

District Councillor Report – Onehouse Ward - April 2025

<p>Death of Cllr Rachel Eburne</p>	<p>It was with great sadness we announced that the Deputy Leader of Mid Suffolk Council, cabinet member for finances and resources, and Councillor for Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden, Rachel Eburne, sadly passed away on the 14th March after a long illness. Since being elected as a councillor back in 2010, Rachel was a key champion within her local community and was deeply committed to Mid Suffolk. She will be missed by us all, and for me after 15 years working with a dear friend and colleague.</p>
<p>Devolution - Mayor</p>	<p>Councillors had a lively debate regarding the government proposal for a mayor for Suffolk and Norfolk. Notable concerns were that local voices would not be heard, and that powers might be concentrated rather than devolved from Government. https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/new-regional-mayor-can-bring-benefits-but-local-views-must-be-heard-councils-say</p>
<p>Local government re-organisation</p>	<p>All District and Borough Councils in Suffolk have published their joint proposals on how local government in Suffolk should be re-organised. This proposal is for two or three unitary authorities across the county, but the exact boundaries for these authorities are yet to be determined. Letters to this effect have now been sent and acknowledged by the Secretary of State. Now more detailed business plans for the proposed new authorities will need to be finalised and agreed by September.</p>
<p>Planning Policy updates</p>	<p>As the work begins to review the Joint Local Plan to achieve compliance with Government’s new housing targets, each parish has now been given a guide to the scale of the challenge to allocate sufficient land to meet the increased numbers to the end of a new plan period – 2024 to 2044. It is emphasised that this is just an indication, and that the eventual numbers may well be less or more.</p>
<p>Community infrastructure levy (CIL) charging structure</p>	<p>Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk agreed for updated CIL charging structure proposals to go out for 6-week public consultation. The CIL charging rates had not been changed since the Councils brought in CIL back in 2018. It is proposed that these are now increased and have been viability tested before going out to consultation. Details of the proposed new charging structure can be found on the website in due course.</p>
<p>Planning and Housing debate</p>	<p>At its April meeting council discussed and approved a motion to tell Government that their misunderstanding of how the planning system and housing markets interact stood in the way of delivery of their aim to see 1.5 million homes delivered over the parliament term.</p>
<p>Locality budget 2025/26</p>	<p>The next round of locality funding is now live so parishes and groups are welcome to discuss project ideas with me. The total amount per councillor has increased to £10,000. Full details available on the website https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/locality-awards.</p>

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