**Report for Brettenham Parish Council 11.7.19**

Robert Lindsay, Babergh District and Suffolk County councillor.

**Babergh District**

**Local plan**

Just a reminder that comments on this must be submitted by end of September. Green councillors have met with senior planning officers to ask for firm targets on carbon reduction and more to be inserted into the plan on monitoring carbon reduction and habitat destruction and more compulsion for developers on achieving reduction targets.

**Buses to lose subsidy**

The 377 which runs from Rattlesden to Bury St Edmunds via Brettenham. Is to stop, because the subsidy has been withdrawn and Galloways is not prepared to operate it without. Some other routes nearby have been given a stay of grace until March from the subsidy, parish councils along the routes are aiming to meet to see what can be done to save them.

**Hundreds of children still unsure about school transport arrangements**

In September 2019, Suffolk County Council’s new Home to School transport policy will be implemented. Children moving to a new school will only receive free transport from the council if it is their nearest school and more than 2 miles from their homes. All eligible parents were asked to opt-in and apply for transport, and those who were not eligible for free transport were offered the opportunity to buy a spare seat on SCC school buses.

However, 472 applications for home-to-school transport remained outstanding at the end of August, with families unsure of whether they would be allocated a seat on an SCC school bus in time for the start of the new school year. I attended a meeting in Nayland for parents caught by this, five of them were from Lavenham and waiting to hear whether they had a paid for seat. I gather that they all now have been told they have one.

**Boundary Commission to shake up county ward boundaries (divisions)**

The Local Government Boundary Commission has begun a review of Suffolk County Council, to determine both councillor numberss and the boundaries between divisions.

For the first stage of the review, the Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent Group submitted a proposal to keep councillor numbers in Suffolk at a minimum of 75, with the potential for an increase to 80. This was based on the need to ensure proper local representation – the fewer councillors there are, the less representation residents receive. Also to ensure the workload does not discourage people with caring or work commitments from standing. .

The Conservative and Labour Groups submitted a joint proposal asking for a reduction to 70 councillors.

We expect the Commission to reply shortly to give its indicative verdict on councillor numbers and will then move to determining new boundaries . The review is expected to be completed by July 2020.