

## District Councillor Report – James Eddy

I recently attended the July meeting of South Norfolk Council. Perhaps unsurprisingly the thorny issue of Local Government Reorganisation once again became a topic for lively debate through a motion presented and ultimately rejected by a majority of councillors. Essentially, it seemed to me that there was broad agreement on all sides that South Norfolk Council should continue to prepare for LGR to take place even as we await the result of a judicial review. The disagreement was more about whether there was any need to formalise that commitment as it was presented in the motion. I will only comment to say that in my experience this is often the nature of local politics and often the debate itself proves far more interesting than any conclusion that is actually reached.

In the same meeting, I was pleased to support the reaffirming of the council's commitment to continuing to support the LGBTQ+ community through the flying of the pride flag. By the same token there was also a reiteration of our support for Ukraine in the face of their ongoing defensive war against Putin's Russia. Obviously, in both cases, the flying of these flags are simply gestures. However, the idea that small acts of support or, dare I say, defiance can't make a palpable difference to people is incorrect.

The idea that the hard earned gains of the LGBTQ+ community are the reason to stop showing this support is as wrong as not openly supporting Ukraine because their war isn't the main news story anymore. What begins with the removal of a flag can escalate over time, perhaps quickly or more likely so slowly that most of us who aren't directly affected will barely even notice but that change will be very real to people who are. If that happens, it seems to me that ultimately we will all end up worse off.

On a different note, I would like to draw your attention to an initiative put forward by the new Chair of South Norfolk Council, Kathryn Cross. Cllr Cross has proposed to make 2026 'The Year of the Volunteer' and is therefore seeking out voluntary groups in each Ward in South Norfolk. So, if you know of voluntary groups in Wortwell, struggling to get enough volunteers to keep running their services or who need help reaching those they want to support and could use a little publicity then please let me know. Hopefully this can help the groups that do so much valuable work for our whole community.

In addition, if you need any help with anything council related then please feel free to contact me at [james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk) or visit me at my next councillor surgery at Harleston Information Plus. Unfortunately this will not be until Saturday 26th September as I will be away at the end of August, attending my cousin's wedding.

All the best,

James