



## Stratford on Avon District Councillor's Annual Report 2014

### Councillor Maurice Howse

This year has been totally dominated by Outline Planning Applications.

- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Localism Act.
- Draft Core Strategy.

The timetable has moved a number of times for the Core Strategy. April Cabinet / May Council Meeting. Submitted / for inspection / Adopted May 2015.

My own Portfolio of Enterprise Housing and Revenues which as you can tell from the title covers a wide area of the District Council's work.

#### **Enterprise.**

As the name suggests, is ensuring that the District Council has a robust Corporate Strategy and maintains a good working relationship with businesses in the District and is recognised as a Business Friendly Council.

#### **Housing.**

Includes looking after Home Choice, Orbit issues, Homelessness prevention, Empty Homes strategy, Disabled Facility Grants, the Refuge and generally anything to do with residents housing and welfare issues, but not Planning.

#### **Revenues.**

Dealing with all aspects of the Council Tax, including collection and pursuing non-payment. Welfare benefits, Housing benefits, Council Tax support. Also the collection of Business rates and again pursuing non collection. (The Council doesn't keep Business rates, they are passed on to Central Government).

#### **During the past Year, as both a Councillor and a Portfolio Holder I have:**

I have attended many meetings including Full Council Meetings, Cabinet Meetings. Planning Meetings, Leaders Meetings and Conservative Group Meetings

I have also attended Parish Council meetings in Bidford, Salford Priors and Wixford and kept in regular contact with the Parish Council Clerks forwarding them relevant information and press releases as appropriate.

I have attended numerous events as the representative of Stratford on Avon District Council.

I have held several 1:1 meetings with businesses and Developers.

#### **Training.**

I have also completed 20 hours of Councillor Training during the last twelve months and attended two One Day Training Courses in London.

## **Other Activities.**

I Chair the Enterprise Planning and Housing Policy Advisory Panel.

I have attended the Board meetings of Stratforward BID Ltd and Shakespeare's England Ltd as the SDC representative on the Board.

The Cash Management Group,  
The District Housing Forum,  
The Markets Forum,  
The Tourism Forum,  
The Southam Development Group.  
StratfordVision.  
Ragley Quarry Marsh Farm Liaison Group

## **In addition I have held monthly meetings with:**

The Head of Service  
The Housing Manager  
The Revenues Manager  
The Business Manager

## **Some Achievements.**

This year we won the Best Small Market of the Year awarded by NABMA as our Markets went from Strength to Strength.

Set up Shakespeare's England (Public Private Partnership) to run our Tourism Strategy 4.9 million Visitors £335 million to the local economy.

Held the first SDC Business Conference at the Gaydon Heritage Centre and now working on plans for one this year.

Started Work on our new Corporate Strategy for 2015 to support the local economy.

A new Start up Business Initiative in conjunction with Coventry Chamber of Commerce giving both advice to people wanting to start up on their own business and running free half day business workshops for them.

Started the first ever SDC 'Business Matters' Newsletter.  
Making Improvements to the Visitor Information Centre Offer.

I took part in the Small Business Saturday initiative sponsored by American Express.  
I undertook work on initiatives for returning empty homes to use, the latest was in Tiddington.

I saved The Refuge from closing.

I continue to enthusiasm and really enjoy my role representing you and the residents of the Bidford & Salford Priors ward on the District Council, we live in a fantastic part of the country and I hope that my role as your District Councillor helps to protect and enhance it for future generations.

Best Wishes  
*Maurice Howse*