

## **Borough Council Report for December**

### **From Councillors Joyce Crooks, Mark Sheppard-Bools, & Robin Webber-Jones**

It has been another busy month for us following up with individual pieces of casework, and working on key issues across the area. The Council has continued to work with government to undertake a range of support initiatives for businesses, families and individuals through the Coronavirus and our thanks continues to go to Council employees who support and implement this activity. Some of the things we have been working on and are involved in are highlighted below.

#### **Licensing Policy**

The Borough Council has re-visited the licensing policy as the law states it should be kept under review and must be published every 5 years. The last review was in December 2015. This review is all based on the Licensing Act 2003 and is 38 pages long. Mark continues to chair the Council's licensing committee.

#### **Community Sector Commissioning**

The Community section partnership is between the voluntary & Community Sector and the Local Authority and has been running since 2003. The Borough Community Planning Team works with 'Next Generation' (Who the Council commission to oversee the development and delivery of our local voluntary Sector Support (or VCS support). The funding has now risen from £20k to £70k and the money is used for small grants. Applicants vary from Burbage Youth Classic Car Restoration Group, to Ratby Band and more local 'Café Jacques' situated in St James Church Centre in Newbold Verdon. Funding is from £1k to £3k

#### **Parish Initiative Fund**

So far virtually £1.5m has been allocated to Rural Parish's since the scheme started in 2005, although there was funding issued prior to that. The total funding per Parish is £12k and the Town Fund is to go up from £10k to £12k in line with Rural Areas. These funds are to be brought together and will be called **The Community Initiative Fund**. Match funding of 50% of the cost of any project will be required.

#### **Green Spaces**

A Play and open space study are currently being produced ready for drafting. Two Officers from the Planning Policy Team have been out and inspected Parks & Play Areas ready to update the Local Plan and the information collected will be fed into the Policies in the New Local Plan. This review should be published in the early part of next year. When complete it will help to obtain Section 106 contributions for Play and Green Spaces in the areas of new developments.

## **Planning**

We continue to provide effective oversight and risk management in relation to development, and implementing the current Local Plan. The Planning White Paper, and the proposed approach being taken, we think presents the biggest single threat to the area we represent currently. We are determined to continue to campaign against it.

We attended a briefing was held on the Local Development Plan for the Borough, and we were advised that the consultation should start in Spring 2021 and the start of the examination in January 2022. This will be followed by the adoption of the plan in October 2022 all being well and would run for 19 years. At this time, the housing numbers are approximately 8600 but this would at least double if the White Paper becomes law. So far, we have 3743 houses for development with permission which gives us another 4845 to find. Add to this a 10% buffer to cover sites not coming forward or not built out, this will equal 5704 houses. The suggestion is for 69% to go in the urban areas and 31% in the Rural areas. 3800 of these properties will be on the two S.U.E, s. Sites are being looked at to provide houses up to 2039. The existing Local plan runs up to 2026 and the new plan will run from 2020 to 2039. When passed which means the new plan will cancel out the existing plan. These proposals could alter if the unmet need in Leicester City is to be taken up by the Districts, and of course if the Government White Paper is passed then the housing numbers required will double! There is to be a further meeting to discuss employment land and work continues with the promotion of a completely new settlement.

## **Hinckley High Street Heritage Action Zone (HHSZ)**

£1.85m of funding and Heritage expertise has been granted over the next four years to secure lasting improvements to the High Street. The Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Action Zone has been chosen as one of a number of zones

throughout the country to help transform Historic Places and help with the Economic & Social recovery. This is to be funded 50% Historic England & the rest to come from Private Businesses and Public Sources, with the Borough Council contributing £360k.