District Councillor report October 2026

On the 24th of September there was the monthly MSDC meeting in Ipswich.

The Leader, Andy Mellen, expressed in his Announcements, the deeply felt disappointment and anger caused by the U-turn of the Government in halting the long announced plans for Local Government Reform (LGR). Officers and Councillors had been working very hard to abide by the timeframes imposed by the Government. At this point we don't know when and in what shape the LGR might reemerge. In early May next year there will Local Elections in the same format as before, District Councillors populating the same areas as always. One good thing that Andy Mellen pointed out is that a lot of people have found new ideas and new ways of cooperating.

Councillor Stringer put forth a motion for the Council to write to the Government expressing its concerns about important aspects of the recent changes to planning policies and regulations. These changes are about to kick in on October the 31st. Some have already happened, like the ceasing of funding for Neighbourhood Plans. Another important change is the removal of the right for elected Councillors to 'call in' an application in their own ward. A democratic link of local influence will thus be broken. A new 'Spatial Development Strategies, SDSs. No reassurance has emerged that this will not lead to 'Local Plans' getting to be unsound. In the NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework change of wording has occurred. The previous phrase, 'settlement boundaries' has been replaced with 'settlements'. This means that green spaces may be lost, also the very character of the landscape could be ruined. These plans on part of the Government would be detrimental to local democracy and Councillor Stringer's motion was unanimously passed.

The CIL expenditure framework has had some alterations. The time period for a Strategic Infrastructure project has been extended to up to the years. Nature recovery schemes has been brought in under the CIL umbrella whereas flooding measures continue to be outside the CIL.

A new fund for 'sprucing up' shop fronts and the like has been put in place. The proper name is 'Town and Village Centre Business Improvement Fund'. Up to £ 10 000 can be applied for. More info to be found the Mid Suffolk District Council website.

The Government has implemented a change to the 'Empty Dwelling Management Orders', the EDMOs. Going through the Residency Property Tribunal a Council is able to seize an empty property, it used to be after being unused for two years but it has now gone down to six months. Anyone where a death of a relative has happened needs to be aware of this as the sorting out of an estate often takes a lot of time.

The matter of the carpark at New Street Close in Stradbroke is gradually developing. I talked to the Officer two days ago and I expect another update by the end of this week.

Yours Sincerely,

Anders Linder