

## Councillor Report April 2025

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March there was the ordinary MSDC meeting and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April there will be an extraordinary meeting, to mainly discuss 'Devolution'. The LGR, Local Government Reform, will be mostly for subsequent meetings and informal discussions.

Firstly it was confirmed that Councillor Rachel Eburne had passed away after a long period of illness. She was very widely respected, very well liked and deeply knowledgeable in all kinds of matters.

Re the LGR an interim report will be sent to government on the 21<sup>st</sup>. It is clear that not only the MSDC but all Districts in Suffolk are in favour of a multi unitary solution. Several options are on the table and these will have to be whittled down in numbers long before the crucial date of the 26<sup>th</sup> of September when the proposal must be sent to the Government. The new Unitaries are expected ( by the Government) to get up and running no later than April 2028. It is worth noting that one of the official criteria is to make credible the development of 'stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment'. Also included are aims to achieve 'local engagement and addressing concerns' as well as 'local identity, culture and history'. It has been easy to emphasize the multifaceted nature of the vast county of Suffolk. A two Unitary model, East and West, would produce two entities of almost identical population sizes, 386,478 and 389,964. Plenty to discuss amongst all of us, all members of the public.

Joint working with Parish and Town Councils will be strived for, support and training preceding changes in responsibilities.

It was agreed by Council that a formal consultation period of six weeks regarding the proposals revisions of rates for CIL charging. This period to be commenced by the end of April. The charges have only been index linked for 9 years. Strategic Sites are exempt from CIL, sites where additional infrastructure is required. Eye has now been removed from this list as new builds have already got underway or been approved of. The Councillors in charge of this are Andrew Stringer and Sally Davies. Christine Thurlow is the Lead Officer for this project. I have to admit that the documentation with appendices for all of this has proven to be more than I have had the time to read.

A 'Biodiversity and Trees supplementary planning document' was presented for adoption. A lot of diligent work had very obviously been carried by a team of Officers, lead by Philip Isbell, supported by Councillors Anderw Stringer and Sally Davies. This Document was approved by Council. One baseline requirement is for developers to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity as compared to what existed prior to the development. Further obligations are outlined in the Joint Local Plan, part 1. Monitoring is an important part of this. A habitat management and monitoring plan will be part of a legal agreement stretching up to 30 years. These plans are expected to be detailed. Reports to be presented to Councils.

Yours Truly,

Anders Linder