

Report from your County Councillor, Cllr Steffan Aquarone



Passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and Proclamation of King Charles III

I felt privileged to represent Melton Constable Division at County Hall on Sunday 11th September, for the reading of the announcement and subsequent proclamation by the High Sheriff of Norfolk, Mr David McLeavy Hill, DL.

Norfolk County Council meetings were rescheduled to occur after the period of National Mourning, with the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee the first to resume.

Bus Improvement Plan

I welcomed the adoption, at the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee on Monday 26th September, of a version of the “Travel Hubs” policy that I put forward in the Liberal Democrat County Manifesto in May last year, which works by putting joined up public transport hubs in locations across the county.

Rather than people driving all the way to the outskirts of Norwich, they need only to drive the first few miles to the nearest hub. They’d also be able to get clean, comfortable, modern buses to other hubs too – not just Norwich. Such hubs are the ideal way of connecting up public transport, and encouraging people to use it.

As part of North Norfolk District Council’s enormously successful Heritage Action Zone bid, a brand new, green-roofed, public transport hub has already been built in the heart of North Walsham.

The County Council’s current plan falls short of the full potential however: we need new routes between hubs so people can get around North Norfolk, not just in and out of Norwich, which even now is a stretch.

We need to think about how to bring footfall to the rural hubs, especially from outlying villages. We also need improved ticketing, increased comfort and of course reduced emissions as public transport is at the heart of our ability to tackle the climate emergency in rural Norfolk.

Consultation on Norwich Western Link

I’m pleased to draw your attention to the following two consultation, which runs until 9th October: <https://www.pinpointcloud.co.uk/NorwichWesternLink/>.

Selection as Parliamentary Candidate for North Norfolk

I wanted to let you know about a recent decision my family and I have made in connection with my life in Politics. I don’t know about you, but I don’t believe what’s happening in Parliament at the moment is reflective of what most decent, upstanding British people think and feel. I’ve long stood on a progressive platform of wanting to bring about change and help everyone get on in life – it’s why I’m a Liberal Democrat.

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But the behaviour of the UK Government is now more a matter of competence and ethics in public service than is it party-political difference.

I believe I could do a better job as the MP for North Norfolk, in such a way that would meet the approval of the vast majority of citizens – not just those who support my party. Having been attracted to politics by the work of Norman Lamb, I believe I have what it takes to be a strong voice for North Norfolk. And you have my word that I will vote for what I believe is in our best interests here, not just what my party says. In fact, I resigned from my position as group leader on the County Council because my opposition to the £200m (and rising) Western Link road through a precious conservation area stood at odds with the party's county policy.

If anyone would like to help support me in taking this next step, then please don't hesitate to contact Scott who I have hired to be my political director. He is at scottlansdellhill@gmail.com. And if you'd like to support my campaign financially, you can do so at <https://www.norfolklibdems.org/donate>.

In the meantime I will remain steadfastly committed to my role as your County Councillor, which you re-elected me to last year.

Division and Constituency Appointments

To help balance this new role, I am aiming to offer regular appointment slots every Monday and Friday afternoon. These will be made available to residents of Melton Constable division as a first order of priority. If there is anything I can help with in terms of local or national issues you're facing, or that are on your mind, please don't hesitate to contact me on the details below. Likewise, as I can already have up to four Parish Council meetings scheduled on the same evening in this division alone, please do highlight if there is an item on your upcoming agenda that would benefit from my input and I will do my utmost to attend in person.

Thank you for your continued support since I was first elected in 2017. I look forward to working with you in the coming years.