

Parish Council Assembly Report 2018

Councillor Derek Town

I have attended the full council meetings – 7 present out of 8 ;member of the Audit Committee 4 present out of 7 ; I substituted regularly for fellow councillors on Planning Committee meetings (because I have completed the respective training) and Scrutiny committee and a permanent member of the New Home bonus Panel.

Also. I have been active helping a number of residents with housing issues and refuse collection BINs – most of the problems have been communication and IT complications!!

More general – what have AVDC done

During the last year AVDC have seen the successful completion of the staff culture change programme. Briefly, every member of staff has gone through an assessment process to make sure that we've got the right staff in the right jobs. This has resulted in the loss of about 10% of staff

The savings made have enabled AVDC to develop a balanced budget for the next four years without cutting services.

The culture change programme, together with our digital solutions, has attracted the interest of other local authorities across the country who are similarly suffering from cuts to the Government Grant and we're now selling our ideas and skills to them – generating over £150,000 of income for AVDC in the last year alone.

Vale Lottery 2017 saw the second anniversary of the Vale Lottery. We've now got about 160 organisations signed up and are selling the lottery to other local authorities. I do encourage local good causes to join this, there is no cost to do so and the management etc is done for you. All you need to do is promote YOUR good cause. I can explain more later if you contact me or Sandra.

The New Homes Bonus scheme has continued to allow us to pass on some of the funds received from Government to local communities. **AVDC is one of only a handful of LAs who pass on NHB to communities – the rest use these funds to shore up their revenue budgets.**

Local benefits of the NHB are the Marsworth- Pitstone pathway and Ivinghoe Lawn replacement 'iron railings'.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan has now been submitted to the Government Inspector. It includes nearly 29,000 new homes across The Vale, **9,000 of which are in respect of the unmet needs of authorities in the south of the county.** We are obliged to review the plan

within two years because the Government has announced even higher housing numbers for most authorities in the south-east and these will need to be accommodated.

Things to Come – the Future

East-West rail will become a reality and this, together with an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, will open up new housing growth areas that will help to facilitate the increased housing numbers I've just mentioned. There are three corridors being considered within which the expressway will run

1. – **the southern route** that takes a route from Thame past Aylesbury and out to the Stoke Hammond by-pass via the A418 Wing etc,
2. - **a central route** that follows the route of east-west rail and
3. - **a northern route** that follows the A421 (Buckingham). (

Unitary. The secretary of state has issued a “minded-to” decision (I interpret this as in favour but not yet decided) to support a single unitary in Bucks (excluding Milton Keynes). This will do away with the four Districts plus BCC and create a new authority based on the geography of Bucks County Council. This is expected to be a new council and not to carry on with the existing BCC - but who knows !! Needless to say, we're not happy with that “minded to” decision because we honestly believe that local communities are best served by two smaller unitaries – north and south of the county, and that view was strongly supported by Parish Councils across the County when we originally consulted them on our proposals. We have another 2 weeks to make representations to the SofS (Secretary of State) and we're asking PCs to put forward their own comments as part of those representations. Please note this has not been a democratic process and such statements as “generally in favour of a single unitary” leave us councillors mystified because I have no knowledge of any consultation or referendum, only a suggestion in a BCC communication !!.