

Annual Report 2017

In keeping with the pattern of recent years, MHDC has again been faced with further cuts in its income from government grants. We have continued finding the necessary savings by making further efficiency savings in areas that will not only save money but should also provide improvement in services.

The move to a single site of the Council House for all employees is almost complete , which will give us a chance to hopefully receive a rental income for Brunel House the former home of the planning department. Whilst there are some difficulties to be overcome , it is still our desire to carry out work to the Council chamber which will allow the TIC to move in (and rent out their building) and at the same time provide a reception to facilitate visits to the Council House.

Joint working with Wychavon , in addition to the sharing of the Chief Executive has further developed during this year , with a common planning system allowing staff to work on either authorities applications which should help deal with the peaks and troughs in each council. The new computer system is now live and the access to planning applications details on the website is much improved after a few early issues were dealt with.

There continues to be a high volume of planning appeals , but the Council's decision is being upheld by the Inspectors on a large majority of cases, especially as the SWDP is now in place. I was pleased to see that the two major appeals in Holt were rejected especially as the Inspector agreed with my reasons for refusal , contrary to the Officer recommendation, in relation to the Millenium Green application.

It has been decided that from April 2018, recyclable and landfill waste will be collected on alternate weeks using wheelie bins. Together with other measures to improve the efficiency of the service, this should save £200,000 per annum which will contribute to the necessary savings target. Most other councils in the region and indeed nationally have already moved to this system or even less regular collections.

During the year I participated in the programme of Ward visits together with one of the Officers from Malvern. We visited local organisations and businesses to create better contact and find out what assistance they needed in their activities.

Finally, there is a budget for each Councillor of £500 to spend on local worthwhile activities. I would be pleased to hear from any community organisation in the Parish that could make good use of a contribution. I was pleased to make a contribution to the worthwhile Christmas lights fund from last year's allocation.

Pam Cumming District Councillor Baldwin Ward