

District Councillor Report: Debenham Ward – Feb 2025
Serving Ashfield-cum-Thorpe, Aspell, Beddingfield, Debenham, Kenton & Winston
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Community Information:	Local Government Restructure, Reform and Devolution Update To recap, Government want to make local councils easier to understand. We need to expect to see new regional authorities for a population of around 1.5 million people – called Mayoral Strategic Authorities, with a further lower authority (usually called a unitary council of around 500,000 people) replacing the County and District and Borough Councils. So how is that effecting you in practice? Suffolk County Council’s request to postpone the elections taking place in May 20025 has been agreed by Government and I have extracted details from the formal letter from Jim McMahon MP that has been sent. It was announced that Norfolk and Suffolk are now on the fast track priority list aiming for Mayoral Elections to take place in 2026. We now expect further discussion to take place between all effected councils for an interim plan to be drawn up. This interim plan needs to be sent back to Government by 21st March 2025. A full proposal will then need to be sent to Government by 26th September 2025, following sufficient time for Councils to carry out engagement necessary to develop robust and evidenced unitary proposals. Government will then work with Councils to move to elections of new ‘shadow’ unitary councils as soon as possible, as is the usual arrangement in the process of local government reorganisation. I am hoping that the public will be brought into the reorganisation proposals by way of very well advertised consultation in many media forms. If anyone would like to see a copy of the letter, please let me know. Debenham Leisure Centre will become a place for Strength and Balance Classes in February. People over 65yrs can self refer or be referred by a health professional. The Good Child Report 2024 has been published and highlighted some long term concerns on Children’s happiness, notably a downward trend with the cost of living directly affecting families. More locally, The Mix, in Stowmarket, will be providing a youth diversionary activity programme which will be yearlong, aiming to engage with young people to include workshops, providing drop-in sessions and a safe space for young people with other aims of breaking down barriers between young people and the local police.
Drop In/Cabinet and Council Dates:	<u>Mid Suffolk in February</u> My drop in surgery will be on 10th February at Debenham Leisure Centre, I am here to help. The next full council meeting will be on 27rd February, Cabinet will meet on 11th February to review short to medium budgeting, the local nature recovery strategy, antisocial behaviour policy, specialist food waste collection vehicles and Stowmarket parking zones. My contact details are as above, please use them if you need me.