

Councillor Mike Sole's monthly report

Kent County Councillor— Canterbury South

Canterbury City Councillor—Nailbourne Ward



March 2023

February is budget time at both Kent County Council and Canterbury City Council. Both councils have been hit hard with inflationary cost increases outstripping income increases. At KCC there will be reductions in many services as many items of non-statutory expenditure are reduced in order to balance the budget. I was extremely disappointed that the grants that I have available to support the parish councils in my area with highway improvements, and also grants to community groups, have been slashed from £10,000 a year to £3,600. I do have some funding that I have carried forward though so please do get in touch if there are projects that I can help with.

At the Canterbury City Council budget meeting I was especially pleased to have the job of delivering the 10 minute budget response on behalf of the Liberal Democrat group. I used much of this to highlight the council's poor record on capital projects and the £9m spent on Station Road West car park, the least used in Canterbury.

Other meetings attended in February included the Kent Fire & Rescue Service and **Wickhambreaux** Parish Council.

I was delighted to be asked to speak to Conserve Adisham's Rural Environment (CARE) about the draft Canterbury Local Plan, and I continue to give what assistance I can opposing the **Adisham** new town (Cooting Farm) and the expansion of Aylesham into **Womenswold** parish.

I met with residents in **Petham** to discuss the City Council proposals for a significant amount of double yellow lines in the village. I will be taking those concerns to the Joint Transportation Board in March.

It was an absolute delight to be asked to be guest speaker at the February meeting of Barham Wives. I hope that my talk about my role as a councillor was both interesting and informative.

I met with the Canterbury branch of the **National Farmers Union** and we discussed a number of topical issues, including the amount of farmland being lost to development.

My activities around the area often find me bumping into Rev Stefan Thomas who covers the Barham Downs benefice, and there is a certain amount of overlap between what we do, albeit that we have different bosses! This month I also had a meeting the Nick White, the vicar in **Thanington**, as I believe that by working together we can often ensure that support reaches those in need.

This month I have also been involved in issues involving, fly-tipping, street lights, planning, bins, KCC funding care and nurseries, abandoned caravans, dogs, and buses, to name a few.

By the time that it gets to my next monthly report, everyone will be well into election mode. I will be seeking re-election as the City Councillor for Nailbourne ward. Don't forget that you will now need a valid form of ID to vote.

Please get in touch if there are any issues that can help with.



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