

ANNUAL REPORT from WNC Councillor Alan Chantler

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

April marks the first anniversary of the creation of West Northamptonshire Unitary Council (WNC). It has been a challenging year for everyone with the pandemic and then the sad situation with the Afghans and Ukrainians refugees.

Nonetheless, your Council's first priority was to be rigorous with its finances in year one.

Up to date, WNC accounts are solid. Without using our reserves, we closed the year on budget – possibly even under budget (we still need to be audited).

To achieve this demanded a new rigour and a new approach to budgeting. We are delivering our manifesto and main actions in our first year as follows:

- WNC joined the UK 100 Net Zero Council group
- WNC has been chosen to be a pilot for Integrating Social Care. In the next few months, this will be rolled out for the benefit of our residents
- The trust for Children is working well for our most vulnerable children

These are the major elements of spending in our budget. By making Adults and Children services robust, your Council will deliver our manifesto in full.

We also took some small actions which have an important impact on your life

- Fly tipping: after a few successful prosecutions, we are going to take a hard line towards the culprits as we want to stop this blight on our environment. We also have a great recycling centre at Brixworth.
- Tree planting: we have been active helping communities and schools to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to be part of the Tree Canopy Challenge
- Covid Grants: We had £2,500 Covid grant per councillor. We spent it helping across our ward and across the ages from the Scouts to the WI, focused on improving well-being.

Now, towards the future, we are looking to develop a new strategy for our rural connectivity, to make planning across WNC a smoother process and to improve the interaction you have with WNC.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who contacted us. It is only by working together that we will make our West Northamptonshire Council the best for us all.

Cllr Alan Chantler

April 2022