

Reports to Kedington Parish Council. Tuesday 15 June 2021

From Cllrs Nick Clarke, Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook

Shoppers to help guide the future of West Suffolk's high streets

Shoppers and businesses are being asked to have their say on how future development will support local high streets and the economy.

This engagement will help inform the evidence we are creating to inform preparation of West Suffolk Council's Local Plan; it will help guide our policies and choices about future development in our towns.

As part of the local plan – which has to meet a Government timetable and be in place by 2023, West Suffolk Council wants to further understand how our town centres work, how people use them to consider how the local plan might help manage the economic success of our town centres.

From Monday 7 June residents will be selected at random to take part in a telephone survey, while town centre surveys will also take place with COVID security measures in place so households and shoppers can have their say.

Boundary review consultation

The Boundary Commission has published its proposals to overhaul the electoral map. Residents are being urged to give their views in the eight week consultation process which closes on 2 August. Visit www.bcereviews.org.uk

Future developments of West Suffolk's markets

A dedicated task force is being formed by West Suffolk Council to assess the future development of the district's six markets. The committee will look at what our markets are doing and how best to sustain them in the future.

The authority operates six regular markets in Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Clare, Haverhill, Mildenhall and Newmarket, although the size and regular stallholders of those markets varies from town to town.

Parking costs

The first parking tariff increases in five years are to come in next month to help pay for important town centre services.

West Suffolk Council has suspended the tariff changes since April 2020 but with the lifting of restrictions on 17 May to support the reopening of leisure and hospitality alongside retail and the need for income to pay for town centre services, the new charges will now come into effect from 5 July.

These are the first increases in five years, and in some of the Newmarket car parks, they are the first in nine years. This is despite rising costs associated with maintaining and running car parks including resurfacing costs, and around £1m per year in

Business Rates that the Council pays. There are also plans to invest further in parking infrastructure including more electric charging points and better signage.

Car park usage is almost back to numbers we saw pre Covid.

Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre cancelled

West Suffolk Council has announced that they will not be organising a Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre this year in its current form. West Suffolk Council have said that a new 'Christmas in Bury St Edmunds' initiative has been launched by local councils and groups which will bring other events to the town over the festive period. The initiative will start in November and organisations and businesses are also invited to come forward with their events and ideas to be included in the programme. It is also expected that West Suffolk Council will look to work with partners across the areas to see how other Christmas events can be put on to benefit the whole district.

Rough Sleepers

Nationally, the government has awarded councils £203million as part of its Rough Sleeper Initiative to help reduce the number of people on the streets. Although there are fewer people on the streets but there are many in hostels

West Suffolk Council was awarded £505,142. This funding is being used to pay for the ongoing work of the rough sleeper team and use of the accommodation that the council has secured, to try to help support people and prevent them from returning to rough sleeping.

Reminder **StreetLink** (www.streetlink.org.uk). If you are concerned about someone over the age of 18 that you have seen sleeping rough you can use this website to send an alert to StreetLink. The details you provide are sent to the local authority or outreach service for the area in which you have seen the person, to help them find the individual and connect them to support. It is important to note that if you think the person you are concerned about is under 18 please do not contact StreetLink but instead call the police.

£1.5m funding to help vulnerable people carry on living at home

Vulnerable people across west Suffolk will be able to receive support to carry on living in their own homes rather than having to go into hospital or care.

Independent Living in Suffolk has received the £1.5million funding for its work in west Suffolk from the Government's Better Care Fund.

The money will be available as grants to help pay for any adaptations to people's homes in order to help them carry on living there.

The adaptations can vary from a simple rail to more extensive works to provide access to facilities.

Enquiries will be assessed by Suffolk County Council and then West Suffolk Council will help people with the application process to support residents to carry out the work required.