**Christopher Cushing Fakenham North District Update – 25th October 2023**

1. **Urban Extension**
* As councillors know the first stage of the project will be to build a new roundabout on the A148 near Water Moor Lane. This was postponed from last year because of an inflationary increase in estimated costs of £1m.
* NNDC have applied for £2 million of government funding that has been made available for such projects from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This would cover most of the cost of the roundabout. If successful NNDC have indicated that they will proceed with building the roundabout next year, regardless of whether a solution has been found to mitigate nutrient neutrality. This would be done on the basis that the issue will be solved one way or another in future.
* Trinity College, who own the land, have said they would be prepared to make up the shortfall, though only on condition that the development will proceed.
* The Government have included legislation in the King’s Speech to negate Natural England’s Nutrient Neutrality Directive in the new parliamentary session. This is on the basis that they have allocated £280m to address the issue.
* In parallel with this, NNDC are pursuing mitigation plan to create a Joint Venture Scheme with neighbouring authorities. This will be able to receive funding from Natural England to purchase land which can be turned into wetland and create credits to offset the nitrates and phosphates that new housing will create.
* I am sceptical about whether such a scheme will work as I think local authorities will be tempted to unilaterally address their own issues first. Even if it does work, there will be a priority order and there is no guarantee Fakenham would sit at the top of this. Also, Fakenham is hampered by the fact that mitigation will need to be in place upstream and there are only limited areas for this as the River Wensum rises only eight miles west of the town.
* In conclusion I think it possible the new roundabout will be built next autumn if either NNDC is successful in getting Government funding or legislation is passed to negate nutrient neutrality which will allow Trinity College to make up the funding shortfall.
1. **NNDC Planning Training**
* At a previous meeting I mentioned that NNDC delivered some training on planning to Stalham Town Council. Martyn Fulcher, Director of Place, has confirmed a similar session will be offered to the FTC in the next few months.
1. **Greenway Close**
* Victory Housing have provided two skips in which they have used to clear the household rubbish that had been accumulating at one property and cut the hedge back at that and the neighbouring property. There have been concerns about rats in the area, but this should be addressed now the rubbish has been removed.
1. **Fisher Road / Seppings Road / Wells Road Path**
* This is a small path that connects Fisher Road, Seppings Road and Wells Road. There have been issues with dog fouling along here. One option which may help would be to put dog fouling warning signs which NNDC produce. Lesley is waiting for confirmation of the price of these, which she will put to councillors. They are A4 laminates.
* In addition, there is an accumulation of rubbish along the path, most of which blows through from the Academy playing field. The Academy had agreed to keep this clear so I will chase them to do so.
1. **Water Moor Lane Sign**
* I requested that the new Water Moor Lane sign be moved slightly so that it is parallel to the A148. It was originally set at an oblique angle so that it could not be read by traffic coming from the west.

Christopher Cushing

23/10/2023