

District Councillor's report on Breckland achievements 2021-2022

When we review what your Council has undertaken over the past twelve months it is right that we look at what we set out to achieve so that we can measure performance against expectation.

We set out to address four key areas of workflow that impact upon the lives and routine of our residents and businesses to some extent or other. Coming off the back of the Pandemic these themes were selected through their ability to support, regenerate, facilitate and drive the district beyond Covid and to work in tandem to grow and enhance the communities within Breckland.

The themes were:

- Inspiring Communities
- Thriving Places
- Breckland 2035
- Working Smarter

1. Inspiring Communities

We have:

- Delivered a £1.8 million temporary accommodation facility in Thetford to help those who are homeless. Other similar projects are planned elsewhere in the District
- Introduced the Breckland mobile food store to support those most in need through subsidised food in the rural areas
- Trained 100 mental health champions
- Utilised the inspiring communities match funding scheme to support 30 community groups across the District
- Created the Early intervention fund to provide support to those most in need
- Supported residents through the roll out of the Disabled Facilities Grants
- Established a discrete team to work with residents who require adaptations to their homes
- Worked closely with the Daisy project to support victims of domestic abuse
- Continued our crackdown on littering and fly tipping leading to a significant number of fixed penalty notices being issued
- Worked throughout the pandemic to support all through our Covid Response team

2. Thriving Places

We have:

- Started construction of a £3.5 million electricity substation in Snetterton that will provide energy to support more jobs.
- Increased housing stock through enabling new developments in Mileham and Attleborough with more in the pipeline across the district
- Supported over 300 business to achieve Covid safe scheme accreditation
- Created an innovative Spring Back Programme supporting over 1,360 businesses and provided over £4.5 million investment to support the most vulnerable and in need areas of our local economy
- Supported 45 enterprises through the Breckland Business start up scheme
- Launched a new commercial waste collection service
- Supported our own tenants through a scheme of rent deferments and lease variations
- Launched the Future Breckland project through engagement with residents and businesses to drive forward each of our 5 market towns to enable them to thrive post covid
- Created the Ellenor Fenn garden in Dereham by repurposing waste ground
- Improved the riverside area of Thetford by removing the unsightly boat, a move supported by local businesses and neighbouring communities

3. Breckland 2035

We have:

- Embedded the Climate Change agenda across all departments
- Launched our sustainability strategy
- Expanded our garden waste service to over 25,000 households
- Supported the replacement of 133 streetlights with LED lamps
- Promoted local environmental sustainability through our Community Green Grants
- Encouraged and worked with our leisure providers to make the leisure facilities more environmentally friendly
- Developed plans to plant hundreds of trees across the district and supported the Jubilee green Canopy initiative

4. Working Smarter

We have:

- Created a partnership to deliver a more cost effective and more efficient waste collection and recycling service
- Launched our online chatbot to allow for a fully automated 24hr interaction with the council.
- Delivered an agile working policy that reflects more efficient ways of working
- Improved the accessibility of our website so that we are now ranked 14/406 local authority websites
- Improved the digital communication opportunities via the website
- Expanded and improved our contracts and procurements team
- Re-written our recruitment policy, strengthened our armed forces covenant and made Breckland Council a better disability employer
- Expanded our range of services delivered by our class beating Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership

All of these initiatives are in addition to the 90+ statutory duties that we as a District Council are required to deliver and moreover, we are doing all this and more within a balanced budget.