**Mulbarton District Councillor Report 17th February 2025**

**Grants**

Member Ward Grants for 2024/25 have been used on local projects. New grants for small projects (up to £1,000 usually) will be available from April.

**Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation**

The County Council has been accepted into the Devolution Priority Programme, with the result that the May 2025 County elections have been deferred for one year (at least). The elections for the new position of Mayor is planned for May 2026.

South Norfolk is working with other Norfolk councils to produce plans to transition to new unitary authorities combining the powers of District and County Councils. Elections for the “shadow” unitary authorities could be in May 2027. Proposals must be submitted by September 26th this year, and a plan is required by 21 March. The key question is likely to be whether Norfolk should transmission to one or more unitary authorities.

**Local Development Scheme – Housing Targets**

It is expected that a review of the local development scheme (the Greater Norwich Local Plan and other documents) will start later this year. This is a result of the new national planning framework which increases the number of new houses required across Greater Norwich by 28%, from 1,929 per year to 2,590.

The Government is planning to accelerate the development of 12 new towns. A recent report in the Guardian suggested that one of these could be at the edge of Norwich.

**South Norfolk Council Tax Proposals**

Council will vote for a £5 annual increase in the council’s share of Council Tax for a Band D property in 2025/26 on 19th February, an increase of almost 3%. Norfolk County Council recently approved an increase of £79.47 for its element of Council Tax.

**Ketteringham Recycling Depot**

Following on from the launch of South Norfolk’s Recycling Action Plan your District Councillors recently visited Ketteringham Recycling Depot. During the visit we asked the team heading the proposed development and extension of the site to supply us and the nearby parishes with updates. Additional land will need to be acquired to extend the facilities but most of the existing land will be redeveloped. Once complete this will improve facilities and safety for the workforce and cater for extra traffic created by the proposed new services with the introduction of food waste collection to be introduced in 2026.

**Planning Consultation – Self-Build and Custom Build SPD**

This consultation on a proposed Supplementary Planning Document on Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing in now open and runs until 21st March.

<https://southnorfolkandbroadland.oc2.uk/document/23>

**Council Tax Assistance Scheme**

The Council is expected to agree to the renaming of the scheme to Council Tax Reduction Scheme and change the terms of the scheme to better target those in most financial need. This only applies to those of working age; the equivalent scheme for pensioners is mandated by the Government.

**‘Norwich to Tilbury’ Update**

National Grid has recently announced a “targeted consultation” involving minor changes to the proposed scheme. Locally, the proposal is to move the construction laydown area from the North of the current substation to the Southwest of it – nearer to Swardeston and Mulbarton. The consultation closes on March 3rd. Details can be found at: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/public-consultation-and-programme>

The application for a Development Consent Order is expected later this year.

 PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals. For further information visit [https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions](https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions%20)

**Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber**

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