

## **Leader's Report for Council - 18 June 2018**

### **Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) Update**

The Members Advisory Group met on the 5<sup>th</sup> June to hear the response to the Consultation on the SGP and I was pleased to hear that as a result of our representations Harborough District Council's concerns were being positively addressed. We are hopeful that a further reduction in future housing numbers from that first envisaged may be possible along with change of emphasis to designation of growth zones. These are positive developments and which we will be working to deliver in the next re-issue of the draft-SGP expected in early July. There will be an all member briefing which is arranged for the 24th July 2018 at 6.30pm and I urge all members who can make it to attend. It is worth noting that the Strategic Growth Plan is completely separate to our own Local Plan and should not be confused.

In addition to the update on the SGP on the 24th July; there will also be a briefing the same evening on the proposed development for a Garden Village known as Whetstone Pastures that falls mainly in Blaby District Council's area but partly within the HDC boundary.

### **Public Open Space Policy Review**

I can advise Members that a review of our existing Open Spaces Policy is to be carried out. In particular it will be considering whether it is appropriate to agree to adopt open spaces as and when they are offered by developers to the Council and when the developer is no longer able/wishes to maintain such space. What needs to be considered with care are the cost implications to the Council in adopting these open spaces as they will inevitably lead to a greater spend in maintenance that could well be costly over the long term. However, we are sensitive to some residents' concerns where open spaces have been sold on to others who may not maintain it in the expected fashion.

### **Threats for Bus services**

It is a matter of concern that in addition to the threatened withdrawal of the Centrebus service in Market Harborough that the Hinkleybus service no. 58 which serves Market Harborough and Lutterworth will be withdrawn from the 15<sup>th</sup> July. These are vital services and we have made representations to the parent company of Hinkleybus (Arriva) and the County Council to see what alternative arrangements can be considered. We will keep Council updated with developments.

## **Working Group for the significant anniversaries**

The Working Group shall be meeting again soon to hear the responses from the various parishes regarding the commemorative benches and road naming schemes.

I am delighted with the success of the reflective soldier Silhouette in Market Harborough. The public have responded in such a positive way to this installation that I hope others can be displayed around the district. Lutterworth and Broughton Astley have been offered a Silhouette but I would like to see at least one other in places in the north east of the district as well – perhaps in Billesdon or Scraftoft. Please let me know if your Parish may be interested.

We are hoping to commission a piece of artwork to mark the centenary of the votes for women. I would like all members to have the chance to comment on the proposed artwork and where it may be placed.

## **Plastics Free Conference**

By the time Council takes place I will have attended the Plastic Free Planet discussion at the Methodist Church Centre on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June (10am to 12noon). I look forward to listening to the key note talk from Professor Colin Walters a specialist in waste pollution as well as taking part in the panel discussion to explain what Harborough District Council can do in trying to reduce the use of plastic in the District.

## **Good News**

We have had a successful prosecution of a fly-tipper this week. The individual concerned pleaded guilty to 4 charges of fly-tipping and, with fines, costs and a victim surcharge now has a financial penalty of £4473.33 to pay. This brings the message that this Council will enforce against those caught fly-tipping and bring charges. This is a substantial sum of money to find for a mindless act of spoiling our countryside.

I wish to share the very good news that Harborough District Council's excellent Cemetery and Burial Strategy has won an award at the recent National Planning Awards 2018. The award was in the Plan Making category.

Leicestershire County Council has been awarded £442,800 of National Lottery funding from Sport England to help low-income families get active with their children. The money will fund a four-year project to be piloted in the Harborough district and North West Leicestershire districts and will remind parents of the many available opportunities for activity with their children

**Cllr Neil Bannister**  
**Leader**