

District Councillor Report: January 2018 Parish Meetings.

Firstly may I wish you all a Happy New Year. I will not include any “add ons” as there are changes being effected everywhere that they are bound to be incorrect!

Babergh continues to be in the news and for all the wrong reasons.

On the 4th January there was an extraordinary Council Meeting with the sole purpose of electing a new leader of the Council, following the resignation, before a vote to remove her, of Jennie Jenkins.

Jennie joined the council at the same time as me and we have worked together on many occasions over the years but all for the good of the District. I supported the motion to have her removed as I felt that her leadership was not strong enough to resist what I am sure was prolific manipulating behind the scenes by both officers and I have to call them this, “junior members”, (those that have yet to serve a full term). Now its done and a new Leader will be put forward whom I hope all councillors can support as it is in the interests of the whole of Babergh and not one part or section.

Planning is still in a mess and that is one area that the new cabinet, because the New Leader will appoint his or her own cabinet, to sort out. The fact that the council is involved in so many legal disputes indicates that it has lost the trust and cooperation of the people it is supposed to serve.

The next major decision is on the Budget and this must reflect the actual financial situation of the Council and if necessary reduce spending to balance the books rather than just seek ways to raise more monies to carry on in the same way.

Some would say that the move from Needham and Hadleigh into Ipswich was the council doing just that. We will see, and I say that because as yet it has involved considerable expenditure and zero savings. Add to that Baberghs dismal record on property and commercial investment and as I say its wait and see!

In the wider field there is much talk of extra investment in infrastructure, but as yet little sign that our own County Council is preparing to bid for some of the monies. Those caught up in the increasing queues trying to get into Ipswich or to its east or West, don't hold your breath for improvements to the A12. In fact watch out for the 20% increase in trucks arriving on the two new ferries into Harwich!

On that cheerful note, I will end and hopefully for Bentley, I will be able to brief you on the new Leader if I can get away form the Council meeting in time!

Again, a happy new year to you all.

John Hinton 2nd January 2018.