i> for their collaboration and focus on their communities. This was awarded by the Improvement & Efficiency Social Enterprise (IESE), a not-for-profit organisation created by local authorities as a shared resource to transform public services. It reflects work carried out by both councils over a number of years.</p>
<p>New Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>In March the Full Council adopted the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy 2024, along with the associated delivery plan. The Council aspire to go beyond the minimum required provision, and hope to extend its proactive service which already makes rough sleeping rare in the district.</p>
<p>Local homelessness concerns</p>	<p>There have been recent reports of individuals sleeping outdoors in Palgrave Ward. Help and support is available to those who need it: if you see anyone you are concerned about you can contact me or report directly to StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services (thestreetlink.org.uk).</p> <p>It is useful to know the date, time, location and description of the person, and whether this is a regular occurrence. If you have a chat with them please do also reassure them - they are not in trouble, we just want to connect them to the StreetLink team who can visit them and offer help if wanted.</p>
<p>CIL update</p>	<p>The Community Infrastructure Levy Expenditure Framework (which covers what CIL funds can be spent on) is regularly reviewed by a cross-party working group. Following the most recent review, the full council has recommended approval of a number of amendments. One change allows applications for District CIL from sports clubs and from community shops and cafes, provided that any profit made by such businesses goes back to the community.</p>
<p>Nationally significant Solar Farm proposal</p>	<p>A 2,000MW solar farm near Mendlesham has been proposed. Part of the proposed site is in the Palgrave ward (Stoke Ash & Thwaite). This is a large, nationally significant energy application; because of its scale, the project will be determined by the national Planning Inspectorate. Mid Suffolk District Council is a consultee, and has asked for more clarity about some aspects of the application.</p>
<p>Suffolk devolution deal</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council (SCC) has now opened the consultation of the proposed Level 3 devolution deal for the county. Mid Suffolk District councillors debated this issue at March's Council meeting, but are not involved in the SCC decision. The deal would mean the County Council would have more local power alongside a fund of £480m over 30 years. This is a small proportion of the total SCC budget. There would also be a directly elected leader of the County Council. More information and public consultation can be found here: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution</p>
<p>Forest for the Nation</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk's partnership bid with Norfolk County Council to secure £9M from central government to create a 'local' national forest has been submitted. The bid proposes an area defined as the South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands, which is already classified by Natural England as a National Character Area. The outcome of the bid will be announced later this month.</p>

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