

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

Newsletter No: 36 October 2017



Welcome to our joint newsletter. Our aim is to keep you informed about relevant council business across Babergh and Mid Suffolk and other information useful to your towns and parishes.

Contents:

Across Babergh & Mid Suffolk:

Joint Cabinet Session to Consider Potential Merger	<u>1</u>
Joint Local Plan Consultation: An Update	<u>3</u>
Town and Parish Council Liaison Meeting Dates	<u>3</u>
New Walk In Centres Open	<u>4</u>
Parish Precept Forms and Tax Bases	<u>4</u>
Free Funding and Volunteering Event	<u>5</u>
Have Your Say on New Ward Boundaries	<u>5</u>
New Suffolk Observatory Website Launches	<u>7</u>

Mid Suffolk District:

London Orchestra returns with "Mission to Launch"	<u>7</u>
Court Upholds Food Business Prohibition Order	<u>8</u>
Delivering a Vision for Prosperity: Stowmarket	<u>9</u>

Babergh District:

Delivering a Vision for Prosperity: Sudbury	<u>9</u>
Hadleigh Market goes from Strength to Strength	<u>10</u>
Whatfield Man Found Guilty of Over £35K Benefit Fraud	<u>11</u>

We upload every issue of the newsletter to our website in a reactive format to make your reading as easy as possible, whatever device you use. If you would prefer to share the newsletter from there rather than as an email attachment, you can always find the latest edition online at:

<http://baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/communities/town-and-parish-council-newsletters>

Across Babergh & Mid Suffolk

Joint Cabinet Session to Consider Potential Merger

Simultaneous meetings of Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Cabinets will consider the future of the relationship between the two districts, including a recommendation to consider dissolving both current councils and replacing them with a new single council.

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

The meeting, to take place in the King Edmund Chamber in Endeavour House at 9.30am on Friday 13 October, will consider a report from council officers, outlining the various options for the future relationship between Babergh and Mid Suffolk:

- Continuing the existing partnership approach, without any further change;
- Forming a wider partnership with 1 or more other district/borough councils;
- Dissolving the two Councils (Babergh and Mid Suffolk) to form a new single district council for the area;
- Forming a Unitary Council for the area (or some other larger area);
- Creating a Combined Authority for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (with or without other Councils);
- Forming a stand alone 'mutual style' company (with or without other public and / or private sector partners) to deliver all public sector services in the area.

The report was written by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Chief Executive, Arthur Charvonia, at the request of the Council Leaders to review the options to further evolve the Councils' partnership working, which started in 2011.

The report recommends that both Cabinets provisionally endorse the option of dissolving the existing councils and forming a new council. Should the Cabinets decide to do so then comprehensive public engagement will take place during the autumn to test this opinion, and understand the views of residents, stakeholders, partners and staff, including Town and Parish Councils: the topic is already included on the Agenda of the next Liaison Meetings (see below) for discussion.

Once this is completed the results of this public engagement and a detailed Business Case will need to be further considered by both Babergh and Mid Suffolk. The full report, along with the other papers for both Cabinets, can be found online at:

Babergh:

<http://baberghmidsuffolk.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=521&MId=1017>

Mid Suffolk:

<http://baberghmidsuffolk.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=522&MId=1029>

Arthur Charvonia, Chief Executive of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, said: "Both Councils are currently consulting our residents on what the future of our fantastic places should look like over the next 20 years. It makes sense, therefore, that alongside this consultation on the Joint Local Plan, we also consider what type of local government arrangements will be needed to deliver the vision and ambitions contained in the Joint Local Plan.

"Mid Suffolk and Babergh formed our award-winning partnership in 2011, not long after the Coalition Government was formed. Since then there have been two further General Elections and changes of both Government and policy. Demand for our services, need, aspiration, funding, and wider political and economic circumstances have therefore changed significantly in that time. The success of our partnership working has enabled the Councils to withstand these challenges over the last six years. However, as explained within the report, simply doing more of the same is unlikely to be able the Councils to effectively address our future challenges, nor

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

leave us best placed to deliver the ambitions and opportunities that our residents want and deserve to see. It is therefore important that both Councils carefully consider this and listen to the views of our residents, stakeholders and staff.”

