

Redevelopment of former MSDC Needham Market headquarters site: Five houses on the new Chambers Green development are now open for viewing by appointment. The development is being delivered by Mid Suffolk Growth – a joint venture between Mid Suffolk District Council and Norse Group set up to deliver housing and promote sustainable growth across the district. The first phase is a combination of two and three bedroom detached and semi-detached houses, as well as one and two bedroom apartments and a retail unit. Ten of these properties will be affordable homes, helping to support those on lower incomes.

A further update on Covid-19 in Suffolk: August was the end of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown, however Mid Suffolk's work to support the district's recovery continues. Also, regular bulletins continue to be produced to give a snapshot of the current Covid-19 situation in Suffolk - along with updates on the work being carried out as part of Suffolk's Local Outbreak Control Plan. There are no signs that the Government will renew the legislation to enable virtual or hybrid meetings. MSDC Committee Meetings are being held in the Council Chamber and it is anticipated that the full Council meeting on 23rd September will be held in the Chamber.

Mid Suffolk and Babergh join calls for devolution talks with the Government: Together with other public sector leaders in Suffolk, MSDC has written to the Secretary of State responsible for local government, to say that the council welcomes early discussions with Ministers about a possible devolution deal for Suffolk. It is important that any deal should avoid an extra tier of government.

Gateway 14: The Outline Planning Application, with extensive conditions, was approved on 18th August by a majority vote, for Gateway 14 – Stowmarket's 2.45 million square foot, innovation, business and logistics park.

Green oasis set to strengthen Mid Suffolk's biodiversity: Almost three acres of land near Stowmarket has been bought by Mid Suffolk District Council to provide a green oasis for the town – as part of the council's biodiversity plans.

Afghan refugees: Following the Government announcement of its new resettlement scheme for Afghan refugees, councils in Suffolk including MSDC, have expressed their commitment to assist. MSDC has already helped a small number of Afghan interpreters and their families to resettle in Suffolk. There will be ongoing work to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and other refugees entering the UK.

Taxi Licensing: No encouragement given to switch to electric vehicles - the current administration at MSDC missed the opportunity to improve Mid Suffolk's environmental credentials when they put forward a new taxi licensing policy at the Council's recent Licensing Committee meeting. Despite the fact that no new diesel or petrol cars can be purchased after 2030, the ten year policy included no provisions to encourage cab drivers to move to electric vehicles and contained none of the incentives other councils use. The policy, without mention of any efforts to reduce emissions, was approved by the Chair's casting vote.

Compost giveaway: The date for collection of free compost from Mill Meadow, Needham Lake, has been changed and will now be Sunday 19th September from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon.

MSDC Locality Awards: The 2021/22 scheme is open for applications. Amounts of £250 or more are available to properly constituted local community groups and organisations that have a bank account and a treasurer. Please contact us for an application form or for further information and assistance in applying.

Mid Suffolk District Councillors Mike Norris mike.norris@midsuffolk.gov.uk Tel. 01449 720871 and
Steve Phillips stephen.phillips@midsuffolk.gov.uk Tel. 01449 721710.

Representing Needham Market, Badley, Baylham, Creting St Mary, Creting St Peter, and Darmsden.