



# Performance Report

## 2023-24 Quarter Three

Mid Suffolk District Council



Customers



Communities



Wellbeing



Environment



Housing



Economy



Health of the Organisation



This performance report covers the period from October to December 2023 (Quarter 3).

This report sets out how the council is performing against its six key priorities from the current Corporate Plan. The main body of the report is aligned to the 21 outcomes from the current Outcomes Framework, setting out notable achievements by teams across the organisation during the latest quarter.

A selection of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been included to show a direction of travel (DoT). This provides an indication of the direction of performance against a comparable period.

This report also looks towards work in progress for the coming quarter, where planned activity for Q4 (January to March 2024) is set out towards the end of the report. This section also sets out the transitional arrangements for performance monitoring, following adoption of the Mid Suffolk Plan, ***Helping to create thriving and resilient communities in Mid Suffolk***, at full Council on 25th January 2024.

[Appendix A - Mid Suffolk Plan.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)



# Our Achievements

## for Quarter Three

# Customers

**Outcome 1:** All our customers can access high quality services and support

## **Customers are digitally included and can use technology to access services and advice**

- 19 customers attended our digital skills sessions across the Mid Suffolk area.
- From our quarter three Tenant Satisfaction Measure Survey 312 tenants were surveyed and 77% of those tenants said they have internet access. We have continued to deliver digital skills in some sheltered schemes.
- Live chat continued to be a popular choice for residents to engage with our customer services team. 365 chats have been completed in Q3.

## **Customers say the councils met their needs the first time they made contact**

- 90% of customers who visited our Mid Suffolk customer access points over Q3 said we were able to resolve their enquiry at the first point of contact.

# Customers

**Outcome 2:** Residents have a voice - enabled to democratically engage and empowered to do so

## **Residents feel well informed about council services, activities and plans that may affect them**

- Our 'Fuel Support' communications campaign launched, promoting support available to help people heat their homes and tackle fuel poverty. Information has been shared across social media, internal staff updates, tenant bulletins, as well as local parish publications to reach people who are not online.
- We worked with Suffolk County Council to produce and distribute cost of living leaflets across the district, helping residents to find and access support.
- We continue to work with Anglian Water to progress the Social Water Tariff Referral Pilot.
- Development Management pre-application customer survey (which may include resident applicants) is open and live for response by enquirers.

## **Customer and community needs are at the heart of service design and improvement, and they are engaged in testing and piloting new ideas**

- ACE Anglia, an advocacy learning disability charity in Suffolk, supported us in testing our website. Approximately 8-10 customers provided feedback regarding their experience of the website and changes were made as a result.
- We have started completing some customer journey mapping with our residents related to online forms to help us to redesign them in our digital platform from a customer perspective.

# Customers

## Outcome 3: Residents are satisfied with Council services

### **Residents are satisfied that council services meet their needs**

- Following on from a piece of engagement work with tenants around complaints the main issues identified were around communications about service requests.
- We are planning over the next few months to implement a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module within the Housing Management system, requiring all officers to log and action tenant contact so that we have a fuller picture of service requests and actions being taken on the back of them.
- We are also jointly hosting a session with the Housing Ombudsman on 1st March with Ipswich Borough Council where we plan to invite tenants along to the session to hear about how the ombudsman service works.

### **Residents say the council listens and acts on feedback**

- 52% of Mid Suffolk tenants surveyed in Q3 have responded to say they are satisfied that we listen and act.

# Wellbeing

## Outcome 4: Inequalities are reduced for all groups

### **Residents age well with the best quality of life, with equal access to high-quality health and care services**

- Officers continue to work with Ipswich Borough Council & East Suffolk Council to implement a strength and balance programme with Ipswich & East Suffolk Alliance across our districts and the area for 2023/24. New strength and balance classes have begun at Mid Suffolk and Stradbroke leisure centres, and the numbers have been encouraging. Both classes are reaching capacity and discussions are in place regarding additional classes outside of the Leisure centres in the community.
- The Council have sponsored SPOT Wellbeing, a Suffolk based community Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Team, two-year project, funded by the Mid Suffolk Investment Fund. The project is designed to offer residents aged 60+ the chance to access classes that promote social isolation reduction, mindfulness, healthy eating, low-impact exercise, and fall prevention. The first group has successfully been set up and running since the start of November in Stowmarket. In total, ageing well classes will be starting in eight new locations across the district, as part of this Mid Suffolk funded project.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions are sought from all new housing developments. Implementation of Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference SP08, LP30 and LP31) are now part of Development Management negotiation and decision making to secure strategic infrastructure provision, infrastructure and health provision.

### **Every child has the best start in life**

- Free after-school multisport clubs have begun at Abbots Hall, Chilton, Cedars Park, Combs Ford, and Bacton for children eligible for free school meals at primary schools in areas of deprivation or with a high number of eligible children. The first week of the programme saw roughly 8 attendances per venue.

# Wellbeing

## Outcome 4: Inequalities are reduced for all groups

### **Older people have a good quality of life**

- Three 'Silver Sunday' themed events took place in Mid Suffolk to celebrate a national older people's awareness day. Hartismere Care Home and Finborough Court Care Home hosted 'Silver Sing-alongs' on 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October, and Needham Market Football Ground hosted the third event.
- Orchestras Live Musical Memories Project was successfully held in 6 venues across Mid Suffolk, and was attended by over 120 residents, including carers and family members. The project brings musical and wellbeing themed experiences to older members of the district, and those affected by Dementia or other long term health needs. The event offered each group four sessions which gave members the opportunity to access world class orchestral musical performances, workshop experience and music making.
- Four schools in the district are participating in 'The Archie Project', an inter-generational dementia awareness programme, for the second year in a row.
- Our Special Friends, a local charity supporting animal befriending, welfare and rehoming services, managed 31 client referrals across Mid Suffolk, in the last quarter. This is an increase from 20 referrals in the previous quarter. Services accessed including animal companionship and dog walking, financial assistance with vet bills and rehoming.
- Funding discussions with Our Special Friends have taken place to explore extending their provision of tackling loneliness through pet companionship. The service is being piloted in part of Mid Suffolk.

