



Councillor Mike Sole's monthly report

Kent County Councillor : Canterbury South
Canterbury City Councillor : Nailbourne

*Working for you all
all year round*

Well, the government dropped a very unexpected bombshell on Local Government Reorganisation last month by putting the whole process on pause. So, whilst we were expecting elections next year to a new East Kent Unitary Council, and for KCC and Canterbury City Council to be abolished in 2028, we don't know what will happen now. Whilst the best guess is probably a pause (rather than cancellation) and then a later announcement to push it all back a year, we just don't know.

As a result of this pause, the one thing that we do know, is that Canterbury City Council elections will now take place next year. It has all been very frustrating and this chaos and uncertainty is not helpful to anyone working in local government and delivering services to residents.

The Canterbury City Council Community Governance review is now entering stage two. This is looking at whether there should be town councils in the district and/or changes to parish councils. One proposal that residents of Kingston and Barham will be consulted on is that both parish councils could work closer together through a grouping arrangement. There is also a district wide consultation about whether, if new town or parish councils are created, elections to all parishes should be delayed by a year to enable them to be set up and keep all elections on the same date.

With over 200 public comments, and packed parish council meetings, the part retrospective planning application for residential caravans on land off Valley Road, Barham, has generated a lot of interest. The planning officer will now review these comments, including mine opposing the application, and those of consultees such as Kent Highways, The Environment Agency and CPRE before making a decision, assessing the application against national and local planning policies. I shall keep residents informed.

We are very fortunate to have rare chalk streams in our area. I attended the Little Stour River Day talk in Wickhambreaux to hear about the work that is being done to monitor the health of the local rivers.

Cllr Lee Castle and I held a councillor surgery at the Ivy Barn in Littlebourne and discussed a number of issues with residents and the KCC Community Warden.

I've been following up a number of highway issues with KCC that were reported months ago without action. With the nights drawing in it is essential that we get many of these safety critical repairs fixed.



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