Joint Local Plan Consultation: An Update

Consultation on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan is taking place between Monday 21st August and 5pm on Friday 10th November. Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings have been sent details about the consultation including a paper copy of the consultation document, and full details of the consultation are available on the Councils’ websites at www.babergh.gov.uk/jointlocalplan and www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan.

Many Town and Parish Councils have attended the briefing sessions held during September at which the content of the consultation document and the process for responding was explained.

Responses need to be submitted by **5pm on Friday 10th November**. Details of how to comment are available on the consultation websites, and we are encouraging responses to be submitted using our new online system.

If you have any questions please email localplan@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or phone Strategic Planning on 0300 123 4000 (select option 5 then option 4).

Town and Parish Council Liaison Meeting Dates

The dates for November’s Liaison Meetings have now been confirmed! In Babergh, the meetings will take place on Tuesday 7 November at:

- 10am at Alpheton Jubilee Hall, Old Bury Road, Alpheton CO10 9BS
- 6.30pm at Polstead Village Hall, Heath Road, Polstead CO6 5AL

Those attending the 6.30pm meeting at Polstead Village Hall are asked to please not park on the green.

In Mid Suffolk the meetings will be held on Thursday 9 November, at:

- 1pm at Westhorpe Village Hall, The Street Westhorpe, Stowmarket IP14 4SU
- 6.30pm at Gosbeck Village Community Hall, Helmingham Road, Gosbeck, Ipswich IP6 9RZ

Due to the timing, a light lunch will be provided at the 1pm meeting at Westhorpe Village Hall. Parking is restricted here so please do not park in front of houses; there is parking near the church, or you may park on a drive with a flag on display.

A provisional agenda is in place, covering:

1. Welcome

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

2. The Potential to Merge Councils
3. Future Town & Parish Liaison Meetings
4. Public Access
5. Community Strategy
6. Planning - Current and Future Activities

Please reserve your place by Friday 3 November 2017, as there are limited spaces. You can do so by emailing Josephine.beever@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or by calling 01449 724 654.

New Walk In Centres Open

Our new Customer Access Points in Stowmarket and Sudbury are now open! While our new website and telephone number – 0300 123 4000 – make accessing our services from home easier than ever, you can now do so in person in each district's largest town.

Residents can drop in without an appointment any time between 9am and 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am and 4.30pm on Fridays, at:

- 54 Ipswich Street, Stowmarket IP14 1AD
- Town Hall, Old Market Place, Sudbury CO10 1TL (*Closed 12.30-1.30pm daily*)

Parish Precept Forms and Tax Bases

It's that time of the year again when the District Councils need information about the Town and Parish Councils' precept requirements for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

The Councils' Finance Team are preparing the Precept forms and Tax Base numbers ready to send out by 16th November 2017. The Precept forms will need to be signed and returned by the Towns/Parishes no later than 31st January 2018.

The Precept form and Tax Base information will be emailed and posted to the address held on the Councils' website page for Parish Council contact details, which you can find here:

<http://babberghmidsuffolk.moderngov.co.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?bcr=1>

Please can you make sure that your details are up to date for the contact name, email and/or postal address by 6th November 2017. If you do not receive anything from the Council by 21st November 2017 then please let us know as soon as you can.

If you have any questions you can contact the Finance Team on 01473 825840 or 01473 296302 or email Precept@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

We will be adding a read receipt to the emails sent to you, this will help us to determine whether they have been delivered successfully or not.

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

The Precept forms can be downloaded now from the Councils' websites at <http://www.babergh.gov.uk/the-council/parish-precept-form/>.

They can be signed, scanned and returned by email to the address above.