# Wellbeing

## Outcome 5: Residents have the best possible opportunities to improve their physical and mental health and well-being

### **Residents have improved mental health and well-being**

- Youth Social Prescribing by The Mix has commenced within three schools across Mid Suffolk. Steering group meetings have reported initial successes as many students have been supported through drop-in break time, lunch clubs and pastoral room cover. Work is continuing with Suffolk County Council to put together a robust reporting system. A proforma is being discussed and agreed with The Mix and 4YP (For Young People) and is due to be completed by the next steering meeting.
- Discussions are ongoing with the Move Your Mind project, a programme co-produced by Suffolk Mind and Ipswich Borough Council which is aimed at adults with low level mental health problems. It will involve 45-minute exercise classes alongside a 45-minute discussion on Mental Health.

### **Residents have improved physical health and opportunities to participate in leisure and sport to improve their health and tackle obesity**

- October 1<sup>st</sup> saw the launch of 'Feel Good Suffolk' (FGS), a behavioural change service to support people who want help to stop smoking, lose weight and become more physically active. Work levels remain extremely high while Phase 1 of the FGS offer continues to be delivered.
- More dates have been agreed with paediatric physiotherapy for children receiving physiotherapy to attend Everyone Active gyms during 2024 in April-May and Oct-Nov.

# Wellbeing

Outcome 5: Residents have the best possible opportunities to improve their physical and mental health and well-being

## **Residents live longer and healthier lives**

- ActivLives have been funded for a year to help support their Step-by-Step programme which is delivered for over 55's in Needham and Stowmarket. The classes promote social inclusion in community settings while helping with falls prevention.
- Active Wellbeing are being provided funding to deliver national physical activity training and resources for clinicians. They will train and upskill any medical and non-medical staff to have a better understanding about physical activity and feel more confident to talk about it and prescribe it. This links in with the Social Prescribing work which enables individuals to gain support outside of their GP practice.
- Implementation of Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference LP29 (active travel) LP24(1) and LP24(2) (g) and (i)) are now part of Development Management pre-application negotiations and application consideration

# Wellbeing

## Outcome 6: Families lead active, healthy, safe and independent lives and manage their own health and wellbeing

### **Residents are supported to help us tackle our most pressing public health challenges**

- Discussions are taking place with Debenham Sports and Leisure to ensure the continuation of the GP referral scheme. This scheme provides subsidised sessions twice a week for the gym with trained members of staff for those who have medical needs. Further discussions will be made on how we can link the centre to other projects which offer similar support to those who need additional support.

### **Residents with care needs have personalised support, independence and choice, enabling a good quality of life**

- 5 providers at 6 different locations in Mid Suffolk were awarded funding for the District Council's October half-term activities, which included sports, arts and crafts, and a Swim and Play world offer. Providers have worked with Suffolk County Council to roll out Suffolk Sourcing, the new booking platform for the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme. Providers are encouraged to sign up to this platform to facilitate the funding application process moving forwards.
- The Eequ booking system, the new booking platform commissioned by Suffolk County Council, was fully used for the first time in the Christmas School holidays. Early indications show that it was a success with most providers using the system. The system will provide a better advertising strategy and more accurate and robust data for the next financial year.
- Christmas 2023 saw the greatest number of spaces available (538 compared to 247 in Christmas 2022).
- Previous data recorded the Christmas holiday period as having the lowest uptake of activity spaces, so the Council funded 150 food boxes which contained a full roast dinner and enough for dinner on Boxing Day for a family of 4 to be collected by families.
- Positive feedback has been received for the new chair-based exercise class and table tennis sessions that were delivered by Everyone Active for people with disabilities.

# Wellbeing

Outcome 6: Families lead active, healthy, safe and independent lives and manage their own health and wellbeing

## **Residents are safeguarded and protected from harm**

- November marked the White Ribbon 16 days of action. To raise awareness, a White Ribbon article was featured in working together with links to a series of free webinars, including a session delivered on Male victims of domestic abuse. A lunch and learn session on Domestic abuse was offered to all staff members in December, with 39 participants.

## **Residents and visitors are and feel safe in the districts**

- Officers continue to work with the Tenancy Management Team, Housing Providers and Suffolk Police to provide risk assessment data on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) , Hate crime and community tensions to SERCO.

# Environment

## Outcome 7: Biodiversity is enhanced and protected

### **Biodiversity gain is optimised in new developments**

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Joint Local Plan Part 1 2018-2037 Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in November 2023, and this includes up-to-date planning policies for the environment including biodiversity net gain in new developments.
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference LP16(e)) is now part of Development Management pre-application advice, negotiation and consideration in all planning decision making to secure a minimum 10% increase for biodiversity.

### **Biodiversity on council owned land is enhanced**

- Revision of Biodiversity Action Plan currently taking place, finalising priorities and resource required
- Working with stakeholders such as Woodland Trust, Suffolk Wildlife Trust & Suffolk Tree Warden Network
- Communications around 'Call for Land' has been published during national tree planting week to identify land within the district that can be used to increase biodiversity

### **Mid Suffolk increasing tree and hedgerow canopy cover contributes to biodiversity gain**

- Successful bid for Local Authority Treescapes Fund to create scattered orchards
- 36 trees planted in Stowmarket
- Planting commenced in late November 2023 using volunteer groups in partnership with Public Realm

### **Wild flower planting enhances the landscape in our districts**

- Free trees, hedging and wildflower scheme open with many applications already received
- 15 applications for 93 trees and 900 whips
- Seeding of some areas to enhance benefits
- 9 sites totalling 10,738 sqm

