

Borough Councillors report November 2017

1. **Junction 45, Rougham Relief road and Sow Lane** now open.
2. **West Suffolk Operational Hub** approved by development control committee. Now with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for consideration and decision on whether or not he will be seeking to call it in for his own determination.
3. **Single Council for West Suffolk.** Both councils (St Eds and FH) have agreed to proceed with this plan. The Secretary of State for communities will now study our proposal and issue a decision on whether or not he is minded to agree with the business case. If positive, work will immediately begin on a draft order to be laid before Parliament to create a new council for West Suffolk. The plan being that this will be in place for the 2019 elections.
4. **Christmas Fayre** takes place from 2pm on Thursday 23rd November through to Sunday 26th November. Opening events include late night shopping, East Anglia's Children's Hospice carol concert in the cathedral at 6pm followed by a lantern procession and fireworks in the Abbey Gardens. Park and Ride will operate from Friday through to Sunday. Police will be working hard to keep everyone safe but ask that people remain vigilant and report anything suspicious.
5. **Late night shopping** on Thursday evenings commences this week after the lights switch on 16th November. There will be free parking from 4pm on these days in addition the normal Free from 3 on Tuesdays.
6. **Anglia in bloom.** Bury St Edmunds has been chosen to represent East Anglia in the town category of the National Britain in Bloom awards next year.
7. **Guildhall.** Refurbishment of the Guildhall is underway. The Guildhall will be open for visitors to see the plans during the weekend of the Christmas Fayre 25th -26th November from 12-4pm. The Apex will be hosting an exhibition of paintings from the Guildhall from 4th December.
8. **Homelessness.** Work is ongoing to provide an emergency winter shelter. We have been in discussion with a provider since the summer to provide winter shelter for rough sleepers but despite our best efforts the provider has just informed us they are unable to go ahead with this service. We are in urgent discussion with an alternative provider, the issue being not the premises but the staffing. I hope to have positive

news by the end of the week on options. The cost to the council will be approximately £60,000

9. **Universal credit.** This has commenced in St Edmundsbury with Forest Heath following on in September 2018. So far there have been around 80 applicants in Bury area and 54 in Haverhill.