

## Borough Councillor report for Hawstead Annual Parish meeting

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Being elected as your Borough Councillor was a consequence of the very sad and untimely death of Angela Rushen in April last year, still missed and a difficult act to follow. Being asked to stand was an honour as I had been familiar with Angela's work in my other role as Chairman of Chedburgh Parish Council for which Angela was also the Ward Member. My election success was achieved with 65% of the votes cast. Thank you. Now seven months into two term I will be seeking re-election in the May 2019 elections, due to this brief period in office any successes on my part are difficult to gauge, however, one defining aspect is to act as a conduit between the villages I serve and St Edmundsbury, I can assure you that the rural voice is being heard.

My Committee work involves the Bury St Edmunds Town Masterplan Steering Group, Licencing and Regulatory, Overview and Scrutiny and more recently, The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel, all of which has given me much insight and knowledge into local government and rural policing.

St Edmundsbury Borough Council has gained an excellent reputation for financial prudence, investing wisely in capital projects to ensure the growth in West Suffolk, through housing, jobs and infrastructure. The Bury St Edmunds Town Masterplan, now in progress, shows great vision in improving a town that's already a centre of retail excellence, much visited by tourists whilst preserving the nature of the historic core, much of this successful approach is filtering down through West Suffolk to enhance life for all in this green and pleasant corner of England.

### Local Issues

Locality Funding. At a recent visit to the Carpet Bowls Club I witnessed the excellent use made of the locality budget for the purchase of the mobile storage and handling unit for the carpets. As ever, in Hawstead, I was made very welcome.

Village events. Please keep me informed, I support the Church whenever possible and thoroughly enjoyed the Village Fete last year.

Have I missed anything? For a list of responsibilities apportioned to St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Suffolk County Council please see the next page.

## Who does what in Suffolk

### District/borough councils

- Benefits - Housing and Council Tax
- Car parks - in Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Clare and Newmarket (parking charges apply), plus some in Mildenhall, Brandon and Lakenheath (free parking)
- Council Tax collection for county, borough/district, parish/town councils and Suffolk Police
- Economic development
- Elections - General, European and local
- Emergency planning
- Environment - including pollution and noise
- Food safety
- Heritage
- Housing - strategic (neither council has its own council houses), homelessness, housing options and housing needs register
- Leisure
- Licensing and regulation
- Parks and open spaces
- Planning and building regulations
- Tourist information - Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Clare, Haverhill, Lakenheath, Mildenhall, Newmarket
- Waste and recycling.

### Suffolk County Council (SCC)

- Adult social care and health
- Fire and rescue service
- Libraries
- Public transport and concessionary travel
- Registrars
- Road maintenance and improvements, public rights of way
- Schools and children's services
- Support for local businesses
- Trading standards
- Waste disposal (St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath collect all the waste and deal with recyclable materials; SCC is responsible for disposing of waste that cannot be recycled).

Website: [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk)

Public enquiries about SCC services:

T: 03456 066067

W: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/contact-us/>

## Borough. Major items so far in 2018

### Boundary Changes

Local groups, councils and the public are being urged to have their say and help shape options on what the ward boundaries for the new West Suffolk Council could look like.

Both Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council have been backed by Government to replace the authorities with a new West Suffolk Council. With the order to create the new Council due in parliament later this month.

New council wards for the West Suffolk Council would have to be created as the suggested number of councillors should reduce, in line with guidance from 72 to 64. People are being asked to look at the options which have been developed by the councils and are based on local information provided earlier this year as part of an informal engagement process.

At the moment these are just the councils' initial ideas for the ward boundaries and replies to this engagement process will help shape the options that will be put forward to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in April. The LGBCE makes the final decision and will hold its own consultation over the summer. However, residents and organisations can also put their own proposals forward to the LGBCE for consideration.

This warding review will not affect either the external boundaries of West Suffolk or of any parish or town council. It will use the current parish and town council boundaries as the building blocks to create the district-level wards which will have an electorate of around 2,000 people.

People can view the maps of the suggested wards and help to shape the options that both Councils will put in front of members and eventually send to the LGBCE by visiting [www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/wardoptions](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/wardoptions). Hard copies of the maps are also available to view at the Council offices in Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Mildenhall. Even if a single council was not being created both councils were due to have their wards reviewed.

As mentioned previously, one proposal is for **Hawstead** to become part of the **Horringer Ward**, thus uniting Gt and Lt Whelnetham, Hawstead, Horringer, Ickworth and Nowton. However, this is still a proposal and the Boundary Commission will have the final say.

### Historic moment as new West Suffolk Council goes to parliament

An order to create a new council to drive prosperity and jobs in West Suffolk has gone before MPs after an historic unanimous decision made by Council Cabinet members.

**St Edmundsbury Borough Council** has purchased the Former Post Office in Bury St Edmunds town centre and Iceland store in Haverhill, with the intention of having greater control over the future development and benefit to both towns.

**The West Suffolk Waste Hub**, a much-needed recycling facility has passed all the hurdles and will proceed.

**Ten times average earnings** needed to afford a home in and around Bury St Edmunds says report by National Housing Federation - The East of England Home Truths 2017/18 report by the National Housing Federation states that there are too few homes being built to meet local needs, with renting still unaffordable in parts of the Eastern region.

**Funding to tackle litter** on Suffolk's roads awarded to St Edmundsbury Borough Council - St Edmundsbury Borough Council has led a successful bid on behalf of the Suffolk Waste Partnership for £10,000 from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). The fund aims to reduce litter by funding innovative approaches to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local research projects that could be replicated more widely.

**Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan.** The aim of the Masterplan is to set guidelines for future growth and development of the Town Centre and provide the framework for individual development proposals. This vital and far reaching document has utilized the ideas of many, from Portfolio Holders, Town, Borough and County Councilor's, Business representative groups, trade associations and Heritage and environment groups, thus facilitating growth whilst retaining what makes Bury special.

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