DC Report 6 February 2022

The follow are sections of Portfolio reports:

It also demonstrated that getting the sequence of decisions right is critical. The new joint waste contract was procured on the basis of charging for green waste and, had charging not gone ahead and collections had to be made from every household, the additional cost would have been about £500k p.a.

The new blue bins for WDC have been ordered along with the food caddies for both SDC and WDC. Delivery of the food caddies is likely to be around April/May time. The new fleet of trucks has also been ordered with the 26 tonne RCV’s being manufactured by Dennis.

Progress on the mobilisation of the new contract is going well and communications plan has been put together. I will circulate this to you over the next few days.

The key message is that the 2022/23 SDC Budget has been constructed on the basis that SDC will again maintain all its existing service provision during the coming year.

The terms of the Government’s Spending Review for 2022/23, another one year settlement – the fourth in a row - has done nothing to improve the certainty with which we can plan SDC’s finances for the longer term. We continue to live from one year to the next.

From the point of view of our residents, the 2022/23 Budget means an increase of £5 on a Band D property to £154.12 for the year. This is a rise of 3.3%, significantly less than the latest CPI figure of 5.4% (December 2021) which the Bank of England forecasts will rise to 6% in the Spring of this year. Our recent experience of inflation demonstrates how quickly and how significantly the prospects for the UK economy can change. In January 2021 the CPI rate of inflation was 0.7%.

The Budget also proposes that the Garden Waste Scheme Fee will increase by £2 to £42, a rise of 5% that is broadly in line with inflation. Residents need to be aware that SDC has a number of contracts with service providers that are inflation rate linked. This fee increase reflects the terms of this particular contract.

Given that SDC’s Council Tax will increase by £5 per Band D property, SDC typically retains only 7.5% of the Council Tax revenue it collects on behalf of the towns and parishes, the PCC and WCC. The lion’s share – 77% last year - goes to WCC.

I have actively been trying to enlighten the new head of planning Adrian Harding about those matters that need to be cleared up within the planning department. It does not make me popular but conservation and getting the various departments to communicate includes enforcement, planning, and building regs.

With regards to listed building, the conservation officer works on the premiss that those who buy grade 2 listed building have got to adopt to the building and not to current SDC requirements with regards to climate change. This another problem I have pointed to the Head of Planning.

The LGA have also made some changes to the model code, which now needs to be signed off by SDC and WDC. SDC this will require an extra meeting of its Audit and Standards Committee to agree to it.