



### Leader's announcements

**Council, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018**

I would like to welcome the four new Councillors Nick, Mike, Gareth and Alan elected on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 and welcome back to Paul Harrison who has returned to our ranks: I look forward to working with them in the interest of our local communities.

I also wish to pay tribute to those 3 dedicated Councillors who stood down at the election. The 3 of them had had particularly noteworthy careers and service of 46 years between them, having been Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Council or Cabinet members or filled other important roles.

It is good that Councillors Anne Hingley, Stephen Clee and Rose Bishop continue to be involved in local government at county or parish level.

I would also pay tribute to those who gave distinguished service to the Council but who lost their seat.

While the political balance and age profile of our Council have changed, in Redditch Borough Council there was a change of political control and a new leader, Councillor Matt Dormer. I have already met him with other leaders, and I look forward to forming a positive working relationship with him, particularly in the context of the joint work we already do with Redditch and Bromsgrove.

The Returning Officer will provide a report on the elections for the July meeting of Council, but I am sure members would not mind my thanking his staff and him for the smooth operation of this year's elections – our last set of elections by thirds. While the declaration of results was very swift on 4<sup>th</sup> May, we will have to wait somewhat longer next year because of the multi-member wards (except for Lickhill) and of course there are elections for all Parish Councils, save for Kidderminster.

Last week, Linda Draycott sent a “no surprises” note about the Depot 2020 project to all members. Tenders have now been issued for construction work for the scheme and bidders invited to bid for the contract by 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

The planning, design and technical preparations for the scheme took longer than anticipated to allow for detailed technical investigations to be completed. These revealed the need to invest in upgrading the site's drainage to meet modern, more stringent requirements. As a result the overall plans have been revised and the scheme will not now include business units for hire. The project is still expected to provide a positive revenue position for the Council. Work is expected to start on site in August/September 2018 and the depot will remain operational throughout the capital works.

Income generation remains important as part of the Council's transformation. I was pleased to see the first few investments from the capital portfolio fund being supported, including one dealt with at the Cabinet sub-committee the day before the

elections. Interviews for the commercial business partner role are being held tomorrow and I hope a successful appointment will be made, to help drive forward our work in growing our commercial income.

In respect of Crown House, Mike Parker and our legal team are liaising directly with Telereal Trillium and their solicitors, Reed Smith, to finalise legal agreements that will effect the surrender of the lease and demolition. Good progress is being made and we hope to be able to conclude the full agreement in the next few weeks.

At Lion Fields, Cordwell have undertaken site investigation works and are currently analysing impact of 'made ground' on foundation design. By mid June the NHS will vacate the part of their land that will be incorporated in the development, which will enable final site investigations to be completed on that land. The Development Agreement is being finalised between the Council's Property Solicitor and Cordwell's solicitors. Again it is hoped to reach agreement shortly on detailed points of negotiation.

Members will appreciate that there is much detailed work that underpins major redevelopment projects such as these. In both cases, the signals are in favour of physical progress on the ground beginning during this municipal year.

**Cllr Marcus Hart**  
**Leader of the Council**