# Environment

## Outcome 8: Babergh and Mid Suffolk have a low carbon footprint

### **Everyone in Mid Suffolk can access and use sustainable, net zero, transport options:**

- Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highways, Rights of Way teams, the planning directorate (including the infrastructure team in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)), Milestone, Ipswich Strategic Planning Area (ISPA) group and all other relevant partners are working together to seek opportunities for, and help facilitate, the delivery of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) schemes.
- Launched e-bike rental scheme pilot in Needham Market with Eezybike.
- Supported several parishes with Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP+) funding bids.
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference LP23 and LP20) are now part of Development Management pre-application advice, negotiation and consideration in all planning decision making to minimise the dependence of new development on fossil fuels. Planning Application Reference DC/22/06288 Port One included shuttle bus and travel plan obligations

### **Everyone in Mid Suffolk understands the need to reduce carbon emissions and energy use - making sustainable choices:**

- Encouraged and supported communities to make sustainable choices through our 'Community Climate Action Roadshow' held in October 2023. The Roadshow featured a series of drop-in style events which took place in Eye, Bramford and Stowmarket, with a total of 275 people attending the Roadshows. The events made residents aware of low carbon choices by giving residents the chance to speak to local groups and organisations about climate action tips, initiatives, and opportunities in their area.

# Environment

## Outcome 8: Babergh and Mid Suffolk have a low carbon footprint

### **New development will achieve high levels of energy efficiency, minimise carbon emissions and support green infrastructure:**

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 2018-2037 Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in November 2023, which includes up-to-date planning policies for the environment including the energy efficiency of new developments, renewable and low carbon energy generation, and green infrastructure.

### **The Councils maximise low carbon energy generation for council owned buildings:**

- Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) backed energy purchased from EDF guaranteeing 100% from renewables

# Environment

## Outcome 9: Mid Suffolk is a healthier, safer and sustainable place

### **Our communities reduce, reuse and recycle by default**

- We supported two council-led events: Eye's Community Energy Event in October, promoting recycling, food waste reduction and home composting, and a Talk Money roadshow at Stowmarket Library in November, promoting food waste.
- We attended Stowmarket Town Council's Go Green Go Wild event during October half term. Our family-orientated stand highlighted pumpkin food waste at Halloween, had a children's glass jar crafting activity to promote reusing, and Master Composter volunteers attended with mini beasts. Our stand received over 1200 visitors.
- We also supported the Suffolk Waste Partnership at a border district event in October: Bungay Food and Drink Festival, to raise awareness of Food Savvy, highlighting pumpkin waste around Halloween.
- In November and December we participated in Stowmarket's Christmas Tree festival, with our upcycled *Three Kings*-themed decorations. We attend the town's Christmas Fayre event, promoting recycling and food waste reduction, and ran a crafting activity for children.
- We delivered waste education sessions at Chives Montessori School, Claydon High School and Wood Ley Primary School. We also did parent engagement event at Wilby Primary School; giving a recycling-themed presentation to parents and pupils, and having information stand in the playground.
- We supported two school tours at the Energy From Waste facility: Wilby Primary School and Wetheringsett Manor.
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference LP24(1) and LP24 (2) (c) and (f)) are now part of Development Management pre-application negotiations and application consideration

### **Green and open spaces are safe and accessible, providing formal and informal activity and opportunities for all residents**

- Green spaces are inspected daily whilst core duties are carried out, e.g. bin emptying and litter removal.
- Play areas are inspected weekly to ensure that they are safe and there are a number of play areas that have been identified for improvements.

# Economy

## Outcome 10: Mid Suffolk's places and economy are supported to be innovative, green and resilient

### **Mid Suffolk has employment sites to meet demand, maximise business growth and opportunities and provide good quality jobs**

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 2018-2037 Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in November 2023, which includes up-to-date policies supporting the economy and sustainable economic growth.
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference SP05, LP09 and LP 10) are now part of Development Management pre-application advice, negotiation and consideration in all employment related planning decision making including in town centres .
- Ongoing work with Planning Policy and consultants to refresh the evidence base for employment land supply and demand
- Continued to support plans for redevelopment of key employment sites including Gateway 14 and Port One
- Handover of the 1.2msqft building at G14 to the Range completed in November
- Cross Street, Eye is awaiting practical completion of the premises. Negotiations with operator continue to ensure we have the right lease that supports the Mid Suffolk plan
- Skills and Innovation Centre diligence and agreement work continues in line with Cabinet resolutions 05/12/2023. Will shortly begin work of operator procurement

### **Mid Suffolk's economy and places are supported to be a home for new ideas, creativity and innovation**

- Innovate to Elevate programme with University of Essex delivery continuing with 2 projects now completed. The project is now fully committed with associated new projects.
- Inward Investment Website now placed first in a Google search for "Heart of Suffolk". Initial numbers are showing an increase in attendance and engagement in comparison to the economy pages on the old council site.
- Innovation newsletter sent each month to approximately 1,200 businesses. Additional communications sent regarding Storm Babet and Rural England Prosperity Fund grant programmes.
- Innovation Awards - planning started for the 2024 event.
- Engagement with key manufacturing businesses to introduce them to the New Anglia Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (NAAME) local group.
- Planning commenced for delivery of B2B Food and drink events delivered through Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) funding.
- Draft evidence base for new economic strategy completed

# Economy

## Outcome 10: Mid Suffolk's places and economy are supported to be innovative, green and resilient

### **Our town centres are supported through regeneration and culture to be resilient, vibrant and creative places**

- Secured access to new Visitor Insight footfall data collection and analysis tool for key town centres to support better understanding of trends and behaviour and impact of events
- Completion of essential heritage roof works at 11 Market Place, Stowmarket to add to the creative spaces within the town and support resilience of events at John Peel Centre
- Stowmarket Wayfinding market tests to identify suppliers for Lighting and Signage projects
- Needham Market - Lake to town centre signs installation delayed due to weather/flooding.
- Stowmarket - contribution to be made for new portable tables and bench seating and to support promotion of Food Market "Foodie Thursday"
- Eye – looking at potential site for Post Office.
- Eye Invest to be relaunched in the new year

