

Borough Councillor's March Report for Hawstead

Community Chest. Funding has been awarded to a whole range of organizations across St Edmundsbury. In total the council will have awarded £342k to help support people in our communities and to deliver the aims of our Families and Communities Strategy. The groups that were given grants range from Gatehouse, Home farm Trust, Home Start, CAB, Women's Aid and Upbeat Heart Support Group.

Locality Budget money. I have been able to give £500 to buy some tents to replace the marquee that blew away last September. I suggest you immediately start canvassing the village on ideas for next year's allocation so as to avoid a hasty scramble just before the end of the financial year. Money will be available from April onwards.

Community safety – Public Space Protection Orders. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recently discussed Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) specifically to include the proposal to include begging in the Order for Bury St Edmunds. There was a lively discussion in order to ensure that people who find themselves on the street are given the right support, advice and help. Prevention and support remains our primary aim at all times. Unfortunately there are a small number of individuals who cause problems for people working, living and shopping in the town and this PSPO provides the Police with a way to address severe anti-social behaviour incidences. This will now go forward for wider consideration in the Council and for public consultation.

Eastern Relief Road. This is progressing well at A14 junction 45. It is due to be completed in the early summer.

Abbott's Vale development in the south east of Bury. This was granted outline planning permission at the January meeting of Development Control. There is still much detail to be sorted out such as implications for increased traffic in the Rougham Hill area of town. We await a detailed application in the coming months.

Bury St Edmunds town centre masterplan. The formal six week public consultation began on the 27th February. Any member of the public can voice their opinions during this time to express their views on what they hope to see as a future plan for this area of Bury. The draft Masterplan document will then go out to public consultation in the autumn.

Farmers market. A regular Sunday market is now taking place on the second Sunday of the month in the Traverse. Regular market traders have the chance to trade as an additional market in the Cornhill.

Cupola House. We hope a new restaurant will soon be opening.

Westley Bridge repairs. The bridge is now closed to all traffic until the 7th of April. Diversions in place as are temporary parking restrictions in the Westley Road area.

Civil Parking Enforcement, (CPE). This is where the Government gives the enforcing power, currently with the police, to local councils. Thus SEBC would monitor, for example, double

yellow lines, loading bays, taxi ranks, areas outside schools and bus stops, this enforcement income would then be retained by local councils, instead of it all going to the Government. There are set up costs involved but it is planned to cover these through the additional revenues to the Council. SCC and the police would share the set up costs. CPE is an ongoing debate and has yet to come to Full Council.

Parkway Multi-Storey Car Park has had brickwork repairs completed and safety grilles installed. A structural survey has identified the need for works to the concrete frame to ensure the facility remains safe and available for drivers into the next decade.

West Suffolk Operational Hub. A planning application is expected to be submitted in the spring.

Garden Waste Collection Service Take up of the subscription service in year one was successful with 39% of all West Suffolk households signing up (41% SEBC & 35% FHDC). 65% of subscribers applied and paid online. Current customers have been, or will be, contacted with regard to the new subscription year which starts in April. Unsubscribed bins will not be emptied from May onwards.

Budget. (Medium term Financial Strategy.) As grants from Government continue to fall, SEBC has adopted the strategy of becoming more commercial and investing to secure extra funding. If we didn't do this, there would be a budget shortfall of over £3.3million which could only be met by cutting funding for services by that amount.

Capital investment plans 2017-2021 currently stand at £64 million. This includes £3 million in Barley Homes, our housing company, and £20 million in our growth agenda plus potential future investment opportunities in Suffolk Business Park, Haverhill Research Park and the delivery of Bury St Edmunds town centre masterplan actions.

Investment in our communities is reflected in our Community Chest grants and through the locality money awarded by ward members.

Council Tax makes up around a fifth of our total income. The Government has removed its Council Tax freeze grant and its funding decisions assume local authorities will increase Council Tax by the maximum level each year, which equates to an extra £3.51 a year (under 30p a month, or 1.96%), taking SEBC's share of the total Council Tax bill to £182.16 for an average Band D home.

Angela Rushen

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