

Paul Gadd County Councillor Update

Saffron Walden Town Council 10/7/23

1. Locality Fund:

- a. I've had applications for £500 each from Men in Sheds and from the PSG women's football team for help with kit so far

2. Education

- a. On primary and secondary school numbers, as I said last month, I think the reality is that there is a shortage of school places in Saffron Walden and a surplus in some of the villages, which is why children are being sent to some of the village schools. At the same time, the Saffron Walden shortage isn't enough to justify a new school yet;
- b. On my call in May 2023, ECC confirmed that they will exercise the option to acquire the school site behind Tesco which is part of the Linden Homes land. Their legal function seems to be under a lot of resourcing pressure at the moment, so I've chased to check that they are exercising the option in good time;
- c. I've now spoken with Essex education regarding the shortage of nursery places locally, and they recognise that there is a real issue which needs addressing, and they intend to do so. They have been contacted by a possible new nursery provider and I am also talking to Cllr Coote in his capacity at the Bell Nursery; he is talking to Essex.

3. Council Matters:

- a. There is an ECC Full Council meeting on 11/7/23. From the agenda it's difficult to see much of interest. There will be a brief discussion on the boundary changes, but ECC haven't formulated a reply, so are delegating it to officers. They have also failed to have their statutory audit completed, but this seems to be the same problem affecting many district and county councils since the Government abolished the Audit Commission

4. Matters for Planning and Transport:

- a. Matters concerning: Flooding and drainage issues; highways and planning are separately reported to the Planning and Transport Committee.
- b. I would note for all councillors though that Essex Highways are operating their member led pothole scheme again, so I'll be allowed to nominate 2 lots of 18 potholes! My first window of opportunity will be mid August, so any particularly bad ones, let me know. When you do, please include location, at least 2 photos and the reference number from when it has been reported – if any haven't been reported, please report them first - [Tell us - Essex County Council \(essexhighways.org\)](https://www.essexhighways.org)