

Report from District Councillor Simon Hestor

Councillor Priory Ward District Councillors Report December 2017

On 4th December's cabinet meeting, Three major infrastructure projects we discussed in the presence of the press and a myriad of local consultees/representatives. The first, the Norfolk Vanguard wind farm which is proposed to be located 47km north-east of Winterton-on-sea. The electrical generating capacity would be some impressive 1.8GW (1.3 million homes). The turbines would be cabled under the sea to Landfall at Cart Gap (Happisburg) where it would need to be run to Necton nr Swaffham to connect up to the national grid. For maximum efficiency the sub stations needed to regulate this flow must be positioned mid-way along the route to Swaffham on an open green field site. There was much local opposition to the siting of this sub-station and the deep cable laying across open countryside. The main points of contention were Environmental damage, the loss of tree, hedgerow and habitat in the name of a green enterprise which only has a shelf life of 25-30 yrs, is it justifiable? Two options are available the 'AC OR DC' model which offers variation in cabling options and land infrastructure. The net result being a request from NNDC for elaboration of information arising from vagueties made during this consultation period.

The Sheringham Splash project was given the green light on to full council for final voting. Of the 3 options it looks certain to be a option 1, option 1 which is a new build, municipal swimming and learner pool, fitness suite, studio and treatment rooms, not to include the spa facilities which were fought for but deemed too expensive. This comes in at an estimate cost of £10.7 m to be part funded by Sport England, the sale of part of the site for a curiously small £0.75m to a hotel chain, NNDC Capital Reserves contribution in the region of £4 million and the rest by a long term loan. The aims at the moment are to keep the current facility open whilst the new development is constructed. The Chairman of the council noted, that there was no public opposition and the wave and flume facilities from the old facility would not be missed?

The community Sports Hub feasibility study was accepted by the committee and delegate authority given to Head of Paid Service, Nick Baker to procure FMG leisure consultants and on the procurement of a construction contractor once and if the external funding becomes available. The financing will be made up of £733k Grant from the Lawn Tennis Association, £1.465 m from Capital Reserves and £733k Interest free loan from the Lawn Tennis Association. It is proposed to be built on the grounds of Cromer academy and to open to both school pupils and the general public.

And in conservation news, happily NNDC have granted a loan of £350k to Sutton Mill towards the purchase, restoration and re-opening as a Millwrighting Centre tourist attraction. The period of the loan is 8 years and will add to funding raised by the Society for the protection of Ancient Buildings (mills section) and a private investor.