

Wells Town Council – February meeting 2020

Report on NNDC/NNTPF Meeting January 22nd. 2020

Sarah Bütikofer, Leader of the Council stated that the Council would seek in future to consult more and listen as well as talking. She itemised new projects:

- Electric cars: there would be a number of electric charging points for tourists in the district – by Easter;
- Parking: car parking charges would need to be increased but better provision for residents was under consideration;
- Tree planting : trees would be available for community groups to plant;
- Windfarms: more applications were coming in and thought was being given to the creation of a ring main to reduce the number of onshore installations to deal with connections to the grid.
- Dog fouling: volunteer dog wardens raise too many difficulties – insurance etc. and the provision of paid wardens is being considered.
- Planning: a new system for dealing with planning applications is to be rolled out which may entail short term dislocation.

Elizabeth Withington, chairman of NNTPF

- Council tax and business rate : attempts had been made to interest central government in the fact that homeowners paying business rate were not anything towards local government – so far without success. A survey undertaken in 2017 had revealed ??% not paying. It is apparently easier to get put on the local business rate than it is to get disability discount on council tax!
- Affordable homes: discussion at the meeting showed some of the difficulties of smaller communities because having received an allocation as e.g. a small growth village under the Local Plan of 20 houses – which might be sold on the open market and not be available to local villagers – any exception site of affordable homes built by a housing association would not count towards that total, being assessed as ‘windfall’ housing so that the village would end up with 40 or 50 extra houses, thus unbalancing the demography. The ‘windfall’ problem needed to be addressed. Allocation was also a problem because housing associations were bound to use the local authority housing list and not be able to give priority to locals.
- NNTPF are now working with NALC as a pressure group with NNDC to raise common issues as an addition to the work of individual district councillors.
- NNTPF will now have quarterly meetings in Cromer for all parish councils to attend. The next meeting is on April 23rd between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm. (The succeeding meeting will be in an evening.)

Roger Arguile 24/1/2020