### **Our places are growing visitor destinations with a wealth of cultural opportunities**

- Action plan for Culture, Heritage and Visitor Economy Strategy has been finalised and costed with clear deliverables identified for year 1
- Working with partners to complete a Suffolk Festivals and Events Strategy which provides an evidence-base to maximise Suffolk's opportunities and build the sector.
- Screen Tourism campaign developed with Visit Suffolk to promote TV and Film locations across Mid Suffolk with developed itineraries for overnight stays and day visits.
- Suffolk Visitor Economy Review started to assess the current landscape and identify the most effective, efficient, sustainable, and accessible model to promote and support the growth and development of Suffolks Visitor Economy

# Economy

**Outcome 10: Mid Suffolk's places and economy are supported to be innovative, green and resilient**

## **Our districts benefits from strong and inclusive partnerships to deliver sustainable regeneration and economic growth**

- Innovation Board continues to meet to drive investment in innovation and economic growth in the District
- Ongoing engagement with a range of local, regional and national partners including Suffolk Culture Network, Suffolk Chamber, Growth Hub, Visit East of England, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Freeport East, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Arts Council England to ensure appropriate support for our districts
- Engagement with business National Farmers Union (NFU) and The Federation of Small Business (FSB) to gather business intelligence and build awareness of business support and grant programmes.
- Direct engagement, support and visits with businesses.
- Ongoing delivery of projects and workstreams for Freeport East – active involvement in Skills, Inward Investment and Innovation workstreams as well as supporting business rates and finance discussions

# Economy

## Outcome 11: We will become a growing area for Innovation, Enterprise and Creativity in the East

### **Our places and businesses can flourish and grow, by accessing high speed broadband**

- Ongoing engagement with Vodafone to see how they can support Wi-Fi in our town centres.
- CityFibre Project Gigabit build partners have been appointed and delivery is in planning, with first connections expected in the summer.

### **Our places are home to a diverse network of spaces where residents can work and test new business ideas**

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) delivery is ongoing with start up support, net zero consultancy and growth hub services commissioned to provide specialist business advice.
- Ongoing delivery of grant schemes including Suffolk Business Grants Scheme, Rural England Prosperity Fund and Business Innovation Support Scheme to support business growth.

### **Our places and spaces are well connected with green and sustainable travel infrastructure**

- Review underway in advance of the first anniversary of the solar car ports.
- Good Journey scheme launched promoting car free travel across the districts to visitor attractions. Discounts provided for car free visitors – 5 venues signed up so far.
- Needham Rail Station Access For All – draft plans for disabled access to platform 2 were presented to officers and stakeholders for consultation.

# Economy

**Outcome 12: Mid Suffolk communities are supported to be the best skilled workforce across the East with high levels of aspiration**

## **Residents are supported to have the skills, knowledge and access to training and opportunities to access local jobs in key growth sectors**

- Tender evaluation for County wide Adult and Youth UK Shared Prosperity Fund completed in December. Delivery (subject to contractual arrangements) to commence from April 2024.
- Working with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to plan a series of jobs fairs in 2024 across the district.
- Working with DWP and other skills and training partners to scope programmes for delivery of final year of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) interventions
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference SP05(4)) is now given development plan weight in Development Management pre-application advice, negotiation and consideration in relation to employment related planning proposals.

## **Mid Suffolk's growth and traditional core sectors are supported to flourish, expand and innovate**

- Promotion of grants available to support business growth across our key sectors.
- Engagement with NAAME (New Anglia Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering group) to provide specialist support to businesses in the District.
- Reviewing draft final Food & Drink report and considering next steps for support for this sector including information gathering and initial conversations held around development of a programme of food, drink & makers engagement events.

## **Economic growth is inclusive with every resident given equal opportunity to participate and succeed**

- Stowmarket Health, Education and Leisure Facilities scheme is progressing with cabinet papers for the January Cabinet. Legal documents are progressing and applications for funding have been prepared.
- Construction works commenced for a changing places facility at Food Museum
- Contractor appointed to install changing places facility at Stradbroke Pool

# Communities

## Outcome 13: Communities have the capacity and are supported and empowered with the infrastructure and skills to maximise opportunities and thrive

### **Community assets are optimised to create thriving communities**

- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Bid Round 12 opened on the 1st October and closed on the 31st October. We received 13 CIL bids for Mid Suffolk District Council. These consisted of 1 health bid, 1 rail bid, 1 education bid and 10 community bids.
- The fifteenth round of Neighbourhood CIL payments were made in October 2023 to parishes from CIL income received from the 1st April 2023 to September 2023. The total paid out to 40 town and parish councils within Mid Suffolk was £1,028,795.56.
- The CIL Expenditure Framework Joint Member panel was reconstituted in December for the sixth review of the framework. The joint member panel consists of eight members from across party from both councils. All the workshop material was issued to the joint member panel in December with scheduled workshop meetings for January 2024.
- Production of the Infrastructure Funding Statement was completed. This is a government return which details the amounts of Community Infrastructure Levy collected and the Infrastructure projects that have been funded through the Levy. The report also details Section 106 funding (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; contributions can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure); monies collected and spent on infrastructure and community projects including ecological mitigation through the RAMS (Recreational disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy). This report was published on the website in December and sent to the government on the 1st December 2023.
- 76 projects totalling £101,439.95 were supported through Locality Awards in Q3. This included new lighting at a Community Shop, outdoor activity equipment, and the replacement of flooring.
- 15 applications for Capital Grant funding from organisations in Mid Suffolk were received, and 11 were awarded funding following a competitive assessment process. A total of £114,131.19 has been allocated, including £27,162.11 of Section 106. This included the installation of new play equipment, solar panels at a Village Hall, and external insulation and cladding at a Pre-School.

