

Old Hastings & Tressell County Councillor Report

- **County Council budget:** The 2014/15 budget was agreed on 11th February and it represents year two of a three year programme of £60m of cuts implemented in a ratio of 25% of the cuts in 13/14, 50% 14/15, 25% 15/16. There will be a 1.95% council tax rise for 2014/15 – which amounts to about 43p a week extra for a Band D council-tax payer. Along with my Labour colleagues I tried to mitigate the impact of all this somewhat on adult social care and children’s services. The majority on the council voted down our alternative suggestions.
- **Banning of badger culling on county land:** I supported a resolution moved by my local Labour colleague Cllr Phil Scott to ban badger culling on county council owned land and rather to support alternatives like inoculation of badgers against bovine TB. We wanted to put out a clear statement of principle as some other county councils have, like Conservative-controlled Hampshire and Labour-controlled Derbyshire. Unfortunately again the majority on the council did not support the resolution.
- **High Street traffic changes:** The council has decided on the pedestrian-friendly measures to be introduced in High Street following on from the public consultation last Autumn. The number of responses was not as large as might have been expected and on the most significant proposal – the reversal of the one-way system in part of High Street and in Courthouse Street – there was not a conclusive view from those who did respond. The council did agree to widen the pavements at the bottom of High Street, extend the red surfacing to cover the entire junction with George Street and to raise the carriageway by the Old Town Museum to reduce the kerb height. These recommendations will now be taken forward for detailed design work. A potential contributory source for the funding for the scheme could be from the parking surplus from on-street parking in the town.
- **Isobel Blackman Centre:** The council previously agreed not to close Isobel Blackman but to hand over its operation to an outside agency. Currently the adult social care department is working up the specification for the future management of the day care arrangements which will then go out to tender. There has been a meeting with users and carers to inform them of the

decision and a further meeting is planned shortly where the focus will be on next steps and involving users and carers in developing the service specification, which will be used to procure the service. The timeline for putting in place the new provider is likely to be between September and December.

- **Street lighting:** The council is changing street lighting in Hastings from the older yellow lights to LED lights. One of the advantages of the new LED lanterns is that the emitted light can be better controlled and directed more efficiently onto the highway where the light is intended. The new LED lanterns also produce “white” light that is perceived as brighter by the human eye. This combination means that less energy is required to run the lanterns to achieve the lighting levels needed to comply with current standards and that means significant financial savings. These changes also significantly reduce carbon emissions. An event to explain the changes is being held on Saturday 8th March, from 9.30 to 12.30 at the Old Town Museum. The changes can also be viewed at:
<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/roads/maintenance/fixtures/streetlighting/changes.htm>
- **Roadworks:** You can find out about current and planned road works at <http://roadworks.org>. This will show you all road works in the area, start and end dates and the likely impact on traffic. This will now also show locations of licensed skips and scaffolding.
- **Getting ready for Winter:** Anyone can follow the gritters live when they are out by following the link below:
<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/roads/maintenance/saltingandgritting/map/default.aspx>

Cllr Jeremy Birch 01424 425585