

Borough Councillor's Update – May 2014

Contact your Borough Councillor Alison Foster by telephone on 07773371190 or email at afield_foster@btinternet.com

Riverside North Development

The Riverside North development is progressing after the Council and the developer signed an updated Development Agreement to incorporate changes to the scheme since it was proposed in September 2011. The development will be situated on the site of the former Town Hall, which is currently being demolished, and will consist of a new cinema, hotel, restaurants and retail and residential units.

The changes include the movement of the hotel to the west of the development to allow for a public square on the site of the Town Hall and a reduction in the number of residential units from 150 to 64. The developer is in talks to secure funding for the development and it is hoped that work will begin later in 2014.

Bus Station Redevelopment

Allhallows car park has now reopened following refurbishment works which include improvements to the lifts and the public conveniences. The bus station is in the process of being demolished as works continue to redevelop the site. Improvements will also be made to shop fronts on Greenhill Street beneath the car park.

Car Parking

From the 19th May Lurke Street and River Street car parks in Bedford will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Council has also announced that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) payment system in Lurke Street, which requires the user to enter their registration number, will be scrapped in favour of the ticketing system at the Council's other car parks.

Council Restructure

At the beginning of April the Council implemented a new staffing structure following the agreement of savings proposals for 2014/15. These included a reduction in senior officers (saving £500k) and a review of overall staffing structures (saving £1.5m). These savings will be replicated in 2015/16.

NHS Review

The body responsible for organising and purchasing local healthcare services, the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) has published a document setting out changes which it feels need to be made to deliver sustainable services. The BCCG's 'Case for Change' document underlines how services need to be delivered differently in order to provide better quality and more efficient services by ensuring that services are co-ordinated, technology is used to a greater extent and patients are cared for in the community rather than in hospital. The report and summary document can be viewed here: <http://www.yourhealthinbedfordshire.co.uk/>.

Options for the future of services will be published in July and a formal consultation will follow. The BCCG is currently conducting stakeholder meetings to gather residents' views. A list of forthcoming events can be accessed here: <http://www.yourhealthinbedfordshire.co.uk/get-involved/>

Ward Funding

Councillors have been allocated their ward funds for 2014/15 to support local projects. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to suggest a scheme which you feel could benefit.