# Communities

**Outcome 13: Communities have the capacity and are supported and empowered with the infrastructure and skills to maximise opportunities and thrive**

## **Community assets are optimised to create thriving communities**

- Section 106 funding (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; contributions can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure) of £19,461.70 was awarded to Crowfield Parish Council for a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), and £750 was awarded to Occold Parish Council towards the purchase of solar panels for 2 Speed Indicator Devices.
- Grant Officers have been preparing a video to promote community grants and offer tips to support applications for grant funding.
- The new Living Well in Winter fund was launched on 13<sup>th</sup> November. The fund has been established to support communities to thrive over the winter months as it aims to help community groups tackle issues faced over the winter period, such as increased social isolation and reduced physical activity, as well as the impact of the cost of living crisis on household budgets. 17 applications were submitted of which 15 Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Organisations in Mid Suffolk have been awarded funding, following a competitive assessment process. A total of £17,459.79 has been allocated to support projects including warm spaces and soup lunches, warm winter social activities, and a 'Friends and Food Friday'.
- The second round of Community Development funding resulted in 13 applications being submitted of which 6 were successful, following a competitive assessment process. A total of £87,383.51 has been allocated. Projects including supporting bereaved people in Mid Suffolk, replacing a mini bus, and supporting a Mums in Mind course.

# Communities

**Outcome 13: Communities have the capacity and are supported and empowered with the infrastructure and skills to maximise opportunities and thrive**

## **Communities are equipped and supported to be resilient, deliver local services and volunteer**

- Employer Supported Volunteering Policy (ESV) went to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and was approved. The policy has been launched on the intranet and is continuing to be promoted internally.
- A “Let’s Talk... Volunteering Policy and how it works FOR MANAGERS” was delivered in December, with 17 staff members attending. Plans are underway for an all-staff session to take place during the Spring.

## **Communities are digitally connected with the right infrastructure and skills to minimise digital exclusion**

- 19 customers attended our digital skills sessions across the Mid Suffolk area.

## **Neighbourhood Development Plans**

(adopted Oct/Nov’ 2023)

**Diss & District**

**Elmswell**

**Walsham le Willows**

# Communities

## Outcome 14: Our places and their communities are well connected and valued by residents and visitors

### **Residents actively participate in their local communities and work to improve them**

- Six delegates participated in the first “ongoing professional development” session for the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) cohort in October, and 7 delegates attended the second session in December which was based around Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma. A final session is scheduled to take place in February around the theme of neurodiversity.
- Officers attended the SALC (Suffolk Association for Local Councils) Conference to share the support and funding opportunities available to parish and town councils.

### **Residents have a sense ownership, belonging to, and pride in, their local communities**

- One piece of Pride in Your Place monitoring has been submitted from Palgrave Parish Council, detailing that the funding has created a sense of ‘ownership’ in the area.
- 68 Pride in Your Place applications were received and £12,860.40 of funding has been awarded to projects ranging from community litter picks, planting of new wildlife areas and the conversion of bus shelters to community information hubs.

### **Our communities lead discussions on what is important to them and inform decisions to improve their quality of life**

- The Community Safety Team worked with the Criminal Exploitation hub and Stowmarket Safer Neighbourhood Team to host a community engagement event on 30<sup>th</sup> November from the United Reform Church. Teams conducted visits to business premises and high street outlets in the area to conduct an in-depth questionnaire survey on issues concerning young people, crime and anti-social behaviour.

# Communities

## Outcome 14: Our places and their communities are well connected and valued by residents and visitors

### **Our communities are vibrant and well connected**

- The Grants Team attended a 'Let's get Social' Social Enterprise conference at Ipswich Town Hall to learn more about the opportunities for local social enterprises and network. This supports the SPF Support for Social Enterprise project and an aspiration to increase activity in the social enterprise space.

### **Residents have positive relationships across communities**

- 2 Food Development Officers, hosted by Community Action Suffolk (CAS), have begun support with food banks, community pantries and initiatives.

### **Residents and visitors feel safe in our places and communities**

- The Suffolk County Council (SCC) Community Safety Team officially approved Babergh Mid Suffolk District Councils (BMSDC) "Victim Impact Assessment-Pre-ASB Case Review" as a best practice for the entire county. As a result, district and borough councils across Suffolk will now employ this in their ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) Case Review process.
- In support of National Hate Crime Awareness Week (14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> October), officers and partners raised awareness about hate crimes, what they are, what can be done to prevent them, and how to report them.
- Officers attended a meeting with the Stowmarket Community Policing Team (CPT) which have replaced the old Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) to discuss the implications of the new policing model.

# Communities

## Outcome 15: Local places are inclusive, safe, and accessible for walking, cycling and public transport

### **Local places are inclusive, safe, and accessible for walking, cycling and public transport**

- Officers continue to develop and support the work around the new Serious Violence Duty, taking a multi-agency approach to prevent and reduce serious violence. In addition to examining the evidence and insight from the Strategic Needs Assessment, the prepared draft strategy brings together the existing thematic groups that prevent and reduce crime and disorder in Suffolk.
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 2018-2037 Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in November 2023, which includes up-to-date policies supporting the delivery of infrastructure and creating safe and accessible places for walking, cycling and public transport.
- 29 planning applications were approved in Q3, delivering 224 new dwellings

### **Residents access and enjoy a range of activities in their local community spaces**

- Officers attended Activities Unlimited Short Breaks Grants Panel to assist with assessments of applications.

### **Communities are green and environmentally attractive**

- Officers supported Suffolk Climate Change Partnership by attending the Community Energy Networking Event on 8<sup>th</sup> November and hosting a stand to promote the community grants and support available for Community organisations.

