

Report for Nedging Parish Council 9.7.19

Robert Lindsay, Suffolk County councillor.

Buses to lose subsidy

The county council announced last month that 23 routes would lose their subsidy (about a third of the subsidised bus routes in the county) in order to save £340,000. Routes include the 461 and 462 from Hadleigh to Stowmarket, operated by Hadleigh Community Transport (HCT). The 462 goes via Whatfield and Naughton, the 461 via Bildeston and Hitcham. HCT also runs the 120 from Elmsett and Whatfield to Ipswich which is also losing its subsidy.

HCT has written to parish councils along the routes of its threatened buses to ask for a contribution of around £450 each to keep them going until March, in the hope that new funding or extra passengers can be found by then.

I voted against the decision to cut the rural bus subsidy (made in February) as I believe supporting our most vulnerable people with no other alternative transport in rural areas is a necessity. I am also prepared to contribute a similar amount to HCT from my locality budget. The final decision on withdrawal of subsidy will be made at the end of July. The bus operators will then have three months notice to the end of October before the subsidy is withdrawn. The subsidy for the 461 and 462 contract was £20,600 last year.

40mph limit Ipswich Road

Highways say they have no legal obligation to install repeater signs along this stretch and are unwilling to do so, because of the lack of space on the verges and the maintenance cost. So I asked if they could paint 40mph roundels or other marks on the road. They have agreed to do this on either side of the junction with Taylors Lane. The work has been ordered but will be done to fit in with other work.

Hedges

Highways have now agreed the hedge opposite the garage is overhanging and will issue a notice to the owner. I am checking what is happening with this and have also asked them to check the hedges at Ivy Cottage, Ipswich Road and Willow Cottage.

Restrictions on recycling

The amount of goods that can be recycled in Suffolk has reduced, with TetraPak cartons and metal items such as pots and pans no longer being accepted in recycling bins. This decision was made by the Suffolk Waste Partnership following a refurbishment of the Material Recycling Facility near Great Blakenham, because the new sorting equipment that is being installed will not be able to separate out cartons.

Cartons and metal items will need to be taken to household recycling centres. I have asked how this change will be publicised and am told that there will be a marketing push once the new machines are up and running.

Ofsted rates Suffolk County Council Children's Services "outstanding"

After a week-long inspection in April, Ofsted have given Suffolk County Council Children's Services an "outstanding" rating, an improvement from the previous rating of "good" in 2015. Suffolk County Council is one of only seven in the country to achieve this rating, and the positive report is testament to the hard-working frontline staff at the council.