

Apologies, this is quite long, but it has been a busy month. Please do email me any questions after you've had a chance to read it.

1 Full Council – ADC July

Main item of interest for Bersted is the fact that the 6-month Local Plan review has been conducted and Council overturned the decision of the Planning Policy Committee to continue with the review. So, I presume it will be another 6 months in abeyance at least whilst we await the outcome of the Conservative leadership election and know who the next Prime Minister will be. Unfortunately, this does continue to leave the district open to unwanted and unsupported (by infrastructure) planning applications.

2 Shripney meet your Councillors stand.

Thanks to all who attended. It was a busy session. Points to take forward including Community Speedwatch (7 names so far but more expected). Hope to have 10-12 volunteers for training. Perhaps a date could be arranged? Also Operation Watershed proposal behind 2 houses on the northbound dual carriageway section of the A29. Makes much more sense – the middle property hadn't wanted to engage previously which would have left the work already carried out, and the proposed new works, with a section in between which would continue to erode. Visit to be arranged with Cllr Greenway to view/discuss.

3 Planning Policy at ADC

Key item to consider Arun's response to the consultation on S Water's ongoing plans. A very brave chap from S Water actually attended and gave an informative presentation and made many apologies for their failings. I did ask for further clarification about the implications for Arun & Bersted about the lack of capacity in the wastewater treatment plants. We were given a graph of the Lidsey one as an example showing the permitted discharges to rivers and the projected number in excess of this. What I wanted to know was whether DEFRA would be likely to simply increase the number of permits granted for discharges in order to accommodate the additional housing in the area. Unfortunately, not all of the question was answered and the Chair moved on swiftly. I'll get to it another way (never give up!)

4 Housing & Wellbeing at ADC

Three main items. Firstly, annual review of the Leisure Operating Contract with Freedom. Interesting presentation of the good work done but concerns ongoing about rising costs and the challenges that will raise.

After my question at the previous meeting regarding the new housing IT system (CIVICA CX), we had an extensive report explaining the long lead-in time and the rising costs of implementation. Our Housing Manager does have direct experience of the system and so has been able to fully plan and cost the work. In this ever-more-connected world, it is seen as being vital and our current system does need replacing. There are some interesting initiatives to instigate a training scheme for housing officers which, if successful, may mitigate some of the implementation costs if less agency staff are needed.

Finally, the decarbonisation strategy for the housing stock. This proved more problematic than expected, mainly on a financial basis, following on from the previous item where expenditure has risen. The Decarbonisation Strategy seeks to bring the housing stock up to an EPC rating of C or better. Each house will have its own plan to achieve this. Usually I leave the administration to propose a motion but, in the absence of any willing volunteers, I decided that

this is too important to let it drop and so I put my hand up for it. From memory, only 4 Members voted for but it did pass. Therefore, we adopted the Strategy and authorised officers to make an application for a £3M match-funded grant. Arun's £3M may need to be funded by borrowing but we do have a legal obligation to complete this work by 2030 anyway. If we leave it, there is no guarantee of any grant funding, leaving us to find £6M or more. With the cost of living crisis and energy prices in particular, it does seem fair to help those households in the least energy efficient homes as quickly as possible. The retrofit works to take place 2023-25.

5 Planning & Environment at BPC

Lots of engagement from local people with regard to the proposed 5G mast to be sited on Highway (County) land to the left of the pink pub. The format of the application was somewhat annoying – dimensions not in the text but a note referring the reader to the drawings (which are never easy to display on screens). Also, a RAL colour reference which really should be shown as the actual colour for ease of reference of local people. For the record, I looked it up and it is Fir Green. The application also quoted a Local Plan policy TEL SP1, and I have put in a personal objection raising some of those issues. Just checked to see if there is anything online to indicate if it will go to Committee and found that the date for comment seems to have moved out to 18<sup>th</sup> Aug. If you'd like to comment, it is BE/74/22/TEL.

6 A259/A29 Active Travel improvement scheme (still at early stages).

At the last stakeholder event, I did raise the issue of the proposed narrow bridge alongside the main road bridge over the Rife at Rowan Way. Paul Eagle, who is running the project, kindly followed up with me. It was originally considered as part of the works with the S106 money from Bersted Park/Willows Edge. Sadly, there wasn't enough funding to complete everything. However, we were shown examples of similar bridges and selected our top 3 from memory. I've given him all the names and info I could remember and he is trying to track it back. Basically, the road bridge is not of sufficient width for a cyclepath/walkway and this was one way around it. Good to know that there is a possibility of further improving and promoting active travel through our Parish.

7 Local case. This started out as one issue regarding accumulated rubbish but has morphed into something completely different, with ASB issues and more. Cllr Lury and I are in touch with local residents and have just heard from officers at ADC that we will have a meeting in a week or so to discuss all the issues.