

## Old Hastings & Tressell County Councillor Report

- **Bus Cuts:** The county council cabinet's plans to seriously cut subsidies for non-commercial bus routes got short shrift at the December full council meeting. The issue only appeared in front of the full council rather than just being determined by the cabinet thanks to a petition of 7,000 names organised by Labour's Hastings and Rye parliamentary candidate Sarah Owen. Under county council rules a petition of **more** than 5,000 names gives the right for the petition organiser to speak to the full council meeting and then for the council to consider what action to take in response. Sarah spoke forcefully at the start of the debate and then a motion to reject the proposed bus cuts was moved by my Labour colleague Cllr John Hodges and seconded by myself. The resolution was carried with the Conservative Group, the leader of the UKIP group and one independent voting against. The final decision still rests with the cabinet of eight Conservative councillors which meets on 16<sup>th</sup> December. But they will be making that decision against the backdrop of a huge petition and of the declared opposition from the majority of councillors. The county council debate can be viewed at [http://www.eastsussex.public-tv.com/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/111675](http://www.eastsussex.public-tv.com/core/portal/webcast_interactive/111675)
- **Isobel Blackman Centre:** In January 2014 the county council cabinet considered the future of six day centres for older people and agreed to the closure of three of them. The second phase of work required the identification of alternative providers rather than the county council itself for the remaining three: the Isabel Blackman Centre - Hastings, Phoenix Centre - Lewes and the Charter Centre – Bexhill. The services were offered to the voluntary and community sector to provide the day service and to manage the building. A procurement process was initiated resulting in the evaluation of bids from three potential providers. Bidders were invited to tender for any or all of the services. A decision has been made involving one organisation to run all three centres and the identity of the successful bidder will be made public soon. It is anticipated that the new arrangements will commence in April 2015.
- **Victoria Avenue:** Carriageway patch repairs at the junction of Victoria Avenue and Leeds Close have been agreed. The three-day works (7am - 5pm) were due to commence on 4<sup>th</sup> December but unfortunately have been postponed. We await information on a new start date.
- **Mount Pleasant Road:** I and other councillors have been complaining about the state of the road surface on Mount Pleasant Road for some time. Resurfacing is now due to take place over four days (9.30am – 4.30pm) starting on 9<sup>th</sup> December. Unfortunately this will involve a lengthy road closure all the way up to the Priory Road/Old London Road junction. Buses will be diverted. The highway authority should be distributing leaflets to residents but if there are any queries they should be directed to 0345 6080193.
- **Frederick Road:** I presented the petition to the October county council meeting calling for a 20mph speed limit and heavy vehicle ban on

Frederick Road. This follows significant concern expressed by residents living along the road who are concerned about it being used as a rat run when it is a narrow residential street. The petition was to be formally considered on 15<sup>th</sup> December but has been put back to January. My borough council colleague for Tressell ward Cllr Tania Charman will be speaking as chief petitioner.

Cllr Jeremy Birch 01424 425585

If you would prefer not to receive my councillor's report please let me know; otherwise feel free to copy it on to others.