

# **Cllr Christopher Cushing – December 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**

- The Council has now received the signed Memorandum of Understanding from Government which formally confirms the funding for the swimming pool.
- The planning application has now been validated and is going through its process. Site notices should have been placed by now. The 13-week time period which the Planning Authority have to determine the application expires in mid-February. It is hoped that, given the amount of work which has been undertaken before the submission, that the application may be considered at the Planning Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 but if this is not possible then the March committee date does not significantly affect the timetable.
- The Council is using a framework agreement to procure the contractor to deliver rest of the development. This uses Alliance Leisure Services (ALS) who are a leisure development company, specialising in projects such as this. They have their own framework for the construction phase. The use of frameworks significantly reduces the procurement burden on the Council and shortens the time on this activity.
- The NNDC Assets Team will work to progress the lease with FTC to facilitate the project.
- Steve Hems, the Director for Communities who is responsible for the project, meet with some of FTC councillors a couple of weeks. This was felt to be of benefit, and it is likely to be repeated in the future as the project progresses.
- I understand Steve has been asked by FTC about the space for the grounds persons and he met with an ALS representative and Lesley Meanley on site on 13<sup>th</sup> December to try and identify a suitable solution. ALS are discussion with the architect and others to look at where viable solutions mat be found.

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

- Waiting for the arrival of the Town Council's new SAM2 camera which they have agreed to deploy initially 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.

### **3. Path from Rudham Stile Lane to the Rugby Club**

- I reported a tree that had fallen over during the recent gales to the Town Council. They said this was the responsibility of Highways and kindly reported it to them to remove.

### **4. Path from Langham Glass to Holt Road**

- One of my residents asked me if the path that runs from Langam Glass to Holt Road could be tidied up as brambles and foliage were impeding the path.
- I reported this to Anglian Water who I was given to understand own this. The path runs parallel o the Langham Glass site, then there is a 90 degree turn to the south to Holt Road. Anglian water say they own the southern part and have cleared this.
- This leaves the northern section which I may do myself as there is not too much to clear up there.

### **5. Local Government Devolution**

- The Government published their Devolution White Paper (WP) on English Local Government Devolution on the afternoon of Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December. A White Paper sets out proposals for future legislation.
- The document states the desire to create mayoral authorities for all areas of England. Though not mentioned specifically in the WP, they have indicated that they will want a combined one for Norfolk and Suffolk.
- In addition, the Government have said would like to abolish existing the County Council and District Councils and replacing them with unitary authorities. These will be responsible delivering the services that both provide now.
- The WP says these should have a minimum population of 500,000, though there can be exceptions. Norfolk's population is about 930,000 so I think there will be at least two unitaries created in the county.
- At the moment we have no idea of the process for agreeing this, shape of what the new authorities or the timescales involved. I would expect this to become clearer as Council leaders start discussing this with Government ministers.
- It is possible that because of this that the County Council elections scheduled for next year will be cancelled, but again this is to be confirmed.

**I would like to thank all members and officers of the Town Council for their support over the last year. It is a great benefit to me to be able to work with such a nice and helpful team.**

**I wish you all a Mery Christmas and Happy New Year.**

**With best wishes,**

**Christopher**