

Gislingham Ward
Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham, `Wortham & Burgate, Wickham
Skeith Parish Councils
February 2025
District Councillor's Report:

Council meeting and annual budget	<p>The monthly council meeting for February took place on 27th February. The meeting primarily revolved around the council's annual budget, including approval of both the General Fund Budget and Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as delivered by both Cllr Winch and Cllr Pearson. This follows discussions on the budget through this month's cabinet meeting as well. Mid Suffolk is investing a record amount of over £36 million pounds in our area, 70% in rural communities.</p> <p>Due to the strength of reserves Mid Suffolk is not increasing its share of the Council Tax although the County council and Police are requesting the maximum of 4.99%.</p> <p>The full budget details can be read in the agenda here: (Public Pack)Agenda Document for Mid Suffolk Council, 27/02/2025 17:30</p>
Suffolk Devolution updates	<p>A public consultation has opened into the Norfolk and Suffolk mayoral combined authority by the government, until the 13th April. This is following the government's approval for the authority, of which more details can be found on the government's website Norfolk and Suffolk devolution consultation - GOV.UK</p>
Mid Suffolk Devolution Workshops	<p>These were organised to explain and consider the implications of a Mayor, a Mayoral Combined County Authority – MCCA, and the creation of Unitary Council(s).</p> <p>These have been recorded – and I am able to forward the slides to anyone interested.</p>
Next Full Council 19-03-2025	<p>Will be to consider proposals for Local Government Reorganisation ('LGR') affecting Babergh District Council / Mid Suffolk District Council as part of the English Devolution White Paper published by the Government on 16 December 2024.</p> <p>The Government wrote to council Leaders in 'two tier' areas on 5 February 2025 inviting them to submit 'interim plans' for LGR by 21 March 2025. In Suffolk the deadline for submission of full proposals is 26 September 2025. To comply with the fast-track process, the Suffolk district and borough councils jointly appointed KPMG to help develop the options for Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk. Separately to Suffolk county council which is also employing KPMG to develop its own proposal.</p> <p>The Government's preference is for local authorities in Suffolk to work together to develop a single proposal for reorganisation but there is an understanding that this may not be possible and will not be a barrier to progress. The Government has said it will consider any suitable proposals submitted by the relevant local authorities.</p>

New Independent Group	4 Conservative Councillors (Cllr James Caston, Cllr Lavinia Hadingham, Cllr John Whitehead & Cllr Anders Linder) have formed a new independent group on Mid Suffolk Council, in opposition to the county council's approval of the proposed devolution
New Solar Farm EcoPower Suffolk PreApplication Stage	<p>Indicatively, current site area extends to approximately 600 ha within the Mid Suffolk District Council area.</p> <p>Electrical connection to new 400kV Yaxley substation via underground cable.</p> <p>The indicative site comprises several parcels of land (5 landowners) situated around Yaxley substation. It is currently anticipated the site area closest to the Yaxley substation would accommodate the BESS and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>We are also looking to engage with the Local Planning Authority and local communities to collaborate on any suggested community benefit initiatives we can deliver as part of the Project.</p> <p>Gislingham Village Hall –Saturday 15th March, 11am -3pm Gov Website: https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0110019</p>
NG Norwich to Tilbury	<p>Mid Suffolk has responded to the recent targeted consultation and although there have been some minor local changes. Pylons further East of Gislingham avoiding Spring Farm meadows, Extended undergrounding of the existing 400KVA grid at the bottom of Dam lane, no underground option where it crosses the R Waveney, as a result of the geological results.</p> <p>Our position remains the same in that alternative solutions have not been properly considered.</p>
Local Plan review	With the new NPPF published alongside new increased housing targets, MSDC and Babergh have no real option other than to review the Joint Local plan part 1 which was adopted in November 2023. The existing plan may become superseded by new national policies if they are not updated. The councils will now build on the work already done on part 2 of the plan alongside reviewing part 1. The new timetable for the new plan will be brought to both councils in February.
Eurogarage service area A1088/A14 junction	Following safety Concerns previously being raised at Elmswell Service Station, the service station has now agreed to carry out the essential works and is due to reopen in early March following this.
Locality Budgets 2024/25	I have received a number of applications for the remaining funds within my locality budget. Some applications will have directed to wait until the next round of funding begins – hopefully in late May, early June.