

District Councillor Report: Walsham Le Willows Parish Council

April 2024

Retrofit of Council Houses	Mid Suffolk has secured a grant of £800k and will add over £1m of its own money for a retrofit programme for Council houses covering insulation, ventilation, solar panels and double glazing.
Community Development Grants	Grants are available for project activities to support local communities and organisations in Mid Suffolk to help with the delivery of local place-based initiatives and activities, where gaps in provision have been identified. Applicants will need to demonstrate they offer a wider community benefit and are fully inclusive. Grants are available up to 100% of project costs to a maximum of £20,000.
Homelessness strategy	Full Council adopted the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy 2024 and the associated delivery plan. Together with Babergh the councils want to aspire to go beyond the minimum required provision, and hope to provide a bespoke person-centred and proactive service.
CIL expenditure framework	Full council recommended approval of the amendments proposed to the Community Infrastructure Levy Expenditure Framework following the sixth review. The main changes include allowing applications for District CIL from sports clubs and community shops and cafes with provisos to ensure that any profit made by such businesses goes back to the community, and allowing more flexibility for community project costs
National significant solar farm proposal	A 2000MW solar farm proposal near Mendlesham has been proposed (750 acres – 425 football pitches!). This is a large nationally significant energy application which will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. MSDC are just a consultee, but have requested more clarity about certain aspects of the application.
Pylons	Mid Suffolk District Council has formally objected to National Grid's plans for more electricity pylons between Bramford and Twinstead – saying the impact on the countryside is too great.
DC/22/2190/HYB Hybrid planning application – Jaynic ex Copart application	This is coming before the West Suffolk Planning Committee again on April 3 rd 2024. The planning committee is basically being asked to reassess the previous decision with some additional conditions. I have sent a written statement to be read out.
Footpath plans	Please see separate mail sent about the footpaths. .

Suffolk devolution deal	The County Council has now opened the consultation of the proposed Level 3 devolution deal for the county. MSDC councillors debated this issue at last week's Council meeting, but are not involved in the SCC decision. The deal would mean the county council would have more local power alongside a fund of £480M over a 30 year period. This is a small proportion of the total SCC budget. There would also be a directly elected leader of the County Council. More information and public consultation can be found here: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution .

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