

## District Councillors' report, All Saints and Wayland ward September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024

During August, often referred to as the Council recess month, the work of officers and members of Breckland has continued apace albeit with many taking their annual leave. In addition to the day to day functioning of the council we have been engaged on a variety of initiatives, not necessarily of our own making such as:

- District Boundary Review
  - The Boundary Commission advised us that as a result of demographic changes to the existing wards within Breckland (caused by housing growth in certain areas) that a review is to be undertaken. As a consequence we have been working to provide the Boundary Commission with an amended warding pattern that will meet all of their criteria and provide a balance of representation across the district. This proposal is being reviewed by the Boundary Commission and any agreed changes will take place at the next district council elections in 2027
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document
  - The New government has made much of the failure of local planning authorities to deliver much needed housing growth across the country and announced that they would be consulting on a revised draft of the NPPF that they anticipate will do much to help to unblock schemes. That consultation runs until 24<sup>th</sup> September and Breckland officers and members have been considering a robust response during August.
- Local Plan
  - The likely changes to the NPPF will have an impact on Breckland's local plan on which officers have been engaged recently. The uncertainty about the outcome of the NPPF and its wider implications on national and local policy has meant that we have had to put on hold our work until we have clarity and can move forward with confidence.
- Budget setting
  - This is the time of year when we commence in earnest our budget setting process for the coming financial year 2025-26. However we are all aware that the new government will be delivering their own Budget at the end of October and there are likely to be nuances in national policies as a result that may have an impact on local decision making. Our team at Breckland are committed to ensuring that we deliver a balanced budget hence we are reviewing our activities to ensure we provide best value at the least cost to residents and businesses.
- Town and Parish Council Engagement Events
  - The leader of the Council and the Chief Executive supported by appropriate officers and members have arranged a number of events across the district in September, the first of which is to be held at Shropham village hall on Monday 9<sup>th</sup>, to outline subjects for discussion such as
    - **Flytipping:** Efforts and measures in place to tackle this issue.
    - **Breckland Rural Support Officer (Ranger):** Their role and the support they provide.

- **Inspiring Communities:** Highlights of our work in community engagement and support.
- **Housing:** Updates and information on housing projects and policies.
- **Community Safety:** Initiatives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our residents.

Councillors Sarah Suggitt and Philip Cowen