

March 2019

Dear Resident

As we approach local elections in May, we wanted to update you on what your Councils have done for Leighton Buzzard over the past 4 years, and to outline future plans. We understand the great responsibility you place on your elected representatives, and we hope that when deciding who to vote for in a few weeks' time, you will look at our past achievements and the credibility of our promises.

At a time of austerity, both Leighton Linlade Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council have continued to invest in our community and have protected front line services, with minimal increases in Council Tax.

Central Bedfordshire Council has made savings of over £50 million since 2015, but has continued to invest in capital projects that have directly benefited Leighton Buzzard.

- £200 million in the A1 – M1 link road.
- £50 million in the Woodside link road.
- £100 million across Central Bedfordshire for new school places, including the expansion of Leedon Lower, Clipstone Brook Lower and Leighton Middle Schools
- £33 million across the local area on road improvements, street lighting and pavements.
- Improved waste recycling centres for Leighton Buzzard and at Thorn Turn.
- Upgrades to the library.

Leighton Linlade Town Council has continued its programme of upgrading local parks and pavilions, with no increase in the Town Council's precept for seven years.

- Award of four 'Green Flags' for our local parks and cemetery.
- Installation of new play equipment in parks around the town.
- Refurbishment of public conveniences in Parsons Close recreation ground.
- In 2018, £150K awarded to local community groups through the Youth Promise grant scheme.
- Worked with Bedfordshire Police to set up 'Streetwatch' and 'Speedwatch' – engaging members of the local community to support the Police in patrolling the town centre and running speed awareness exercises.
- Continued to fund additional Police patrols through Operation Dodford, to provide extra officers for community events, the market and in parks.

As we talk to local residents, it is clear that the number one concern is policing and crime. We are committed to continue with existing initiatives, and to lobby for a fair allocation of police resources. Central Bedfordshire Council are planning to recruit 12 additional Neighbourhood Officers, who will work in local communities to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour and parking enforcement.

New developments are already underway to the east and north of Leighton Buzzard, and we have been working with developers and council officers to ensure these developments are supported by appropriate facilities and infrastructure.

- Central Bedfordshire Council are committed to providing a new leisure centre for Leighton Buzzard to meet the needs of the growing population.
- Early completion of the eastern relief road to take the pressure off the town centre – work is already underway to improve the junction of Stanbridge Road and the southern bypass.
- Following the successful delivery of the Grovebury Road retail park, we will be pushing for progress on the redevelopment of the land south of the High Street as a mixed-use development, to include leisure and retail, residential and commercial.
- Construction of a new residential care home on the site of the old Police Station.
- Three potential sites have been identified for a new health hub – we will be pushing for the delivery of this much needed facility.
- Imminent refurbishment of Pages Park pavilion, and the opening of a café in Parson Close recreation ground.

It is impossible to ignore the national political scene – we are going through a time of unprecedented uncertainty, but whilst Westminster may be in turmoil, your Councillors are united and are working together for the local community. We are committed to improving your services and making Leighton Buzzard a great place to live.

Our promise to you is that we will always listen to you, we will always put the needs of the town above party politics, and we will always act in the best interests of Leighton Buzzard.

David BOWATER
Ray BERRY
Amanda DODWELL

Carol CHAMBERS
Adam FAHN
Farzana KHARAWALA
Syed RAHMAN
Sarah WARD