

District Councillor's Report for Parish Councils - July 2022

Councillor Andy Mellen, Bacton Ward (Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe and Wyverstone)

Residents' survey	Babergh and Mid Suffolk are carrying out their annual survey of residents. Hopefully this will enable the Councils to understand more about residents' and communities' resilience and to help improve the Councils' service. Up to 8,000 households from the districts have been randomly selected and invited to take part.
Mid Suffolk Council finances	Figures for the full financial year 2021/22 are now available: Mid Suffolk District Council has announced an underspend of £1.2 million against budget with net expenditure on services down by £1.6 million against a budget of £12.7 million. Total reserves stand at just over £24 million up nearly £4 million on the previous financial year. Capital expenditure was £13.3 million against a budget of £30 million. Recent capital expenditure includes £756,000 on the solar carport at the Stowmarket Leisure Centre (not yet operational due to issues with obtaining inverters), £666,000 on the Needham Lake café and £4.5 million on Gateway 14.
Gateway 14	The Range has announced a £200 million investment to base a major distribution centre at Gateway 14 creating 1,650 jobs (across three shifts). Once a reserved matters planning application has been approved, work is expected to start in January 2023 and occupation of the new distribution centre in Autumn 2023.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	This Fund has been set up by Government as a replacement for EU funding (although with less funds available) and in order to access it Councils must submit an investment plan. Funding is expected to be approximately £140,000 for the rest of this year, £280,000 next year and £780,000 the year after.
Local Planning Issues	Work on the Bellway development site in Bacton was subject of a stop notice due to the developer not having got pre-commencement conditions agreed before starting work. Work has now re-started with HGVs hopefully following the prescribed route in the Construction Management Plan.
Grants for carbon-reduction	A new fund for community-based carbon-reduction projects is now open. Projects could include promoting cycling/walking, improving energy efficiency and raising awareness of climate change. Applications can be made via the Green Suffolk website.
Locality Funding	I welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project.

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