

Borough Council Report 2017-2018

This year has for me been a special year for me as I was elected Mayor of St Edmundsbury and I have enclosed my Mayors speech as a separate document.

This year has been a year of balance and getting ducks in a row for the new West Suffolk. It will be going forward and a list of boundary options has been submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. This will be studied and options come back for further consultation. It is proposed that St Edmundsbury will have one less Councillor and Forest Heath will lose seven Councillors. This will leave a West Suffolk Council of 64 Councillors.

In my opinion this needs to be carefully managed as it has at the moment given Forest Heath an equal seat on the negotiations.

I know it is a side issue to some but as Forest Heath has never had a Mayor there is a convincing job that Borough status is important to the economics of the Council as this brings in revenue via leisure and status.

St Edmundsbury will not be increasing Council tax as there is a plan in place to work towards equalisation across West Suffolk.

I keeping with financial policy St Edmundsbury will be taking an opportunist view on capital spend of over £44 million in the next 4 years.

One recent acquisition is the old Post Office which has caused much concern by residents so with proper consultation this is being seen as an investment for the future. Of local interest Locality budgets will remain the same at £2.5 K per Councillor. This year I have supported the play area with £1K for equipment.

Sadly I resigned from Governors at Gt Whelnetham school after nearly 40 years. I still believe there is a need for traffic management on the 60 mph stretch of road before 30mph sign. I had an agreed scheme while a County Councillor but this was not supported by the School. I asked questions at Suffolk County Council plus met with Highways Cabinet Member. Who incidentally had to park by 30 mph sign and like children had to step out into the 60 mph road. There was an agreement that there would be additional signage and hedge trimming. Only hedge trimming has been done. I feel I need to place on record that I have done as much as I can and am totally disappointed that even a bare minimum hasn't been done.

In Nowton there was a problem with encampment by Gypsy/Travellers in Nowton Park and although they were moved on there still had to be a deep clean which took over two days. There is a legal problem on how many areas we as a Council we can put a prohibition notice on (I believe that is the phrase) plus I in on the meeting.

On a brighter note was able to invite members of the Oakes family to the Mayors Parlour to see the chain which was given by the family also photos and memorabilia. The Chain which is 200 years old cost £141's at the time. Also able to give them info on the influence of the family in Nowton.

In all a busy year has been enjoyable obviously apart from unresolved school issues.