

## Woodlands Park Borough Councillor Report November 2020

### Planning for the Future Consultation

As you are aware the consultation on the Government's white paper 'Planning for the Future' has now closed, and the Council has submitted a response, as have we as your ward councillors. This includes the need, in our view, to ensure local residents have a say in planning decisions, more support for neighbourhood plans and increasing affordable housing.

### Ward Boundaries

The new proposals for the Borough's ward boundaries have been published and a consultation is running until 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The proposal is that Woodlands Park should be part Brickhill Ward. If you would like to comment the consultation can be found here: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/bedfordshire/bedford>

### Community Hub

Given the new national lockdown that was announced on 31<sup>st</sup> October by the Prime Minister, the Council is re-launching the community hub to support those who need additional help. For more information please visit [www.bedford.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/covid19) or contact 01234 718101 or [Covid19help@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:Covid19help@bedford.gov.uk). The hub is operating in partnership with local organisations and can help with deliveries of food or assistance with prescriptions as well as providing information and guidance. Please continue to be aware of 'Hands, Face, Space'.

### Planning

The Council's 5 year land supply will be challenged at an appeal for 400 dwellings off Hookhams Lane, Renhold, later this month. Cllr Moon has been asked by Renhold PC to speak at this appeal on their behalf. It is relevant to the whole Borough as if the Inspector does not support the Council's view that we have a 5 year land supply then we expect to see more speculative applications on sites similar to the Graze Hill development.

The Local Plan preparation also continues and you can see all the sites which were submitted to the consultation here: <https://bedford.opus4.co.uk/planning/localplan/maps/planning>. The officers are currently in the process of analysing the responses to the Issues and Options paper and the sites which were submitted. We are expecting a draft plan to be presented to the Executive in February.

### Covid Marshals

Covid Marshals are now operating within the Borough to provide information and advice about how to stay safe and slow the spread of coronavirus locally. They are working closely with council officers and the Police so that any concerns can be escalated to Environmental Health, Public Health, or the Police, if necessary.

### Maternity Services

At the last Full Council Phillippa introduced a motion that the Mayor and the Portfolio Holder write to Bedford Hospital to get them to change their policy so that women have support from birth partners during maternity. We have since heard that birth partners are now able to attend 12 week and 20 week scans and be present throughout labour. We hope that this will remain the case during lockdown and we have also asked whether greater access for partners can be given post labour.

### Ward Fund

The deadlines for the ward fund are:

Environmental Services Projects – 20 November 2020

Outside Organisations Projects – 11 December 2020

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