

## **PARISH REPORT JANUARY 2025**

### **ORWELL & VILLAGES**

#### **Jet-ski vote narrowly passes**

The Licensing Committee recently voted by 5 votes to 4 not to licence commercial personal watercraft within the East Suffolk area. There had been a record 377 representations made in response to the consultation, the vast majority requesting the council not to allow a commercial operator to hire jet-skis on the River Deben.

The vote means that there will be a presumption of refusal for commercial hire of personal watercraft throughout the district, although by law the council is required to allow a hearing by a sub-committee for commercial operators to argue exceptional circumstances.

This ruling does not affect the use of privately owned personal watercraft which is outside the scope of the licensing authority and fall under the auspices of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

#### **Local Government Reorganisation**

Despite several deadlines having passed we have still not received clarification from the Government as to whether the County elections are to be cancelled in May nor whether a joint Mayor for both Norfolk and Suffolk will be imposed.

The District Councils Network of all current District councils is not opposed to the creation of unitary authorities. However, 79% of the current District councils believe that the lower limit of 500,000 residents for new unitary authorities is far too high and will damage the local connection that councillors currently have with their parishes and residents. What is needed is real devolution of powers to the lowest level of elected representation possible. Instead, it appears that a centralisation of power to a single directly elected mayor across two counties will be imposed. No information is being given as to the future role of town and parish councils and how they will interact with unitary authorities and the overall Mayor.

If parish councillors need to contact either of us, please feel free to do so.

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