# Housing

**Outcome 16: Residents are settled, safe and healthy in affordable and high-quality homes that meet their needs**

## **Residents have access to quality affordable homes that meet their needs**

- The published Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Authority Monitoring Report (December 2023), identified that between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, there were 1,234 net dwellings completed, of which 299 dwellings were affordable.

## **Vulnerable and homeless residents have somewhere safe and appropriate to live and homelessness is prevented**

- 69 prevention duties were accepted , with 61 successful prevention outcomes.
- 88% of prevention duties were successfully preventing homelessness with 13 residents being able to remain in their existing home and 40 were found alternative accommodation in social housing or in private rented sector.

## **Residents understand and can access the most appropriate options to get housing**

- 394 Choice Based Lettings application have been received.
- 5 Households have been rehoused in the private rented sector vis Central Suffolk Lettings.

# Housing

Outcome 16: Residents are settled, safe and healthy in affordable and high-quality homes that meet their needs

## **Residents are able to live as healthy, safely, independently as possible in local communities**

- 14 Minor Adaption Grants have been approved and 17 have been completed.
- 4 Disabled Facilities Grants have been approved and 4 has been completed.
- £425,941.76 of grant has been spent to date had been spent to helping residents to remain their homes and remain independent.

## **Residents live in high quality and safe homes**

- 73% of tenants surveyed through Q3 for the Tenant Satisfaction Measures felt satisfied that they live in a safe home and 65% of tenants feel satisfied they live in a well-maintained home.
- Joint Local Plan (Policy Reference LP24) is now part of Development Management pre-application advice, negotiation and consideration in all housing related planning evaluation and decision making

# Housing

## Outcome 17: Residents have a say in the future of housing

### **Council tenants and leaseholders are involved in the management and improvement of their housing services**

- We engaged with 136 tenants across both districts around improvements they would like to see in their neighbourhood, feedback on written communications in relation to the Energy Bill Relief scheme and reviewing our Recharge & Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policies and our Rent increase letters. We have also surveyed tenants about satisfaction with complaint handling.

### **Tenants and leaseholders receive high quality services from our councils**

- Through our Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey carried out for Quarter 3 – 59% of Mid Suffolk tenants answered as satisfied overall with their landlord service.

### **Residents are included and actively participate in how their areas are evolving and changing**

- There were no community actions days in Q3, however we are currently planning next years programme of days and areas which ward members will be invited along to and residents engaged in their areas about capital improvements through our Greater Places work. Gainsborough Close communal area residents have been consulted with on improvements to their communal areas with work due to start in Q1 of 2024.
- Our Statement of Community Involvement sets out our consultation and publicity arrangements for Development Management applications. We have publicised at least 263 applications in Q3 and sent at least 3,200 neighbour letters receiving at least 329 responses. We are actively supporting Parishes and communities to prepare neighbourhood plans in 28 Parishes and other Neighbourhood Priority Statements in 19 communities.

# Housing

**Outcome 18: Homes are sustainable, with reducing carbon emissions, that are future proofed to meet resident needs**

## **Residents have choice in the housing market with homes that meet their needs and are environmentally sustainable**

- The published Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Authority Monitoring Report (December 2023), identified that between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, there were 1,234 net dwellings completed and 6,916 dwellings to be completed with planning permission.

## **Mid Suffolk's homes have improved energy efficiency**

- 2 grants have been issued to improve energy efficiency of properties.
- Enforcement action has been taken against 5 properties to improve the energy efficiency.

# Health of the Organisation

**Outcome 19:** Develop and implement a comprehensive 'People' Strategy that ensures we are a great organisation to work for, that our people are supported to learn and grow, energised and enabled to deliver our ambitions

## **Pay and Reward Project**

- Completed Equality Impact Assessment and finalised pay proposals
- Went live in November with revised pay scales and backdated those increases to 1 April 2023.
- Carried out the relevant re-evaluation for roles as agreed, as part of the appeals process.
- Appeals have now been completed and the pay element of the Pay and Reward Project is now complete
- Finalised reward options and started procurement of additional reward benefits for go live April 2024

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training has now been delivered across the organisation and to Councillors. New starters will also receive training
- Scoped out the work around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion process and policy review for commencement early February 2024
- Work with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion champions continued across the organisation

## **Leadership and Management Development**

- Both the Aspiring Managers and the Emerging Leaders programmes commenced. Excellent feedback has been received and candidates are also progressing with their ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) qualification.

## **Policy and Process Review**

- Policy review is continuing and the HR process review is also underway.

# Health of the Organisation

**Outcome 20:** Provide robust effective management of the Councils finances, including our capital projects and contracts. We will use our resources in a sustainable way and prioritise based upon our Corporate Plan

Financial activities of the Council were reported to Cabinet for the second quarter of 2023/24, covering General Fund Revenue, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programmes for both funds. This included monitoring information on the Council's Prudential Indicators. The report noted that subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the projected surplus on the General Fund of £2.878m, and the projected overspend on the Housing Revenue Account. Compliance with the Prudential Indicators were also noted. The Treasury Management Strategy was also reported to and discussed at Joint Audit and Standards Committee.



