

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT FOR EDGEFIELD PC – NOVEMBER 2024

SUCCESS FOR NNDC

I am pleased to report that the Council continues to be recognized nationally for its performance in coastal management, revenue collection being the best in the country, dog warden services Golden Paw award, property acquisitions for the homeless and finally in planning with the highest platinum award, with just 3 other district councils, for successful appeals and speed of decisions in domestic applications. We will continue to improve our services across other areas within the financial constraints we are currently experiencing.

AUTUMN BUDGET

The Government budget presented on 30 October has done little to relieve the cost and demand pressure in North Norfolk and beyond. English councils are saddled with a £2.3 billion funding gap in 2025/26 rising to £3.9 billion the year after. A £6.6 billion shortfall across two years. We continue to draw on our reserves to minimize any rise in council tax next year but this is not sustainable in the long term.

LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION LAUNCH

A further consultation has been launched to ask residents for their views on additional sites allocated for development in the new Local Plan and runs from 6 November until 19 December. The new Government's demands for more houses-building have necessitated changes in the Plan to increase new build numbers until 2040 from 553 houses each year to 973 (70% increase). This has affected the progress of the Plan and increases in numbers are inevitable following the change of Government. Please go to the Local Plan Examination page on the Council's website for further details.

NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY PROGRESS

Norfolk Environmental Credits is a not- for- profit company, formed by 5 district councils in Norfolk (the only one in the country of its type) to expedite the release of sites for major development under lockdown since March 2022. A further £8.9 million has been secured to expand the company's scope to invest in land for nutrient improvement around the county so developers can buy credits especially when they cannot satisfy the rules within sites being developed. This should encourage more building in our district in the near future.

CAR PARKING CHARGES AND PUBLIC TOILETS

We have decided to increase charges by 30p per hour in our coastal car parks, 20p in the resort car parks and 10p elsewhere from April 2025 to reduce the deficit in the Council's finances. New weekly tickets, increases in coach parking and season tickets

are also being considered. The review of public toilet provision continues with some closures and some sales of sites to charities, parish councils and local businesses is likely to save expenditure and reduce our deficit.

BEACH HUTS AND CHALETS

A recent review shows that we maximize income from longer leased huts and chalets as compared to the weekly lettings so plans will be announced to generate more consistent income and increase maintenance savings. Releasing sites to one commercial operator to reduce pressures on costs to the Council is also under consideration.

SPENDING AND FAIR FUNDING REVIEW

There are 2 large projects currently being carried out. A long overdue review of business rates and fair funding (not altered since 2011). However, this presents a risk as the pressure on social care costs will more than likely result in funding being channelled to the County Council who are responsible for social care services and away from district councils like ours. This could mean a loss of £2-3 million per annum due to the Revenue Support Grant being withdrawn. We wait for the outcome from the Treasury with bated breath.

OUTLOOK MAGAZINE

The Council's quarterly magazine will be delivered from 11 November to every household containing a variety of informative articles on the daily working of the District Council and how to get in touch.

Thank you for reading this report. If you have any questions about this report or any other matters then please contact me at:-

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Cllr Andrew Brown