Please be aware that we will still need the original document for audit purposes, therefore please can you also send a signed hard copy to:

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich IP1 2BX.

Free Funding and Volunteering Event

Babergh and Mid Suffolk are hosting a free Funding and Volunteering Fair this October for community groups looking to attract more funding and volunteers across the districts.

The Fair, to be held at Henley Community Centre between 10am and 3.15pm on Wednesday 25 October, is open to all community groups, from sports clubs to village hall committees and offers attendees the chance to tap a wealth of knowledge and experience in fundraising and attracting volunteers.

Those wishing to attend can book a place by calling 01449 724 654, or by emailing Josephine.beever@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Representatives from Crowdfunder, Volunteer Suffolk and the Suffolk Community Foundation will be in attendance while specialists from Community Action Suffolk and Suffolk Prohelp will run workshops on "A Practical Guide to the Funding Portal" and "Professional Help with your Projects" respectively.

The Fair also includes an address from Guest Speaker Su Johnston, from Crowdfunder UK, who has successfully run many Crowdfunded projects and will provide real experience and insight into how to engage and raise funding to make a real difference in your community. Crowdfunder UK is a nationwide organisation that allows community groups to raise funds for their projects online from a wide audience of supporters.

Tickets are free and lunch will be included. The deadline to book tickets is Monday 23 October 2017.

Have Your Say on New Ward Boundaries

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is asking people in Mid Suffolk and Babergh districts to comment on its draft proposals for new council ward boundaries.

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

A ten-week public consultation on the recommendations begins today and will end on 11 December 2017. The consultation is open to anyone who wants to have their say on new council wards, ward boundaries and ward names across each district.

The Commission's draft recommendations propose that the Mid Suffolk should have 34 councillors in the future, six fewer than the current arrangements. The recommendations also outline how those councillors should represent eight two-councillor wards and eighteen one-councillor wards across the district.

For Babergh, the Commission's draft recommendations propose that the council should have 32 councillors in the future, eleven fewer than the current arrangements. The recommendations set out how those councillors should represent two three-councillor wards, six two-councillor wards and fourteen one-councillor wards.

The full recommendations and detailed interactive maps for both reviews are available on the Commission's website (links below). Hard copies of the Commission's report and maps will also be available to view at council buildings.

Professor Colin Mellors, Chair of the Commission, said: "We are publishing proposals for a new pattern of wards across Mid Suffolk and Babergh. We are keen to hear what local people think of the recommendations.

"Over the next ten weeks, we are asking local people to tell us if they agree with the proposals or if not, how they can be improved. Our reviews aim to deliver electoral equality for local voters in both districts. This means that each councillor represents a similar number of people so that everyone's vote in council elections is worth roughly the same regardless of where you live.

"We also want to ensure that our proposals reflect the interests and identities of local communities across Babergh and Mid Suffolk and that the pattern of wards can help the councils deliver effective local government to local people. We will consider all the submissions we receive whoever they are from and whether your evidence applies to the whole of your district or just part of it."

The Commission wants to hear as much evidence as possible to develop final recommendations for both districts. If you would like to make a submission to the Commission, please write or email us by 11 December 2017:

The Review Officer (Mid Suffolk/Babergh)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th floor, Millbank Tower
London
SW1P 4QP

Members of the public can also contact the Commission by email via reviews@lgbce.org.uk

You can also have your say online, on both the Babergh and Mid Suffolk proposals online at:

- Babergh: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/9231>

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

- Mid Suffolk: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/9230>

More details about the proposals for Babergh and Mid Suffolk are also available online at:

- Babergh: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/suffolk/babergh>
- Mid Suffolk: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/eastern/suffolk/mid-suffolk>

New Suffolk Observatory Website Launches

You may already have used the Suffolk Observatory – the one stop shop for data, statistics and reports about Suffolk – via their website, www.suffolkobservatory.info, which allows you to view statistics for your parish, ward, district or even the entire county.