# Our Direction of Travel

Quarterly Performance Indicators		2022/23		2023/24			Trend	Direction of Travel
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3		
Outcome 1 Customer Access	Recorded chatbot sessions	2026	2679	2472	2964	2289		data only
	Automated telephone sessions	912	973	394	589	857		data only
	Calls per day	542	619	556	495	498		data only
	Average wait time in seconds	224	179	151	153	154		31% reduction YTD
	Abandon rate	18	14	13	12	13		28% reduction YTD
	Failure rate on waste collections (Mid Suffolk)	0.10%	0.11%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%		static
Outcome 2 Engaged Residents	Average daily web visits	942	1550	1651	1224	1,076		14% increase YTD
	Facebook reach (Mid Suffolk)	186,224	142,995	63,232	102,954	108,100		decreasing (YTD)
	X (formerly Twitter) impressions (Mid Suffolk)	71,600	68,500	275,100	55,900	70,100		slight decrease (YTD)
	Tenant Survey (quarterly) on feeling informed about decision-making		58%	63%	65%	65%		data only
Outcome 3 Resident Satisfaction	Compliments	53	40	52	43	57		increasing
	(Stage 1) Complaints	193	261	242	238	290		data only
	Tenant Survey (quarterly) on whether the Council (as landlord) treats tenants fairly and with respect		63%	65%	67%	68%	<b>New for 23/24</b>	data only
	Tenant Survey (quarterly) on whether the Council (as landlord) listens and acts on feedback		44%	45%	51%	51%	<b>New for 23/24</b>	data only

Quarterly Performance Indicators		2022/23		2023/24			Trend	Direction of Travel
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3		
Outcome 16 Affordable and High Quality Homes	Affordable homes built or acquired for HRA (Mid Suffolk)	37	31	19	26	10		data only
	Households placed into temporary accommodation (Mid Suffolk)	47	52	56	48	44		6% decrease YTD
	Cases where homelessness has been prevented or relieved (Mid Suffolk)	60	56	73	80	71		
	Percentage of market share of building control applications (Mid Suffolk)	65	66	60	70	64		1% reduction (YTD)
	Number new applications of building control excluding AI's (Mid Suffolk)	131	162	162	189	137		increasing
Outcomes 17 + 18, Engaged Residents/Tenants, and Sustainable Homes	Number of residents (and staff) engaged in community action days			22	97	20	New for 23/24	data only
	Number of tenants involved in codesign of services			122	204	136	New for 23/24	data only
	Improvement in Overall Tenant Satisfaction Survey results (Combined for both Councils, can be split)		59%	68%	64%	62%	New for 23/24	data only
	Average number of days for VOID relets (Mid Suffolk)	56	72	65	75	89		data only
	Number of properties relet (Mid Suffolk)	56	68	59	46	93		data only

Quarterly Performance Indicators		2022/23		2023/24			Trend	Direction of Travel
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3		
Outcome 7 Biodiversity	Trees planted as part of green canopy (Mid Suffolk)		127				Annual	data only
	Hedgerows planted through the planting scheme (Mid Suffolk)		4,665				Annual	data only
	Number of tree preservation orders (TPOs) determined (Mid Suffolk)	14	10	7	15	14	Monthly	data only
	Square metres of wildflower seeds distributed (Mid Suffolk)		7,070				Annual	data only
	Meadow Management Areas sqm (Mid Suffolk)		85,517				Annual	data only
	Biodiversity metric 3.0 measuring biodiversity change from development (Mid Suffolk)						New for 23/24	data only
Outcome 8 Climate Change	Number of EV charge points installed by Babergh (cumulative)	New	11	24	24	24	New for 23/24	data only
	Number of BMSDC owned houses that meet the EPPC standard or above (all to achieve by 2030)				4,147		New for 23/24	data only
	Carbon emissions from council owned buildings (gas consumption)	331 TCO2e	259 CO2e	247 TCO2e	151 TCO2e	330 TCo2e	Static	data only
Outcome 9 Healthy, Safe and Sustainable	Total garden waste subscribers (Mid Suffolk)	18,368	18,544	19,126	19,427	19,448		increasing
	No. of business waste customers (Mid Suffolk)	735	737	744	759	769		data only
	Contaminated recycling % (Mid Suffolk)	9.60	9.90	8.90	12.09	11.83		increasing YTD
	Food safety hygiene ratings (Mid Suffolk)			88.56%	88.59%	88.07%	New for 23/24	data only
	Incidents of fly tipping (Mid Suffolk)	71	88	94	73	60		15% reduction YTD
	Building control, reports in relation to dangerous structures (Mid Suffolk)			6	4	3		data only

Quarterly Performance Indicators		2022/23		2023/24			Trend	Direction of Travel
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3		
Outcome 13	Total visits to the CAP (Stowmarket)	160	260	221	168	224		40% increase YTD
Community Capacity	Capital grant spent or allocated (Mid Suffolk cumulative)	£115,518	£111,828	£74,469	£74,469	£161,438		data only
	Small grant spent or allocated (Mid Suffolk cumulative)	£15,750	£0	£8,049	£11,594	£19,093		data only
Outcome 15 Inclusive, safe and accessible	ASB cases reviewed by the ASB partnership (Mid Suffolk)	6	4	25	30	11		data only
	New ASB cases received separate to those discussed with the ASB partnership panels (Mid Suffolk)	27	28	65	77	39		data only
	No of ASB cases open more than 6 months (Mid Suffolk) at end of Q	1.0%	3.0%	4	2	2		data only
	Number of ASB triggers called for (Mid Suffolk)	1	1	0	0	0		data only
Outcome 10 Support for Places and Economy	Town Centre Vacancy Rates 3 - Eye (MSDC)	9.50%	5.00%	11.40%	13.60%	15.90%		data only
	Town Centre Vacancy Rates 4 - Needham Market (MSDC)	9.50%	9.00%	11.00%	13.50%	9.50%		data only
	Town Centre Vacancy Rates 5 - Stowmarket (MSDC)	4.90%	7.00%	9.80%	7.40%	7.30%		data only

