

District Councillor Report – James Eddy

After the recent activity at South Norfolk Council relating to the yearly budget, attention has inevitably turned towards preparations for the Norfolk County Council elections on May 7th. Obviously, this means that while you will all have to deal with endless rounds of leaflets and people knocking on your doors, you won't have to put up with me doing it, as I will be seeking votes in East Depwade , which doesn't include Wortwell of course.

Despite this, I will offer a little something to those that are interested. As far as I'm concerned, the most important thing in any election isn't who you vote for. I believe the main thing is to make sure you cast your vote. It is easy to forget that voting is a privilege that not everybody in the world has had. I also recognise that our choices can feel rather uninspiring but, as my mum used to say "even spoiling your ballot and writing 'none of the above' on it, is still voting."

With this in mind, I'd like to encourage anyone who hasn't already done so to register to vote by going to www.gov.uk/vote-uk-election before April 20th. In addition, if you've registered to vote but won't be able to vote in person on polling day please consider registering for a postal vote by April 21st. In both cases there is a form to fill in (either paper or digital), which you can find online or, if you'd prefer, you can contact me and I'd be happy to provide you with the forms.

As you are all no doubt aware, the Morningthorpe Recycling Centre will be closing in October. Given that this is due to the landowner not renewing the lease on the land, I can appreciate that this has left Norfolk County Council in a difficult situation. However, given where we are geographically It is fair to say that this ward will be more inconvenienced than most by the solution that has been offered. The Norwich South Centre is around 22 miles away from Harleston, which can hardly be considered a convenient service for residents. Perhaps more significantly, the fact that the council had earmarked a site near Long Stratton for another centre before effectively kicking it into the long grass suggests that there is an understanding that this will be a significant diminishment in service to the people of this part of the county. My hope would be that perhaps there can be a reconsideration of the Long Stratton site proposal moving forward.

I would like to take the opportunity to draw attention to the fact that South Norfolk Council's Help Hub team will be visiting this area. On Monday 20th April they will be in the Co-op car park in Harleston offering help, advice and support to residents, This will include debt advice, and benefits support; parenting, relationships, and domestic abuse guidance; and health, wellbeing, and bereavement support. They are a very friendly and helpful team, so if you know of anyone in need of some support then let them know and I'm sure they will be able to offer the help needed.

I will end, as always by saying that if you need help with this or anything District Council related then feel free to contact me at james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk or visit me at my next councillor surgery at HIP on the last Saturday of each month.

All the best,

James