

District Council Report

to parish councils in Claydon & Barham Ward, September 2018

Ward Boundary Proposals – Finalised

After a third consultation period which ended on 30th April this year, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), released the finalised ward pattern make-up for the May 2019 elections on 7th August. There were minimal changes made when compared to the second set of draft proposals and the new Claydon & Barham Ward will be a two-member ward enlarged from its present composition of parishes to also include the parishes of Coddenham, Ashbocking and Gosbeck. With a predicted electorate of 4,890 it will have almost perfect electoral equality as the average single-member ward will be 2,435 (equivalent to 4,870 for a two-member ward). As announced earlier, there will be 34 councillors, down from the present 40.

The Foyer, Stowmarket

Mid Suffolk has purchased this site in Stowmarket from Flagship Housing. It has been unused for over a year but has now been refurbished to provide housing for 17 vulnerable families in a mix of single, double and twin rooms. This will prevent families and/or individuals being placed into Bed & Breakfast accommodation. The council's focus however remains on the prevention of homelessness over the provision of temporary accommodation.

Acquisition by Mid Suffolk DC of 'Gateway 14' Site

On 15th August Mid Suffolk announced the purchase of the 'Gateway 14' site which comprises 100 acres of land to the east of Stowmarket which has outline planning consent for employment purposes and has the potential to accommodate over 1 million square feet of logistics, warehousing, advanced manufacturing and business space. Discussions are already under way with potential occupiers through the appointed agents for the site, GVA. It is envisaged that this will be a long-term project boosting the Mid Suffolk economy whilst generating a 'profit for purpose' for the council.

Mid Suffolk Property Company 'CIFCO Ltd' Trading & Performance Report Issued

Both Cabinet and Full Council were presented a report in July detailing the trading activities for CIFCO Capital Ltd following its first full year since the venture was approved. In addition, a 2018/19 business plan was included within the report. CIFCO is not targeting capital growth but rather medium to long-term income resilience. CIFCO is a 50/50 joint venture between Babergh DC and Mid Suffolk DC with a strong Board comprising Non-Executive directors, each with many years of Real Estate experience, together with councillor oversight. At the date of the report the company had invested £23,572,000 in six property assets with a rental income over £1.4million. Once fully invested the complete portfolio is expected to produce rental income of circa £2.8million p.a.

Joint Housing Strategy & Homelessness Reduction Strategy – Consultation

Cabinet in September is being asked to approve a Joint Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and a Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023 both to be put out for a formal 30-day consultation with key stakeholders, including parish councils, from 5th October to 2nd November. The Joint Housing Strategy is to ensure a ready supply of affordable homes which are well designed both inside and out. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires district councils to carry out a review of homelessness in their districts and formulate a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review.