

District Councillor's Report for Gislingham Ward: Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham, Wortham & Burgate, Wickham Skeith Parish Councils

Feb 2022

<p>A Peer Review of Mid Suffolk's Planning Committee processes</p>	<p>Waiting for the report.</p>
<p>Switch onto a new Digital Skills Programme for businesses</p>	<p>Business owners in Babergh and Mid Suffolk who want to learn new or improve their digital skills can now access free courses as part of a new business support programme.</p> <p>The Digital Skills Programme is part of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils post-covid recovery strategy and is being run by MENTA using funding from Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund (SIGIF).</p> <p>The workshops, which are held virtually, are free to attend and cover topics such as online security, digital and social media marketing, e-commerce, and information management.</p> <p>Following the launch of the Virtual High Street in 2020, many businesses reported wanting to improve their digital skills to help their business engage with current and potential customers, but they needed support to help them understand which platforms they should be using and how to make them work for their business.</p> <p>The Digital Skills Programme was initially launched for businesses on the Virtual High Street and is now open to all businesses in the districts.</p> <p>In addition to the Digital Skills Programme, the recovery programme also includes the Virtual High Street, which operates in all five key towns and surrounding areas across Babergh and Mid Suffolk as well as the Innovate Local scheme.</p> <p>Innovate Local is supporting start-up businesses with access to a pitch at Stowmarket and Hadleigh markets while the Innovation Hubs will offer micro businesses start up support with desk space and business mentoring in Sudbury and Eye when they open later this year.</p>
<p>Mid Suffolk District Council Five-Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement 2021</p>	<p>The NPPF – National Planning Framework requires LPAs to prepare and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing. NPPF requires an additional buffer should be added to the five-year requirement. In the case of MSDC this is 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.</p> <p>The Council's Local Housing Need figure is calculated by the government using the 'Standard Method' set out in the PPG.</p> <p>From 2017 to 2020 MSDC delivered 1567 dwellings against a target of 1524 dwellings.</p> <p>The Standard Method figure for Mid Suffolk district – with a 2021 base date – is 513 dwellings per annum ('dpa'). The basic five-year requirement is therefore 2,565 units.</p> <p>The Council has undertaken a thorough review of policy, guidance, and appeal precedent to determine the 'deliverability' of its sites.</p> <p>MSDC considers it can demonstrate a 'deliverable' supply of 5,319 units across the five-year period.</p> <p>This includes a windfall allowance of 70 dpa in years four and five The Council's five-year housing land supply position The Council therefore considers it can demonstrate 9.54 years supply.</p>

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<p>Arrangements for Development Committees</p>	<p>Please note that for a temporary period the formal Development Control Committees will be replaced by informal Planning briefings held via TEAMS. The first of these will be Development Control Committee B on Wednesday 26 January 2022. An amended calendar invite will be sent shortly.</p> <p>These will be informal meetings of the members of the Development Control Committees to discuss upcoming planning applications and the expected recommendations of officers on them. The meeting will be asked to provide a steer as to the wishes of committee members as a group.</p> <p>The applications will thereafter be determined by the Chief Planning Officer under delegation. In reaching a decision the Chief Planning Officer will have regard to the views expressed informally to him by members of committee as a group.</p> <p>Committee members will be able to express their support for, or opposition to, a planning application during the discussion but will not be able to vote formally on whether or not to grant planning permission – this will be a decision for the Chief Planning Officer. The applicant, agent, objectors, supporters and other relevant third parties will have the opportunity to participate in these informal discussions.</p>
<p>Full Council Meeting 24th Feb.</p>	<p>The Green and Liberal Democrat Group will put forward an amendment to the budget. The proposal is that Mid Suffolk engage in a programme to provide two zero emission minibuses (electric) to operate on a network of routes to link communities together and to service critical locations. We should establish scheduled low cost or free services to complement and enhance demand responsive services provided by BSEVC (https://www.bsevc.co.uk/). The Council should work with the County and BSEVC or another appropriate operator to establish a service similar to the Counties Katch service (https://www.katchlift.com/). Knowledge should be drawn from that service and established community bus services to ensure that accurate cost estimates and effective service parameters can be established.</p>
<p>Innovations Lab, Stowmarket</p>	<p>At a Presentation at The Mix, Stowmarket on 11th February I was again impressed by the work carried out at the Innovations Lab.</p> <p>Innovation Labs is an innovation hub, business hub and coworking space, strategically located within the heart of Stowmarket. Its aim is to foster: innovation, entrepreneurship, business growth and the development of an AI Centre of Excellence.</p> <p>This initiative is backed by Mid Suffolk District Council and will form the focal point for developing Stowmarket's world leading cluster of technology and manufacturing companies</p> <p>More to be found here: https://innovationlabsstowmarket.com/#about_section</p>