

SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2015

I have been a district councillor for 16 years and, as I am standing down at the May election, I thought it would be interesting to look back, to reflect, briefly, on my time as a district councillor.

I was elected for Kirton Ward in May 1999, (later to become a 2 member ward in 2003 including Nacton & Purdis Farm) part of a completely new administration that was to prepare for the new Cabinet system. I was appointed as Cabinet member for Health & Well-Being and my prime responsibility was Port Health, visiting schools and advocating a healthy life style plus attending Cabinet meetings, Full Council and giving reports. I did this for 5 years.

Councillors had no computers, ipads, blackberrys; I didn't have a mobile phone! But strange to say, we managed!

In 2001 I was elected to SCC for The Trimleys & Kirton Division for 4 years and, with the boundary changes in 2003, I moved across to Martlesham Division, where I have remained. In 2005 I was appointed Cabinet member for Children, Schools and Young People's Services, a post I filled until 2009. As a result, I stood down from my SCDC Cabinet position and concentrated on my parishes and one or two committees at SCDC.

I have to say that I have been fortunate to have had an excellent working relationship with all my parish councils and, indeed, with parishioners. I thank you all for your support.

However, the application to build, first 1000 houses at Adastral Park, which was rapidly increased to 2000, shocked and motivated me, and many others, to object in the strongest, most forceful terms. I have written numerous letters, made representations and spoken at Council meetings over the years. The opposition and fight has lasted 7 years and is still being fought by NANT. I remain a committed objector. My stance did not endear me to the administration at SCDC. Nonetheless, I have continued to represent the views of my constituents, particularly in relation to planning.

For the last couple of years I have been a member of the Audit & Governance Committee and, despite the dryness of many of the issues, I have appreciated the strength of the committee in its determination to investigate and highlight the governance of the council.

The district council that will be elected in May will be very different from the one it replaces. The numbers of councillors is being reduced from 54 to 42.

SCDC is moving premises. The Melton Hill site is to be sold for housing and new offices are to be built on the Girdleston site at Melton.

SCDC has not increased council tax for the 5th year.

I have spent all my Community Enabling Fund on projects such as: renovation projects for church and village hall; flood protection, play areas, kitchen equipment for village hall.

