

## **Suffolk County Council Report for Carlford Division. 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**

Since your last Annual Parish Meeting I have been re-elected as your County Councillor for Carlford Division, and my first task was to attend numerous mandatory training sessions, covering such things as Health and Safety, Corporate Parenting, IT, Emergency Planning, my role as your councillor and courses associated with committees I have been appointed to.

The councillor appointments I was given following the election in May were:-

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Pension Board.

Suffolk Armed Forces Community Champion.

East Anglian Army Reserve and Cadet Assn Representative.

Cabinet Committee for Health and Wellbeing issues.

Joint Advisory Committee for Areas of Natural Beauty.

Suffolk County Council Observer on the Boards of The New Wolsey Theatre and Eastern Angles Theatre Group.

I have also been appointed to the Lord Lieutenant's 2018 Committee for Commemorating the Centenary of the Signing of the Armistice. We have been planning 5 Major events across the County, as well as encouraging other events being organised by other organisations within the County. I am also encouraging the Planting of Oak Trees across the County as a living memorial to all those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, especially members of the Suffolk Regiment. Your Parish Council may like to participate.

I have also been on the interviewing Panel to find a replacement for our retiring Armed Forces Commissioner, and our choice has been ratified by the Suffolk Leaders Board, and Lt Col John Ogden Ret. has been appointed.

In addition to attending all the main Suffolk County Council meetings, I have also attended as many Parish Council meetings as possible, and numerous fetes, coffee mornings and social events throughout the Division, in order to meet as many Parishioners as possible.

Most of the concerns I have encountered at Parish Council meetings are issues relating to Highways, whether it be potholes, speeding through villages, speed restrictions, hedge cutting, footpaths or signage. I wasn't allocated a local highways budget this financial year, which has meant I haven't been able to

achieve much due to lack of finance to resolve these issues. However, I have been able to finance various projects, such as defibrillators and improvements to village halls, from my Locality Budget.

Apart from the Education Budget, the two main areas of expense are Children and Young People and Adult Social Care. Both those budgets have overspent in the last year, and the shortfall has had to be made good from the Council's reserves. As a result, Suffolk County Council's basic council tax rate has been increased for the first time in seven years, and the amount raised has been ring fenced for Adult Social Care.

Suffolk County Councillors have had some very difficult decisions to make, and as Councillors we are having to find different ways of providing services in a very difficult economic climate.

County Councillor Robin Vickery.