DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT FOR MELTON CONSTABLE PC – APRIL/MAY 2025

PLANNING REFORM

The new Government's drive to improve our planning system continues its passage through Parliament and has proposals for easier acquisition of building land by local authorities, localising planning fees and increasing capacity for planners. They say it's needed to help councils deliver the homes and infrastructure our communities require. It also proposes to restrict whether decisions are taken by planners or councillors via committee. This is a concern because local councils should always have an opportunity to scrutinise decisions that affect us locally.

LOCAL PLAN RE-VISIT

The latest stage of approving the new Local Plan for the District took another step this month towards being adopted. The Govt. Inspector announced that the recent changes agreed with the Council are acceptable so the main effect is our annual target will be cropped to approx. 575 new houses instead of 900+ over the next 15 years. More to follow as this unfolds later.

FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

The Council has allocated £1.456 million to purchase vehicles ahead of the new food waste collection rotas introduced by the former Government and effective from April 2026. NNDC is required to operate a weekly food waste collection service form next April along with all authorities nationally. Each household will receive a 5-litre food waste caddy. How this will impact all bin collections has still to be determined between NNDC and their operator, Serco.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM (LGR)

The debate between our Council who prefer a three unitary model with East, West and Greater Norwich and those who prefer either just one (like the County Council) or two (Norwich and then the rest of the county) continues as the Govt. are allowing until September for formal bids to be submitted.

HOLT PRIMARY SCHOOL LATEST

The County Council will still not commit to building the new school after permission was granted several years ago. Their view is that population growth has declined and its not currently justifiable. This is being disputed by others who are very aware that funding from the developer is time-limited and could be recalled within 5 years if building the new school Is not started. The residential part of the site currently being marketed was only allowed under planning rules because of the new school.

NEW LIDL IN HOLT

The Council are expecting a planning application for a much-needed new store on the edge of the Heath Drive. Before applying Lidl would like to know what the local community thinks of the proposal. Everyone is invited to a meeting at the Community Centre on Kerridge Way NR25 6DN on Friday 9 May 3.30 – 7.30pm to find out what's in store!

NAMEPLATE REPAIR

The Council have listed the plate on the corner of Gordon Rd for refixing to the wall but cannot say exactly how soon this will occur as these repairs are done in batches across the district.

Thank you for reading this report.

Cllr. Andrew Brown

28/4/2025