Well the new, more user-friendly Suffolk Observatory website has now launched and is available from the link above: it is designed to make it easier to find the information you need, includes an improved search function and automatically updates itself from various online sources, ensuring it is constantly reviewing the information it provides. It also includes a “Data Explorer” function that helps break statistics down into relevant categories more swiftly.

You can use the Observatory straight away and use the information there to inform policy, support grant applications or simply to gain new perspectives on familiar places.

Mid Suffolk District

London Orchestra returns with “Mission to Launch”

City of London Sinfonia, one of the country’s leading professional chamber orchestras, will be performing two Lullaby Concerts at United Reformed Church, Stowmarket on Friday 27 October 2017 (10.30am and 2.00pm).

Specially designed for children aged 2 – 7 and their parents and carers, the concerts will feature an exciting blend of audience participation, fun and fabulous orchestral music, all woven together by charismatic presenter Claire Henry. In this year’s brand new show, entitled *Mission to Launch*, the orchestra and Claire will be on a mission to power up a rocket to take music into space with the help of the young audience members. After each concert there will be a chance for children to try out a range of orchestral instruments too.

Ahead of the performances, Claire Henry and musicians from City of London Sinfonia

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

will be holding some free 45-minute music workshops at the John Peel Centre (for home educated children and their parents/carers only) and Stowmarket Library (open to all) on Thursday 28 September, enabling young children to have fun making music and meeting some of the players who will be in the subsequent orchestral concerts.

The Lullaby Concerts are produced by Orchestras Live, a national music charity that brings orchestral music to thousands of people in culturally under-served areas across England, working in partnership with Suffolk County Music Service, Suffolk Music Hub and a number of local authorities. This year's Lullaby tour will go also to Clacton-on-Sea and Rayleigh in Essex, and Haverhill, Lowestoft and Newmarket in Suffolk. Last year, the Lullaby Concerts won Best Family Event in the Family Arts Festival awards.

Find out more about the Lullaby Concerts at www.orchestraslive.org.uk and at www.facebook.com/lullabyconcerts

Tickets are priced £2.50 for children, £5 for adults, £12 for a family of 4 (max 2 adults) and can be booked online at <http://bit.ly/Lullaby2017>, or in person at Stowmarket Tourist Information Centre or over the phone on 01449 676800.

Ipswich Court Upholds Food Business Prohibition Order

Owner of a mobile takeaway food operation Mehmet Cokgezici sought a hearing at Ipswich Magistrates Court on Tuesday 22 August to request the court lift a Prohibition Order which they had imposed in 2016.

Mr Cokgezici had pleaded guilty to eight food hygiene offences at the hearing in 2016 which included exposing food to risk of contamination in various ways, dirty equipment, and a lack of a food safety management system. The Prohibition Order was made preventing him from managing a food business for three years.

The Flame Kebabs van owned by Mr Cokgezici, which previously traded outside the train station in Elmswell, has not been in use since the 2016 hearing.

At court on Tuesday Mr Cokgezici, from Wrights Way, Woolpit, representing himself, advised the court that he was embarrassed about what had occurred previously. He said that Mid Suffolk District Council had been right to take action against him at that time. He also stated that he had undertaken further hygiene training and now wished to start-up his business again.

Simon Smith, Solicitor representing Mid Suffolk District Council, attended the hearing along with two of the Council's Food & Safety Officers in order to oppose the lifting of the Prohibition Order. Mr Smith advised the court that the original court case had made the national press due the appalling conditions and practices found back in 2015. He also advised that Mr Cokgezici had not approached the Council for any advice prior to the new hearing to lift the Prohibition Order, and the Flame Kebabs unit had not been inspected since the original court case. He said that the Council's Food

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

& Safety Officers were more than willing to offer advice if needed and suggested Mr Cokgezici make direct contact with them.