Quarterly Performance Indicators		2022/23		2023/24			Trend	Direction of Travel
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3		
Health of the Organisation and Other Statutory KPIs	Average number of days sickness per FTE (Cumulative)	5.67	8.05	1.96	4.14	7.14		increasing
	Average number of days sickness per FTE (Actual for Quarter)	2.23	2.38	1.96	2.18	3.00		
	% of major applications processed 'in time' (13 wks. or within agreed Extension of Time/ Planning Performance Agreement) (Mid Suffolk)	92.90%	92.30%	93.30%	90.90%	71.40%		Data Only
	% of non major applications processed 'in time' (8 wks, or within agreed Extension of Time/ Planning Performance Agreement) (Mid Suffolk)	96.70%	98.60%	95.10%	94.30%	93.80%		Data Only
	Average time taken to process new claims and changes to claims (Mid Suffolk)	2.96	5.26	4.56	4.81	3.01		Reducing
	Average time taken to process new claims (Mid Suffolk)	12.29	18.44	15.25	14.79	13.66		Reducing
	Average time taken to process changes to claims (Mid Suffolk)	2.39	4.46	3.87	3.80	2.10		Reducing
	The level of Local Authority Error overpayments as a % of all housing benefit paid (Mid Suffolk)	0.56	0.41	0.41	0.40	0.30		Reducing
HBOP Amount recovered in year to date as a % of HBOP Amount created in year to date (Mid Suffolk)	117.26%	109.99%	111.82%	111.54%	117.89%		Data Only	
Council Tax % of total raised collected in year (Mid Suffolk cumulative)	83.69%	98.21%	29.09%	56.00%	83.59%		Data Only	
Business Rates % of total raised collected in year (Mid Suffolk cumulative)	86.95%	98.33%	29.24%	56.03%	82.73%		Data Only	



# Our Plans for Quarter Four

# Our Plans for Housing & Infrastructure

- A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module will be rolled out within the housing management system. Officers who interact with our tenants will be trained, enabling them to capture and action more customer communication and service requests. We hope that the benefits of this will be a decrease in complaints, improved record keeping for tenants and officers and ultimately increased satisfaction with how we listen and act.
- We also hope to start work on improving the communal areas at Gainsborough Road flats in Stowmarket as part of the Greater Places work following on from resident consultation.
- Carry out our final Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey for the financial year to enable us to report our results to the Regulator in June 2024.

# Our Plans for Resilience

- Completion of work to roof at 11 Market Place, Stowmarket.
- Completion of works at Stradbroke Pool – Changing Places.
- Works to commence on site at Food Museum – Changing Places.
- Needham Market – Access for All, Partnership meetings, presentation of options and stakeholder engagement.
- Ongoing work regarding improvements to Needham Market including new signage at Needham Lake, Cattle Tunnel
- Moving forward with partner workshops and tender preparation relating to the Stowmarket Creative Placemaking & Wayfinding Project.
- Cross Street – Final agreement will be in place with operator and working towards launch date. Gateway 14 (G14) – Working with G14 Board and Jaynic towards planning application for Skills & Innovation Centre and Freeport Board in respect of funding decisions
- Ongoing delivery of Suffolk-wide business support schemes funded via UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) (start-up, net zero, Growth Hub)
- Ongoing delivery of Innovate to Elevate programme including case study development
- Completion of refresh of Economic Evidence Base and scoping of new Economic Strategy process
- Completion of end of year reporting to government on UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund
- Continuation of receiving and reviewing of grant applications under Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS), Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)
- Planning and development of a programme of food, drink & makers events
- Final Sign off of Food and Drink Sector Report
- Love Exploring promotional window stickers with Quick Response (QR) code downloads distributed to businesses along the walking routes
- Ongoing work on AccessAble and Good Journey Scheme
- Consultation with agents, landowners and developers in relation to employment land review to inform Joint Local Plan Part 2
- Sign off new contracts for SPF countywide skills projects for 24/25 delivery
- Finalise wider SPF and REPF projects for 24/25 delivery

# Our Plans for Resilience

- Sixth review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Expenditure Framework to be undertaken in January 2024 and presented to both full councils in March 2024.
- Valid CIL bids to be determined by both Cabinets in March 2024.
- Member and Parish workshop sessions to be held on CIL and project development.
- Developing revised CIL rates with viability consultancy work.
- Plans for an all-staff session on “Let’s Talk... Volunteering Policy and how it works” are underway to take place during the Spring.
- A final Mental Health First Aider training session is scheduled to take place in February around the theme of neurodiversity.
- Officers from the Community Safety Team will be running a training session to housing providers on closure orders in early February.
- A Domestic Abuse Training session for Councillors will be held in January.
- Officers will be supporting the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence campaign in February, the aim of which is to reduce and prevent exploitation of vulnerable groups, with activities currently being planned and co-ordinated with partners.
- Full Cost Recovery training is planned for the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) in the spring 2024.

# Our Plans for Community Wellbeing

- Everyone Active is looking to launch their own regular Health Walks in 2024.
- Discussions are commencing on the Family Fun Days, which will be delivered in the 2024 school summer holidays. Last summer, the project saw two events in Mid Suffolk, in Stowmarket and Eye. The funding for the events is made available by the Holiday Activity and Food Programme funding. Evidence will provide areas where Free School Meal Eligible children are situated, which will help us to decipher areas of need. Partners will also be brought on board who said that they would like to be involved with the planning process.
- The outcome of the application for the Sport England Swimming Pool Phase II Capital fund has been delayed until the end of January 2024.
- A new Sporting Memories Group, funded by local Mid Suffolk councillors, is due to start in Stowmarket in January, at The Leisure Centre, delivered by Everyone Active. This group will be affiliated with the national Sporting Memories Foundation Trust and is designed to bring comfort and support to older residents, living with or effected by dementia and other long term health conditions, across the district, joining together to share memories and experiences with sports events, topics and historical moments. There will also be a regular exercise component delivered at each session, increasing activity and strength in older residents.

# Our Plan for Environmental Sustainability

- Provide residents the opportunity to recycle their real Christmas trees at collection point around the district and by their brown bins.
- We will attend a community-led event in Coddendam in March, promoting recycling, food waste reduction and home composting.
- We continue to support schools by offering waste education sessions to pupils and waste management guidance to staff/leadership and pupil eco groups. Upcoming visits include Gislingham Primary School.
- We will support two tours at the Energy From Waste facility.