

5th February 2015

Bedford Borough Councillor's report

Education

There is a lot of investment by the Council in Brickhill at the moment. We are delighted that Brickhill Lower School has now joined Scott Lower in receiving their new classroom buildings.

We have set aside £12m [across the Borough](#) to replace all the overdue temporary classrooms in our schools.



Landscaping and Traffic Calming

New trees are being planted, junction and road resurfacing, verge protection is being installed and the 20mph zone is being extended following our consultation. Over 80% of people were in favour of the 20mph limit, those who were not as keen expressed concern that it might not affect real speeds. We have set funds aside to introduce 3 vehicle activated speed signs in Tyne Crescent and the extended zone. These have been shown to be helpful and we know that across the country these zones have reduced speed over time. Five people are killed every day on our roads. Imagine if that happened on trains; there would be a public outcry. We need to take action and these zones do help save lives.

Council Tax & Frontline Services

We have just announced that council tax will be frozen this year for the fifth year running in Bedford. Frontline services will still be protected with no closures of things like libraries, leisure centres or children's centres. Bus services will continue to be subsidised and alongside £41m investment for schools there will be no reduction in the road budget and an extra 1m for footpath works. This comes against the backdrop of an eye watering £82m government cut, over a third, to our budget every year.

Local Infrastructure

In spite of difficult economic times Bedford continues to buck the trend with considerable economic growth. The bypass is underway and the new bus station opens in the next few weeks. The new seven screen cinema [will soon be](#) under construction, with [a](#) public riverside square, shops, restaurants, hotel and a new pedestrian and cycling bridge. National chains like Wagamama are taking 20 year leases, showing their confidence in the future for Bedford.

Around town derelict buildings are being restored like Porter Blacks, and the old Ford Garage on St Peter's. In St Pauls Square the refurbished buildings are almost complete, the timbers show these to have been built in the medieval period around 1460. Why not take a drive into town at the weekend to see them, and enjoy free parking!