

District & County Councillor's Report for November 2021

I apologise for not submitting a report last month, we were on holiday for three weeks and time just ran away from me, we had a week in Cornwall with the family then took the ferry to Ireland for 10 days; we had glorious weather and a fabulous time. (Cornwall was a bit wet)

County:

I have attended two full County meetings, many Councillors are still not attending meetings in person, because of health concerns and the Chamber can be rather crowded. There are COVID measures in place and Councillors are asked to wear masks unless speaking, tables and chairs are wiped down between speakers, etc, but it still feels rather stilted to me.

In the September meeting we received a Suffolk in Focus presentation by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the Chairman announced the Suffolk Archive' Sharing Suffolk Stories, Pride in Suffolk's Past project had received a national award, being also commended for the way in which it engaged with people who do not traditionally interact with or use archives.

VERTAS group has been awarded Highly Commended in the RoSPA Facilities Management Sector Award

The Chairman announced the charity he would be supporting during his year in office – it will be the East Anglia Air Ambulance, a cause close to my own heart, so expect to see some publicity about events soon. In October's meeting we received a presentation about their work.

Questions were asked about SEND provision in the County, the lack of spaces has caused some high-profile discussion lately and much lobbying of Councillors from a local pressure group and parents, also about School Bus provision and how the Highways team advises Councillors when work is to take place in their divisions. We have a new Cabinet member for Highways and he is very engaging and hardworking, I hope to bring him up here before too long.

Now the Government has insisted Statutory meetings should take place in person, SCC has brought in a dispensation clause for those unable to attend because of COVID reasons, so they are not disqualified.

My County inbox is as ever full of Highways issues, they are such expensive things to fix. Can I remind everyone there is a Highways portal to use, which is very easy and this should always be your first port of call.

I have attended training/ information sessions on the Dropped kerb policy, a site visit to Carlton Marshes, and a session on Highway's flooding.

District:

I have attended a Community Partnerships Board meeting, at which the success of the CATCH bus from Campsea Ashe to Framlingham was discussed, and with the assistance of BACT and Bungay Events and Business Association, our Community Partnership has funded a trial weekly bus service on a Thursday, to bring residents into Bungay from most of the Saints villages on a Thursday for the market and shopping. The first run was last week and there were no customers, which is disappointing. It will continue to run until February and for the Christmas market on 5 December. Our Community Partnership held its first meeting in person for 18 months at Bungay Community Centre, it was well supported and more decisions were made about grant funding some projects, but I cannot mention these here as I am not sure the organisations have been told. Sam, our community's officer has been very busy with publicity and getting me out to various places with the ceremonial cheque, it has been a real joy to meet some of the people volunteering in many of these smaller organisations you never hear about. He has also run half term activities in Bungay, Beccles and Halesworth. You may not be aware that Sam doesn't drive, so he is to be congratulated in the way he manages to get about to all of our villages. (He has been caught up in the current debacle at DVLA) We have a Visioning event coming up at Trinity Park at the end of the week. This will involve an in-depth review of the Partnership and how it is working. At Scrutiny, we have reviewed the Dentistry provision in East Suffolk, which is poor, there were several speakers including Peter Aldous, who has been raising the topic in Parliament for a few years now.

As ever, do contact me if you have any queries and I will try to help

Judy Cloke

1 November 2021