

Report from District Councillor Peter Patrick – November 2018

Just a few things to report.

I was, as you can guess, extremely pleased that the Planning Committee agreed the application for the proposed developments at the vineyard. I believe we must try to encourage enterprise and initiative and not, as in the case of the pier, attempt to stifle competition, however modest.

The Parish Council will be aware that I devoted a lot of time last year in helping put through the 'All Together' project, in the face of opposition from, inter alia, Cllr Davis. We achieved the move of staff from the inefficient Hadleigh offices, and have brought about a significant change in working practice. Equivalent effort came from my counterpart in Mid Suffolk, Cllr Horn. Much to my surprise, he and I were awarded a Judges' Commendation for our work at a presentation at the Guildhall in London last week. I didn't get a backdated Special Responsibility Allowance from Babergh councillors, but I did get a certificate from the major Local Government information organisation. Something for the granddaughters. Cllr Davis' appropriately remunerated portfolio continues the work we started.

I do wish the shoreline protection CIC good fortune. I know you will receive ongoing help from Chris Knock. If I can help in any way, please shout.

I am keeping a 'watching brief' on the caravan site. Our officers are doing all they can.

I no longer have responsibility for Babergh's finances – you know why – but I am trying to follow events and progress. I see no grounds for optimism, particularly since Babergh councillors rejected the opportunity to 'merge' with Mid Suffolk. There are significant investments being made in Sudbury, but these are unlikely to yield the short-term benefits that will be desperately needed. The current administration will have to produce a budget for next year, just as I did for this year. Mine was voted against by opposition members, including Cllr Davis, and Lib Dems, but no alternative was offered. I sincerely hope that, in the run-up to next year's local elections, those who wish to be involved in running Babergh will have the courtesy to produce their own budget options.

Finally, I was delighted to see that local people won community awards. It was pleasing that the local shop is so well supported by the local residents, and I hope the proposed new houses in Queensland will be well received as an attempt by Babergh to bolster the local community.