

District Council Report

Bus Cuts

The 461/462 bus has been given a reprieve until March 2020, whilst alternative funding options are developed. While this is not a long-term solution it does give us time to try to save the bus routes permanently.

Climate Emergency declaration

Councillors at Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have voted on motions to support Suffolk's county-wide aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

This Council pledged to:

1. Acknowledge a climate emergency.
2. Set up a Task Force, commencing by September 2019, to examine ways in which Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils will respond to the climate change challenge on a spend to save basis, with the ambition to make Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils carbon neutral by 2030.
3. To work with partners across the county and region, including the LEP and the Public Sector Leaders, towards the aspiration of making the county of Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.
4. To work with Government to a) deliver its 25-year Environment Plan and b) increase the powers and resources available to local authorities in order to make the 2030 target easier to achieve.

CIFCO Business Plan

Also approved in July, was the CIFCO's draft business plan for 2019/20. The property investment company is looking to increase the £1.4m annual income it already generates for services in Babergh and Mid Suffolk – the equivalent of increasing council tax by more than 12%.

CIFCO Capital Ltd, which is wholly owned by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, was established in 2017 to generate income through property investment which is then ploughed back into council services within the districts to offset reductions in funding from central government.

Over the next 12 months the company plan on investing another £50m as agreed by both councils back in February. The plan was endorsed by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the month and approved at the July council meeting.

Each property acquisition is carefully considered by an expert team of advisors and where target acquisitions are deemed too risky or not cost effective, they are not pursued. While 12 properties were acquired, dozens more were ruled out.

The current portfolio of 12 properties is spread throughout the east of England and balanced across commercial sectors to minimise exposure to any one sector or location. The changing market is now expected to be reflected by a shift away from retail property and towards office and industrial sectors instead.

[Joint Local Plan Drop in Events](#)

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have been running a number of drop in events over the last month.

The events, which will be run across the district and continue until next week. The remaining events take place in Great Cornard, Needham, Claydon, Shotley and Stowmarket.

The events will allow residents with questions about the draft Joint Local Plan to put those questions to members and officers from the two councils.