

County Councillors Report – Daniel Elmer – September 2021

Forehoe Division – *Mulbarton, South Wymondham, Newton Flotman, Spooner Row, Wreningham, Swardeston, Bracon Ash, Swainsthorpe, East Carleton, Flordon, Ketteringham*

Email – daniel.elmer.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Highways and Road Works:

- **A11 Resurfacing** – Myself and other Cllrs attended a briefing with National Highways (formerly Highways England) on upcoming works to the A11 between Spooner Row and the Thickthorn Interchange. Phase 1, Thickthorn to Tuttle Ln, will take place from Mid-October to the end of the year, and will consist of life extension works to the concrete surface, extending its life by a further 5 to 10 years. As part of this there will be some nighttime road closures from 8pm to 6am, with a diversion along the B1172 via Hethersett.

Phase 2, Tuttle Ln to Spooner Row, will take place from January to mid-2022, and will involve the replacement of the current concrete surface with asphalt, which will provide better noise cancellation for residents. This section will include some daytime roadworks which will include a contraflow system for traffic management. I have asked for further information on the likelihood of the Phase 1 section also being replaced by asphalt after the current life extension expires.

Both phases will also include a HGV dispersal diversion, to encourage heavy traffic along the A1066 and A140 during the works, which may result in higher traffic levels in Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe.

- **New Road Speed Limits in Mulbarton** – Norfolk County Council is planning to designate the newly adopted Roads in the Hopkins Homes 2 Estate (Sterlet Grove, Minnow Way, Tench Rd, Gudgeon Rd and Barbel) as a 20 MPH Zone. The Traffic Regulation Order is due to be advertised on 20 September 2021.
- **Road Safety Community Fund and Pothole Repairs** – September Cabinet will be discussing two new money allocations for highways funds. The £1m Road Safety Community Fund would provide up to £10,000 each for smaller road safety schemes, such as lowering speed limits or making changes to road signs and markings, to help address local issues and concerns. The cash would be spent on improvements right across Norfolk over the next four years, with work focused on one area of the county each year to help maximise efficiencies and allow as many schemes as possible to be funded. The focus would initially be West Norfolk, then North and East Norfolk, South Norfolk and finally Norwich. The first safety improvements could be in place about a year from now.

A new £10m Highways Maintenance Pothole Fund would see an extra £2,500,000 spent each year for the next four years on resurfacing, surface dressing, drainage improvements, bridge maintenance and pothole repairs.

Schools:

- **A-Level and GCSE Results** - [Norfolk's A-Level](#) and [GCSE results](#) were announced with the County Council praising the county's young people and adult learners for their commitment and determination shown after two years of disrupted education due to coronavirus.

Norfolk County Council's award-winning Adult Learning service has once again celebrated excellent GCSE results: The service has seen its great success continued across both English and maths GCSEs this year. 84% of its maths GCSE students achieved Grade 4 or above and 73% of English GCSE students achieved Grade 4 or above.

The [Help You Choose website](#) offers young people information and advice on different options if they are uncertain about their next steps or receive results below their expectation. Advice and support available ranges from CV writing, apprenticeship vacancies, and information about different careers. It also has space for parents to help them understand the different options for their child.

- **Ministerial Visit** - Vicky Ford MP was hosted by Norfolk County Council this month, where she heard about the work the council is doing to support its children and young people. The Minister visited St William's Primary School, in Norwich, to see children taking part in a range of holiday club activities, including Forest Schools, crafts and sports. Some of the places on the activities are funded as part of the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme, known nationally as the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Minister Ford also visited a holiday scheme at Little Plumstead Village Hall.

Other:

- **Resettling Afghan Refugees** - As part of the Government's scheme to welcome up to 5,000 vulnerable Afghans to the UK in its first year with up to a total of 20,000 in the long-term; Norfolk County Council will work closely with the Government and partners to ensure that Norfolk accommodates a share of these refugees.

The council will be ensuring new arrivals get the support they need to settle into their new communities as well as taking into account pressures from other existing schemes. Details of the Afghan resettlement scheme [are now available](#).

Norfolk has a proud record of offering support to refugees. Along with our supporting city, district and borough councils, Norfolk was among the first localities to offer to support the resettlement of Afghan nationals under the government's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), launched on 1 April this year, and a number of Afghan nationals are already receiving support right here in the county.

The council has already assisted over 150 Syrian refugees to successfully settle in Norfolk since 2017 and will use the skills and experience this provided to make the transition for arriving Afghan nationals as smooth as possible.