

Watton Town Council

Questions for the Leader of Breckland District Council Sam Chapman-Allen 28.09.21

From Councillors:

1. With the exception of Watton all the other Breckland market towns have sports and leisure facilities provided by BDC. When will Watton tax payers be treated equally by provision of sports and leisure facilities funded by BDC in Watton?
2. You claimed in you COVID update earlier this year that all Breckland market towns had been provided by BDC with electric vehicle charging points. Watton does not have one. Your assistant said the Watton would be a priority in the next round of provision. When will that be?
3. In terms of Breckland's successful investment in Watton, what changes or improvements would Mr Chapman Allen expect to see in the town by this time next year?
4. Why unlike many District Councils does Breckland exclude parish and town councils from 106 discussions on planning applications, both initial and for subsequent variations? It is common practice in some places for parish/town councils to also be signatories to 106 agreements and when allocated sums or transfer of assets are due they are passed directly to them not through the District reducing time and administrative delays.
5. WHY do BDC charge business rates to landlords, when there properties are empty, but haven't charged the previous business, rates as they were classed as a small business, so received nothing from the business, but are crippling landlords, whom have been in very difficult times trying to get a new tenant in covid. + the lengthy wait we have endured for planning permission, for change of use, after refusal of allowing it to be residential. When permission was given to other properties in the town to go residential, and i consider them to be more in the commercial area, than our property.

Questions as submitted by members of the public:

- 1 - There is a premises with no name. Apart from a small piece of paper that states jces online in it. (There is no online website for it.) I assume it would have been granted permission to open as a shop. However, this is no longer a shop. Instead it is used as a storage room. Is this allowed as im sure the council would never have agreed it to be this. It has windows missing and looks grim.
- 2 - opposite the above is the Bull pub. The building is a complete state. As is the building by this attached to the Watton kebab shop. The building is so run down, graffiti, and newspapers stuck all over it.
- 3 - All of the above 3 are what you see when you first enter the highstreet. What can be done about this? Is there the unsightly scheme you can enforce. These 3 buildings are really ruining the feel of the highstreet. It looks grim and run down.
- 4 - what is being done to try and bring other businesses in to the area to fill these empty shops?
- 5 - Are the empty shops privately owned? Can they be asked to sell to a business who will open and care for the building/highstreet, if not they need to keep to community standards?
- 6- why is it that no other highstreet in Breckland is like ours? What are they doing in order to have nicely kept buildings and shops?

7 - why do we not employ litter pickers? We have issues with litter and need to stop relying on peoples good will. The amount of council tax paid and the fact Watton is increasing in size with the housing developments, more needs to be done. People need to be employed to do this like in other countys across the uk. I have lived in London, Essex and Hertfordshire and never noticed litter until i moved here. To the countryside. I am constantly picking up litter but i have a job myself, family, commitments etc. People are feeling fed up having to pick up after people so stop helping.