

REPORT FOR STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL – MONDAY 4 JULY 2022

from West Suffolk Council Councillors – Nick Clarke, Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook

We hope you all enjoyed the Platinum Jubilee weekend and managed to get to some of the events. As you would expect there was a variety of good and bad weather but still many people turned out for the Queen's celebrations to recognise the amazing role she has carried out over the years. The three of us managed to get to some of the many events over the Clare, Hundon and Kedington ward. We were impressed with the work the volunteers carried out, giving up their time and putting on many events that were free to residents. Brilliant to see people came together and celebrate.

Grass Cutting

This year the team at West Suffolk Council (WSC) are doing a good job in the ward. The weekly schedule they send out keeps us all up to date. It may have gone a little rogue the last 2 weeks this is due to the team working with parish and town councils to help them in light of the jubilee celebrations. We are assured they will be back on plan within a few days.

Markets Review

A task group working on West Suffolk's markets has voiced ambitions for increasing customer numbers, more special events and plans to become financially self-sufficient. After West Suffolk Council formed a task group last summer to assess future developments of the district's six markets, as well as any opportunities and improvements that can be made, they have now set forward their ambitions.

The authority operates regular markets in Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Clare, Haverhill, Mildenhall and Newmarket, as well as special events such as those at Christmas. The task group has published its recommendations ahead of next week's scrutiny committee meeting.

Replacement bin charging

A £30 replacement charge for a stolen, lost or damaged blue or black bin will be introduced from 13 June. Web content will go live on Monday including the FAQs attached.

Charges were in this year's budget setting. This followed a transformation review as the council can no longer absorb the cost of around £100,000 a year for free replacements.

Replacement bins will be supplied with a sticker that can be marked with the house number which will help residents and crews identify where it belongs.

Bin crews are being reminded to replace bins with care in the place they were picked up from. Also to record any bins lost in a freighter on the in-cab tablet for automatic free of charge replacement.

Customer Services will be able to escalate calls for moderation should circumstances indicate that is appropriate.

As a council:

We strongly encourage bins to be marked with an address or house number to avoid being mistakenly taken and so crews can identify them.

We also suggest that bins are put out on the morning of collection and taken in as soon as possible afterwards.

West Suffolk is one of only two Suffolk authorities who do not currently charge Councils who charge have seen a decrease in requests for replacements.

West Suffolk Council is acting entirely legally and we will not collect waste if a replacement bin has not been paid for.

This has no effect on the level of Council Tax payable.

The householder has the option of taking waste to a household waste recycling centre.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

WSC have been awarded this as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) that Government announced in April this year to support the implementation of its Levelling Up White Paper.

The fund has two elements:

Multiply – funding to support adult numeracy. This is “to enable all adults without the equivalent of a GCSE Grade C or 4 in maths to be able to access a free flexible course”. The lead local authorities for Multiply are county councils and Suffolk County Council has been allocated **£3,752,462**. That said as plans for this emerge, we will know doubt play a role in supporting this and I will share more information as I get it.

Core UKSPF – where lead local authorities are districts, and from which West Suffolk Council has been allocated **£1,934,467** over three years.

The funding over the three years breaks down to:

Year One – £235,858 - must be spent by 31 March 2023

Year Two - £471,715 - must be spent by 31 March 2024

Year Three - £1,235,894 - must be spent by 31 March 2025

In order to ‘unlock’ West Suffolk’s allocation, West Suffolk Council, like all authorities need to submit an investment plan to Government by 1 August 2022 setting out how the funds will be spent in all three years. As you can imagine this is a very tight turn around, especially as the funding for the first year will not be given to us until October.

WSC is inviting all parish and town councils to take part in the engagement (details below) and to tell us what you think are the key challenges facing West Suffolk in the priority areas set out by Government that I mentioned earlier. These being:

- communities and place
- supporting local business
- people and skills (2024-25 only)

We also want to hear from you about local projects that could be funded from UKSPF in order to address these challenges. This will then help in the later process of putting forward detailed proposals that will meet local priorities.

The investment plan will be agreed by West Suffolk councillors before submission to the Government by 1 August 2022.

Parish and town are asked to complete the survey by **23 June 2022**. We appreciate that this is a short deadline, but it is to allow us to meet the timetable set by Government for submission of investment plans.

National Clean Air Day Thursday 16 June.

Although this day was a couple of weeks ago, we thought we would let you know what the council is doing on this important issue. The theme is the impact air pollution has on our health, harming every organ in our body. Transport is a big contributor to air pollution but there are other causes too.

WSC publish their performance [Protecting our environment \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/protecting-our-environment)

WCS are committed to working towards CO2 net zero by 2030.

They have approved a £9m investment in reducing carbon emissions including measures like EV vehicles, charging infrastructure, sustainable travel plans which will help. [A budget to help West Suffolk be greener, healthier and more prosperous is approved](#)

Have a statutory duty to monitor air quality across the district and although the air quality is generally good the Council is committed to improving this further. [Air quality \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/air-quality)

WSC is helping businesses to reduce air pollution they have launched a scheme to become an accredited Clean Air Business thewaytogosuffolk@suffolk.gov.uk

WSC are working on the following to reduce air pollution:

take direct action: drivers of larger vehicles in our own fleet are given environmental training as part of their professional certification and taxi drivers in West Suffolk work to a policy that has an anti-idling clause

The council's vehicle fleet is being upgraded with bio-diesel and electric vehicles
 We are growing the public EV charging infrastructure
 We raise awareness: For example we won national recognition for an on-going campaign we began in 2020 supporting schools in tackling anti-idling at drop-off and pick-up times. And we have produced an anti-idling driver training video to improve understanding of this issue: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QP14Exibj0>