

RE: BRPCagenda mar22
Cllr. Sarah Bütikofer <Sarah.Butikofer@north-norfolk.gov.uk>
Wed 09/03/2022 12:41

Ok thanks for letting me know please find below.

Please do convey to Councillors I am not avoiding them and if at anytime they would like to rejoin you please just let me know.

1. SECOND HOMES TAX LOOPHOLES

After a prolonged period of lobbying to the Government, new measures are being introduced to ensure second home owners who abuse a tax loophole by claiming their often-empty properties are holiday lets will be forced to pay council tax. Currently second homeowners avoid paying council tax and claim business rates relief instead by declaring an intention to let their property to holidaymakers. Frequently this is used as a device to obtain relief and there is no intention to offer holiday letting from day one. Under the new proposed rules holiday lets must be rented out for a minimum of 70 days a year to qualify for business rates relief. Business rates avoidance is estimated to cost £250 million per year in lost revenue. Closing this loophole is a stated aim of the current administration and is an objective of the Council's Corporate Plan.

2. VISIT NORTH NORFOLK

The Council have offered a year's free membership for the Visit North Norfolk scheme to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses worth £150. The Government Covid Additional Restrictions Grant will fund the initiative. The scheme provides businesses with access to promotional opportunities, all year marketing opportunities, networking events, national press coverage and an interactive booking website. The move will give businesses an opportunity to increase their profile and access markets they would not reach individually.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Once again the Environment Agency are set to announce that North Norfolk has high bathing water quality including the 6 Blue Flag beaches at Cromer Sheringham East Runton Mundesley Sea Palling and West Runton. We are determined to increase our Blue Flag beaches and are working towards a seventh by next year.

We are in the process of planting 3 "Miyawaki Forests" pioneered first in Japan in Fakenham North Waltham and Sheringham. Funded by DEFRA and acting in partnership with the County Council Natural England and the Tree Council they grow 10 times faster (a metre or so each year) absorb more carbon and support much more wildlife. They have been called a secret weapon against climate change. Anyone wishing to develop a micro forest should contact the NNDC tree planting scheme on treeplantingproject@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

4. CAR PARKING CHARGES

The Council have reviewed charges for the first time since 2016 and have decided to increase fees by reference to the Consumer Prices Index or CPI. We have made an exception for season ticket holders who will not have to pay more than they currently pay to acknowledge we have to support local working families at this time. Standard car parks will go from £1.00 to £1.20 for first 2 hrs then from 70p to 80p per hour; Resort car parks from £1.30 to £1.50 for 1 hour then £1.20 (up from £1.00) per hour and Coastal car parks will go up to £1.80 from £1.50 per hour. Increases will be effective from July.

5. CROMER PIER

The Council owns the pier and the Pavilion Theatre and has contracted Openwide, an entertainments company, to operate the theatre, restaurant and gift shop whilst retaining responsibility for the pier and buildings' maintenance and repair. It is a revenue raising asset attracting some 60 to 70,000 visitors annually. As part of its ongoing maintenance programme and to enable hygiene legislation compliance the Council is to consider investing £45,000 to upgrade the bar and food service area within the Pavilion Theatre. Maintenance work is planned in addition and will cost some £1.4 million which has been provided for in the budget forecast.

6. COUNCIL TAX BUDGET

At a meeting of all councillors on 23 February the council set its tax for the 2022-23 civic year. We are of course pleased that there will be no cuts to services and that we have delivered a balanced budget, however we are acutely aware of the pressures building on residents. However the Council too is facing rising costs and we were therefore unable to maintain the freeze of last year, Council tax will rise by £4.95 for a band D property. It is worth recapping that there are 4 components: County Council charges, District Council charges, Police/ Crime Commissioner and Parish Council precepts.. Although NNDC is the collecting authority we actually retain only about 9p in every pound to fund services with the bulk of 75p in the pound going to the County Council.

7. LOCAL PLAN

The District Local Plan section 19 consultation has just closed. The full plan and the interactive response online website can be viewed on <<http://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/local%20plan>> or you can telephone 01263 516318 or email: <planning_policy@north-norfolk.gov.uk>

Thank you for reading this report.

Kind regards

Sarah

Sarah Butikofer

District Councillor for Beeston Regis and The Runtons

Local Government Association Regional Peer