

**APRIL 2018**

### **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

No meetings in March

I would like to remind you that full reports from past Council and Cabinet Meetings, can be found online at:

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

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

### **FORMER BABERGH COUNCIL OFFICES – HADLEIGH**

The former Babergh District Council offices on Corks Lane in Hadleigh have temporary occupants: Suffolk Police dogs in training.

The offices in Hadleigh, which Babergh District Council vacated in November last year, are now in use to train police dogs for Suffolk Police.

Suffolk Police's Dog Section trains general purpose dogs (German shepherds) as well as specialist dogs (spaniels and Labradors) in both outdoor and indoor environments. The former offices in Hadleigh offer an ideal opportunity to train these dogs in an office environment in which the dogs can train in tracking down people, drugs, explosive training aids, cash, ammunition or firearms.

### **COMMUNITY LAND TRUST – OLD GRITTING DEPOT**

On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March the first turf was cut in a ceremony to celebrate the 18 affordable homes being built in conjunction with Babergh and the Lavenham CLT.

13 houses will be affordable rentals to local people and 5 will be shared partnership homes.

A great deal of effort by the CLT, Lavenham Parish Council and Babergh has resulted in this process and the building of more affordable homes for local people.

### **GOLDEN AGE FAIR**

On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March Lavenham had its first Golden Age fair. This free fair was open to all Suffolk residents but especially those of a "Golden Age" (over 60').

The fair included over 20 organisations, which all provide a wealth of help and advice aimed at supporting residents of the village to stay fit, healthy and independent.

### **HOUSEBUILDING/PLANNING**

I continue to urge anyone who wishes to comment, good or bad on planning applications, to do so by emailing [planning@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk) and explaining your objection or support.

### **WATER STREET**

Suffolk County Council Highways are maintaining that the start date for the temporary weight restriction in Water Street is 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. They have stated that "that the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order is being processed".

## **BOUNDARY COMMISSION INITIAL DRAFT CHANGES**

The initial draft of the boundary commission review has collated Lavenham and the Waldingfield together, alongside Cockfield and Chilton to form a much larger 2 member ward (currently Lavenham itself is a one member ward).

Originally it was thought Acton would join Lavenham and the Waldingfield, rather than Cockfield, but Cockfield parish made a plea to the commission which seemed to gain more weight than the Acton plea who also asked to join this ward, rather than the Melford ward.

If anyone wishes to comment it is not too late. The eight-week consultation on the Commission's recommendations started on 7<sup>th</sup> March and will close on 30 April 2018. The consultation is open to anyone who wants to have their say on the names and boundaries of wards represented by councillors elected to both authorities.

For more information please visit

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

and for your comments Email: [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)

or post to:

**The Review Officer (Mid Suffolk/Babergh)**

**14<sup>th</sup> floor, Millbank Tower**

**London SW1P 4QP**

## **NEW RULES ON CALLING IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

In the 'good old days' if a councillor felt sufficient objections had been raised to an application that was likely to be passed by the planning team, they could 'call in' a planning request so that the decision was deferred to a committee and not anyone planning officer on their own. This also worked the opposite way in which if an application was to be refused but there was local support for it, the district councillor could call it in.

These powers were significantly reduced a couple of years ago. Amendments have been made to this to improve matters and the following rules have been set: an unpopular planning policy, is not able to be called in, unless the application involves significant policy, consistency or other material considerations and a decision on the application is of more than local significance.

Further to this the decision will not necessarily be made by full committee in the first instance. Instead the decision can now be made by panel, if that decision is that the call in does not satisfy the significant policy consistency or material consideration test. The Delegation Panel will comprise the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Planning Committee together with the Corporate Manager – Growth & Sustainable Planning. The Corporate Manager will support the Panel and record its conclusion. If the panel does agree that the call in is due to significant policy consistency or material consideration then it will still go to full committee as it used to.

The new rules are not my favourite, I would like to see councillors able to call in applications where they feel there is merit to do so, rather than when the panel think there is merit to do so, however they are a slight improvement on what has been happening for the last couple of years.

**BABERGH AWARD**

I am pleased to announce that at the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards dinner in London, Babergh and Mid Suffolk won silver in both the Working Together and Council of the Year categories.