

Parish Report –MARCH 2020

Councillor

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BUDGET MEETING; I put forward my groups amendments including more highways officers to deal with planning applications, more health visitors and social workers, change the school transport policy on split villages and siblings, put back funding for CABs, and put in electric charging points at all depots for council owner vehicles with the plan to have all electric asap

I'm sorry these were voted down.

Ipswich Northern Route project recommended to cease

The Leader of Suffolk County Council has announced that he will be recommending to his Cabinet that the Ipswich Northern Route should not proceed to the next phase of development.

This follows an Interim Study, a Strategic Outline Business Case and a public consultation into the proposed bypass to the north of Ipswich. The public consultation found that 70% of respondents were against the bypass, and there has been a prominent anti-bypass campaign organised by local residents. Babergh District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and East Suffolk District Council all withdrew their support. The Cabinet made this decision on the future of the INR project on Tuesday 25 February.

REPORT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORT; this has now been published and has highlighted many of the problems that the new policy has had, in particular on the way it was difficult for parents to gain information. It also showed that the time taken to implement was far too short and many of the issues we raised at the time have now been detailed. This was put to the scrutiny committee last week where I put forward the problem of split villages and siblings. I also asked when the actual policy would be scrutinised

Phase 3 of Superfast Broadband Programme

The Cabinet has approved the roll-out of the third phase of Suffolk's superfast broadband programme with BT Openreach.

Currently, 96% of properties in Suffolk have access to superfast broadband. Phase 3 will aim to reach a further 2% of properties, who are amongst the hardest to reach. In order to fund this, the council will reinvest the £10m of 'gainshare funding' that it has received from the first two contracts with BT Openreach.

Introduction of permit scheme for roadworks

The Cabinet has also approved the introduction of a permit scheme, which will require utility companies to apply for a permit from Suffolk Highways before digging up roads in Suffolk.

Currently, utility companies only have to inform Suffolk County Council of their intention to conduct work on the highways. The introduction of a permit scheme will ensure that motorists have more notice of planned roadworks and will provide the council with more powers: the council can approve or refuse a request for a permit and can also place conditions over the work carried out.

It is expected that a permit scheme will also result in less disruption for road users, as the council will be able to coordinate, and plan works to ensure there are minimal road closures.

Any costs incurred by the council for running the scheme will be recovered through fee income from permit applications, so the scheme will be cost neutral.

MIDSUFFOLK

BUDGET; Again, Mid Suffolk council setting meeting took place last week. The Lib Dems and Green party members put forward some amendments including more highways support for planning, invest in making all new housing zero carbon, install electric charging points in all public car parks. To have free parking in Stowmarket after 3pm one day per week and to have a competition to produce plans for a series of sustainable Suffolk house designs.

These were voted down; however, my suggestion of a youth council has been taken up.