**District Councillor Martin Lury**

January and February have been surprisingly busy - two Member briefings, Full Council , Planning Policy and Planning on the 11th January and the 8th February . The Elections Act briefing covered the change to voters in May having to show photo ID at the polling station. Residents can get a free photo at The Civic Centre and Arun will be contacting all parish clerks. Free voter ID can be applied for online (deadline Tuesday 25th April ) and the voter certificate lasts a decade , but the signature has to be renewed every three years .

The second Member briefing was that of The Arun Housing Market Absorption Study which took place on the 6th February. 650 homes are built in Arun per year, far short of The Local Plan’s average of over 1000. Arun has a one per cent growth in population as a result of in - migration both from surrounding areas and London and Surrey with older downsizers and those seeking larger properties as Arun has the lowest house prices in West Sussex and is thus affordable for incomers, but low earnings locally and part - time employment create affordability challenges for locals ! Unbelievably the average house price is 11.3 times earnings. The last decade has seen lower sales influenced by the cost of moving and the ageing population. Evolving market dynamics are relevant also - last year the market was buoyant, but this year a weakening economy , cost of living crisis and rapid interest rate rises have dampened demand .

In terms of new build activity, strategic sites have not come forward as expected and there has been no delivery on these sites since 2016 , although six of the eleven have some form of consent . 60 to 70 units per year are being built on sites, thus making the housing targets unreachable. The highest proportion of people moving into the district are aged 50 plus and two major housebuilders say sales are dropping. The Help to Buy scheme is coming to an end also , although this affects Arun less than other authorities as Arun is less dependent on first - time buye . The conclusion of the report is that delivery of 1400 homes per annum is unrealistic , although the Local Plan should have allocated more smaller sites as they can be delivered quickly!

At the Planning Policy committee on the 26th January I was able to rail against Southern Water’s disgusting dumping of raw sewage into the sea with Aldwick being particularly affected .

**District Councillor Gill Yeates, for Bersted Parish Council 14.02.23**

Just finished a cycle of meetings at Arun DC. Here are some of the relevant points:

1. 12th Jan. Initial ‘visioning’ around options for the area surrounding the Regis Centre site. Officers suggested options to see what Members would be interested in or prepared to consider.
2. 17th Jan. Elections Act briefing. Mainly surrounding the new requirement to take photo ID (passport, driver’s licence, or the free ID which comes in the form of a letter)
3. 18th Jan. Full Council. A petition to ensure that services continued to be provided from BR Town Hall was received and Members voted to give that assurance. Most debated item was ADC response to National Highways re A27 scheme at Arundel. Also agreed our support for the Bognor BID (Business Improvement District) ahead of their ballot.
4. 24th Jan. Target Operating Model (following questionnaires last year to staff & Members about improving the way ADC works). A more ‘social’ meeting to elicit ideas.
5. 25th Jan. Housing & Wellbeing. The key debate related to the projected problems around the Housing Revenue Account project balances which are likely to remain below the previously agreed £2M level for the next few years. This is mainly due to cost increases and reactive rather than planned maintenance. The PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) was agreed for a further 3 years.
6. 26th Jan. Planning Policy. Key debate around response to Water Resources Management consultation – relating to water supply ‘stresses’ in this area. Some plans under consideration include desalination and water recycling plants. Felt there was insufficient emphasis on managing/storing water during the wetter months to supply in drier times. Also considered further the Infrastructure Investment Plan, particularly around bringing forward expansion to Waste Centre at Littlehampton and delaying works to the Waste Transfer Station in Chichester. Members expressed concerns about the poor facilities in BR and the possibility of that closing and residents having to use Chichester or Littlehampton.
7. 2nd Feb. Economy. Committee considered application to Brownfield Land Release Fund for assistance with the costs associated with developing floor(s) above the ground floor shops in the Arcade, BR. The amount available, even if granted, of less than 10% would mean that any of the development options would remain ‘challenging’. In exempt business, we also considered the bids for the London Road coach and lorry park. These were disappointing as expected and Members requested that a Masterplan for the site be developed.
8. 6th Feb. Briefing on Housing Market Absorption Study. This will be considered at a Special Planning Policy Committee later this month. Cllr Lury has probably included in his report but I will update mine next month after that meeting.

At BPC:

2nd Feb – Infrastructure & 7th Feb - Planning