On questioning from the Bench, Mr Cokgezici told the Court that it was his intention to return to operating Flame Kebabs if the ban was lifted. He also admitted that the kebab van did require some improvement work prior to being reinstated.

After deliberation, the Court advised Mr Cokgezici that they would not lift the Prohibition Order, but recognised that he had attended and passed the Level 3 food hygiene course. The Court suggested he make contact with the Council's Food & Safety Officers to take the advice offered.

Mr Cokgezici can reapply to the Court to have the ban lifted in no less than three months.

Delivering a Vision for Prosperity: Stowmarket

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Stowmarket event on Wednesday 4 October!

We had a great turnout and some really great conversations about a vision for Stowmarket at the United Reform Church on Ipswich Street.

If you couldn't make it, you can still have your say: just contact visit our website at: www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/VFPStow and follow the conversation via #VFPStow.

Babergh District

Delivering a Vision for Prosperity: Sudbury

As the main towns in the district, Sudbury is potentially facing a new era of large-scale growth and development in the forthcoming Joint Local Plan. Our Members are committed to ensuring that the views of local residents, businesses and interest groups form part of the decision-making journey, for the Greater Sudbury area, focusing minds, and priorities for an aligned vision.

As such we are preparing a document called Delivering a Vision for Prosperity for Sudbury, which is intended to establish:

- a high-level **aspiration**, setting out the community's key desires and wishes for the town they would like to live and work in;
- the **priorities** for the town – setting out the main targets, goals and achievements to focus limited resources;
- a **delivery plan** that identifies the intended key projects and action points, and sets out who will be responsible for their implementation, and when.

Sudbury has a large sphere of influence. It is the major social and economic hub for our district. The "Greater" catchment encompasses the surrounding villages so we

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

would warmly encourage people from Long Melford, Great Cornard, Acton, and the many other communities that have an interest in Sudbury.

The purpose of this visioning process is to provide an opportunity for the local community, businesses and organisations to:

- Understand the current projects, plans and strategies that are already shaping their place – seeing that this is not new, just one point along the town’s timeline of growth.
- Set out what they would like to see in the future, commenting on development, service delivery and important issues.
- Reflect upon and share what they would like their town to become in the context of the benefits and opportunities that growth may bring.
- Unite behind the strategic, high level coordinated vision for the improvement of their area

Of course, this is not just the remit of the District Council – it is a collaborative approach that involves many organisations and partners, such as Parish and Town Councils, community and voluntary organisations, local interest groups, businesses and Government departments. But mainly it’s about the people who live and work in and around Stowmarket and Sudbury. That includes YOU!

Come and talk to people who make decisions – give us your views about how the towns and their hinterlands should evolve, and how we get the best from our limited resources to improve these areas.

Drop-in any time between 2:00pm-7:00pm on 12 October at Sudbury Town Hall, Old Market Place

You can keep up to date with the Delivering a Vision For Prosperity work by following our Social media feeds #VFPSudbury, or find out more on our website at:

www.babergh.gov.uk/VFPSudbury

Hadleigh Market goes from Strength to Strength

The future of Hadleigh’s weekly market now looks much brighter after a year of successful new management which has seen a rise in the number of new traders.

In 2016, Babergh undertook an engagement exercise on the future of Hadleigh Market which had been in decline for a few years. Despite having a Market Charter dating back to 1252 and a community loyal to its high Street, the Market had become reliant on just three regular traders. However, feedback received from local people last year, revealed a great deal of support for the Market and a desire to see more diversity on offer from traders including baked and artisan goods, specialty cheeses and seasonal offers to support and compliment the High Street shops.

To help revive the market and fulfil the wishes of local people, Babergh teamed up with award winning local company, Suffolk Market Events and in just over a year,

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

Hadleigh Market now boasts 8 regular stalls and additional ones that come on an occasional basis.

The response to the new market has been so positive agreement has been reached between Babergh and Suffolk Market Events to extend the partnership for another two years.

