

Annual County Council Report for Parish Councils 2016

Devolution

Local council leaders in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have agreed a deal with the government – to devolve significant powers to local level. The deal has been produced after months of negotiations with authorities across Norfolk and Suffolk and latterly Cambridge and Peterborough.

The draft agreement suggests a combined authority be set up across the four authority areas in East Anglia, but councils would still keep their sovereignty and deliver local services. It would see the transfer of significant resources and powers from central government to the region, but at this stage specifically for infrastructure, housing, economic development and jobs and skills. Between now and the Summer each council in East Anglia will have the chance to debate the detail in the draft agreement.

Highways

A new pot-hole and small project fund of £1.5million to ensure not only good quality roads, but rucially a good standard of road safety – cyclists and motorcyclists are especially vulnerable to potholes.

Parish Partnership Scheme

Funding of £3800K for 122 small scale highway projects across Norfolk has been agreed by Council. The money from the County Council's Parish Partnership scheme will be matched by parish and town councils who were invited in June 2015 to put in bids for funding schemes important to their local area. This comes on top of the £1.5million pot-hole and small projects scheme mentioned above. Popular bids have been for vehicle activated signs, trods as well as part-time advisory 20mph signs with flashing warning lights specifically outside 12 schools in the county.

NDR

Work is now underway on this important scheme which is expected to help deliver 10,000 new homes and 12,000 new jobs. The road, when it opens, will be a 20km dual carriageway running from the A47 at Postwicksouth-east of Norwich through to th A1067 north-west of the city and is currently the country's biggest local authority promoted road building project. The road is expected to be open to traffic by early 2018, although there is an ambition to have the NDR open to traffic before Christmas next year 2017. Of course this target depends upon good progress with earth moving over the coming months as well as key structures such as the twin bridges over the Norwich to Sheringham railway and Plumstead Road.

GCSE exam results:

Norfolk's schools have narrowed the gap on the national averageat GCSE for the second successive year according to provisional results published. Early results suggest that Norfolk has climbed 35 places up the national league tables over the last two years, with a 16 place jump since 2014. 53.8per cent of students achieved A* to C grades, including English and Maths, while 63.7per cent of students performed above the national average of 66.6per cent.

Norfolk has seen a big rise in the number of 16-18 year olds now in education, employment or training.

There are also other numerous bits and pieces of news that may be found on the council's website www.norfolk.gov.uk

Cllr Colin Foulger

18th April 2016
NCC Forehoe Division