

District Councillor Report – Harry Richardson

July 2026

<p>Local government reorganisation</p>	<p>The new administration at Suffolk County Council confirmed at a Cabinet meeting on Monday 29th June that they formally intend to launch a Judicial Review to the High Court over the decision to proceed with three new unitary authorities in Suffolk.</p> <p>This will be at a cost of £500,000 which will be met from (as yet undetermined) earmarked reserves. The timescales for this are unknown but will likely depend on whether the High Court believes there is a ‘case to answer’.</p>
<p>Local Plan</p>	<p>The Scoping Consultation on the Local Plan opened on 5th June and runs until 31st July 2026. The Local Plan will guide decisions on housing, employment, infrastructure, town centres, the environment, transport and community facilities.</p> <p>The consultation seeks views on key issues and opportunities across both Babergh and Mid Suffolk and will inform the evidence base and plan-making process. It is an early opportunity for residents and organisations to contribute before the new Local Plan is drafted.</p> <p>No decisions are being made at this stage on specific development sites. The consultation also asks how MSDC should engage with communities and stakeholders throughout the process.</p>
<p>Refuse changes</p>	<p>We are now (as at 30th June) on week 4 of the new ‘Better Recycling’ regime. At present MSDC is collecting approximately 162 tonnes of food waste per week, up from 116 tonnes initially. There have been issues with missed collections, partially due to new drivers not being familiar with the routes and issues with the recent heatwave.</p> <p>Any resident who is still experiencing problems with the new collection schedule (including any new bins that have not yet been delivered) should contact MSDC on either recycling@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or 0300 1234 000 (option 4) .</p>
<p>Thurston Community College</p>	<p>The planning application for the rebuild of Thurston Community College was approved at the Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 17th June. This was prompted by the extensive presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (‘RAAC’) in the school buildings themselves.</p> <p>The construction of the new school is due to be completed in 2028. There will be further highways disruptions while the build-out is undertaken but it is hoped that the relocation of the main pick-up / drop-off point for coaches and buses will alleviate some of the pressure on the Station Hill / Ixworth Road / Norton Road junction once completed.</p>
<p>Armed Forces Day</p>	<p>Armed Forces Day commemorations took place at King’s Meadow Recreation Ground in Stowmarket on Saturday 27th June, bringing together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community to recognise the county’s armed forces community.</p> <p>The programme included a cadet and Standard bearers’ parade, a royal salute</p>

to HM Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, the national anthem, and performances by The Vibettes, the RAF Honington Voluntary Band and the Honington Military Wives Choir. Attendees also visited local stalls and displays from Suffolk's Regular, Reserve and Cadet Forces, alongside family activities.

Speeches from Cllr Darren Dordoy (Mayor of Stowmarket), Cllr Lorraine Baker (Chair of Mid Suffolk District Council), and Mark Pendlington, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, highlighted the importance of the armed forces community and expressed thanks for their service. The event concluded with an AH-64E Apache helicopter flyover.

Cllr Harry Richardson

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