Justine Paul, Owner of Suffolk Market Events said, "I am absolutely delighted to be continuing my work with Babergh and Hadleigh market. Over the last twelve months significant improvements have been achieved at the town's weekly market and I am really looking forward to working hard to continue to improve it further. The market now has a consistent number of top quality stalls serving the people of Hadleigh with a brilliant range of products but there is more than can be done and over the next two years, with the continued support of Babergh, we will strive to achieve even better things for the market."

Cllr John Ward, Babergh District Council Cabinet Member for Economic Development said, "I am very pleased that Suffolk Market Events will continue to manage Hadleigh Market for the next two years. They have done an excellent job to increase the numbers of regular and occasional traders. Hadleigh is a growing town and deserves a flourishing market as an additional attraction to what is an excellent shopping experience."

Hadleigh Market is held every Friday morning between 8am and 2pm on the Market Place, just off the High Street. For further information about the market or to enquire about having a stall at the market, please contact Justine Paul at justine@suffolkmarketevents.co.uk or call 07704 627973. Information can also be found on the website at: www.hadleighmarket.com

Whatfield Man Found Guilty of Over £35K Benefit Fraud

A benefits fraudster was released from prison after paying a Suffolk council £23,000.

Kai Jensen, of Whatfield Hall, near Hadleigh, was sent to jail after failing to pay the cash owed to Babergh District Council in a confiscation order.

Jensen, 77, had repeatedly promised to pay but the courts finally lost patience with him and activated a suspended jail term on 11th August.

Three days later, after contacting family members from behind bars, Jensen paid up in full.

Jensen was originally sentenced in 2014 by Ipswich Crown Court to 232 days in prison (suspended) after hearing that he spent thousands of pounds he cheated from fraudulent benefits claims. He received housing and council tax benefits of nearly £40,000 after failing to reveal he and his wife were on pensions from Denmark and that he held several company directorships.

Town & Parish Council Newsletter

He denied three charges of fraud but was found guilty after an investigation led by Ipswich Borough Council's anti-fraud team, acting on behalf of partner councils in Suffolk.

After Jensen paid his debt to Babergh council this month, fraud investigators were praised for their "perseverance".

Councillor Peter Patrick, who is Cabinet member for Organisational Delivery/Finance, said: "We have a zero tolerance policy towards fraud in Babergh and we are indebted to the Asset Confiscation Enforcement (ACE) team for their dogged perseverance in recovering this money. People who cheat councils are cheating their neighbours and other residents out of hard-earned taxes. Wherever possible we will go after these people and recover our money."

ACE sits within the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) and works with a number of law enforcement agencies to recover proceeds of crime from offenders. In this current financial year (2017-18) the ACE team has helped to recover nearly £250,000 from non-police agency cases across the Eastern Region.

ACE's Financial Investigation Manager, Nick Bentley, said: "When a defendant has a confiscation order made against them the Judge will attach a period of imprisonment to be served if the individual fails to pay, in this case the magistrates were left with little option but to activate the default term of 232 days imprisonment. Any defendant in this position would still owe the money when released with added interest, so it is not unsurprising that Kai Jensen made arrangements after three days in prison to pay the full amount to gain his release."

Mr Bentley added: "This case demonstrates the benefits of excellent joint working between all agencies involved and that the criminal's ill-gotten gains will be pursued using the full weight of the Proceeds of Crime Act legislation."

Councillor Martin Cook is Ipswich Borough Council's Resources portfolio-holder. He said: "Ipswich led the original investigation that led to Jensen's conviction and we are pleased that the money has now been recovered. This case shows how the multi-agency approach is working and we want to reiterate that we will pursue benefits cheats whenever and wherever we can."

Anyone with information about criminal activity including proceeds of crime is urged to pass on intelligence to police via 101, or to contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Newsletter ideas

What topics would you like to see covered in future editions of the Town and Parish Council Newsletter? Please let us know by emailing duncan.merren@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk