

## **MSDC COUNCIL – 25 JANUARY 2024**

### **ITEM 5 – LEADER’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **1. Update on Government payments after Storm Babet**

It is three months since Storm Babet had a devastating impact on our communities. With several storms and heavy rainfall events since, for many residents and businesses the recovery is still ongoing.

Following the storm, the Government announced flooded households could apply for up to £500 to help with costs, and businesses could apply for up to £2,500. I am happy to be able to update councillors today, and I can confirm that all these grants have now been paid out. There are more than 300 households and nearly 40 businesses who have received the recovery funding.

Our officers worked to get these grants to those impacted as quickly as possible, working closely with Suffolk County Council as the lead local flood authority. I would like to thank everyone involved in this process.

Debenham was one of the worst affected communities in Suffolk, so I am very pleased that tomorrow a flood forum will be held in the Debenham Community Centre, where residents will be able to hear from, and speak to, the Environment Agency, Suffolk County Council, our officers and others. I think this will be a very useful event, I am planning to attend to see how it goes, and I am grateful to Councillor Davies as the ward councillor for Debenham for making this event happen.

#### **2. Living Well in Winter grants**

I am pleased to report Mid Suffolk has provided grants under the ‘Living Well in Winter’ scheme to 14 projects in the district.

The grant was introduced last year to support VCFSE organisations (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprises) in providing new accessible spaces and activities, or to expand upon existing projects, in order to provide warm spaces and help tackle social isolation.

I’d like to thank all of the people who make projects like these happen in our communities. We hope that this extra funding will go a long way to supporting the wellbeing of residents during the colder months and help people to forge new connections within their communities.

#### **3. Tribute to Charlie Flatman**

Finally, I was sorry to learn of the death of Charles Flatman, who served as ward councillor for Eye between 1993 and his retirement in 2017, but represented the town at either town, district or county level for a total of 43 years.

He sat on various committees over the years, including environmental health, housing and local economy committees. During his tenure he was also heavily involved in bringing forward Eye Community Centre, working with the town's cricket club, and the reopening of the Queen's Head pub.

Charlie served his community with dedication and distinction, and I am sure all members will join me in sending our condolences to his family and friends.