

## District Councillor Report for Parish Council

### January 2022

Main issues arising from EDDC Cabinet meeting on Wednesday 5 January.

**Finance!** With the withdrawal of significant government funds to local councils and the requirement for councils to produce 'balanced' budgets, this was the main feature at the Cabinet meeting.

The council is facing increased financial challenges in the areas of:

- **Waste and Recycling** - 720 additional houses built in the last year. Increased loads and staff shortages due to seasonal and COVID related absences. (72,000 homes to be serviced)
- **Car Parking** - no increase has been applied for 10 years. (£1.00 per hour)
- **LED** - the pandemic has reduced income considerably and the health and fitness services are much needed and valued across the district. A subsidy of approx. £1million already agreed for this years budget but similar support needed annually.
- **Planning** - increased number of planning applications and a large backlog to be dealt with. More staff needed.
- **Independent Pay Review** - Public employees have had minimal pay increases over the last four or five years and now an independent review is underway. This is likely to cost over £500k to add to the council's budget.

Councils only have two ways to meet the mandated budget requirements:

- Reducing costs
- Increasing Council Tax as well as fees and charges

Costs have been cut continuously for the last 12 years alongside the introduction of more efficient ways of working (online). Now there is little that can be done without reducing front line services e.g Waste and Recycling or reducing staff numbers.

The Cabinet will make recommendations to the full council and we can expect this will include increases in car parking charges as well as a small hike in the council tax. The next meeting of the full council is scheduled for 23 February.

Details of all these issues and officer recommendations can be found on the EDDC website under the Cabinet Agenda for 5 January.

Cllr. Alan Dent  
06 January 2022