

# **Cllr Christopher Cushing – November 2024**

## **Fakenham Lancaster North Ward – District Council Report**

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*Lancaster North ward covers all dwellings in the parish of Fakenham that are east of Wells Road, and north of Highfield Road, Greenway Lane, Pensthorpe Road and the A1067.*

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### **1. FLASH Project - Swimming Pool & 3G Artificial Pitch**

- By now most residents will have heard the good news that the government will honour the previous government's commitment to provide £9.8m for a new swimming pool.
- Planning work has continued. The project will soon be handed over to the contractor who will be responsible for building the facility.
- The estimated completion date for the swimming pool is now October 2026. This is six months later than first planned because of the delays in confirming the funding has slowed elements of the delivery. The new date needs to be formally ratified with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- The 3G artificial pitch will be a separate development and follow on from the swimming pool. I assume this will not be completed until 2027.
- This will be funded mostly by the Football Foundation with some money from the District Council.

### **2. Speeding on Field Lane, Rudham Stile Lane and Claypit Lane**

- I raised the issue of speeding at the November police liaison meeting of the Safer Action Neighbourhood Panel. I asked the police to undertake regular handheld speed camera checks during the school rush hour times.
- In addition, the Town Council has agreed to deploy a new SAM2 camera that they are in the process of buying along Rudham Stile Lane. This is a mobile camera that records the speed of oncoming cars and flash up their speed with a 'slow down' message if they are going too fast. There is currently one placed at the bottom end of Field Lane.
- The maximum deployment lasts up to 4 weeks, then there must be an 8 week gap. It will hopefully help to reduce speeding if these cameras can be set up around at Field Lane, RSL and Claypit Lane on an ongoing basis.

### **3. Urban Extension north of Rudham Stile Lane**

- Work on the new A148 roundabout is underway. This is scheduled to finish on 9<sup>th</sup> May next year.

#### **4. NNDC Fakenham Car Parking Fees**

- The District Council approved at their November Full Council meeting increasing parking fees for their 'Standard' market towns' car parks which includes Fakenham by 10p per hour.
- I proposed an amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group that there should be no increase for the 'Standard' car parks. This was done on the basis that the council originally intended to rise circa £400k from the car park fees increases, whereas their final proposal will raise an estimated £470k. The Standard car park element of this is just over £30k. I argued that market towns like Fakenham need all the help they can get to encourage people to shop there. However, the Liberal Democrat majority voted this down.

#### **5. Tyres Dumped at the end of Holt Road near Clipbush Lane**

- Over 50 tyres were dumped at the end of Holt Road near Clipbush Lane. I reported these to NNDC. As the council were unable to determine who owned the land on which the tyres were left, they agreed to remove them.

#### **6. Field Lane Potholes**

- Some of the potholes I reported at the bottom of Field Lane have been repaired. In addition, I subsequently reported some in the pavement and Highways have agreed to do these as well.

#### **7. Possible Abolition of the District Council**

- The Government have stated that they want to institute mayoral authorities for all areas of England. They have indicated that they will propose a combined one for Norfolk and Suffolk.
- In parallel with this the Government have said would like to reform local government in both counties by abolishing the County Council and District Councils and replacing them with unitary authorities. These will be responsible delivering the services that both provide now.
- The Government have indicated they will publish their proposals before Christmas. Hopefully this will give an idea of what precisely they intend to do. I think we need to see the details of this before taking a view on it.
- I would anticipate that this will not affect Town and Parish Councils. Indeed, where unitary councils have been created elsewhere in the country, they have strengthened the role of towns and parishes.