

## District Councillors' Report   March 2024   Baldwin Ward

The Council has received a further £1m one off grant from the Government this year, which has been allocated to the priorities reserve, although it is unclear at this stage what it will be spent on. An increase in the District's element of Council Tax of 2.82% was agreed bearing in mind the projections for the next few years which show substantial ongoing savings being required.

The District still remains at risk of speculative planning applications due to the expiry of the SWDP, with the adoption of the new Local Plan now being further delayed as the Inspector has called for updating of various pieces of background data before the Examination progresses further. In particular the long awaited Transport survey is required. We will continue to press for improved performance in this situation.

It is worth noting that in the original public consultation in 2019, all the Parish Councils in the old Baldwin and Woodbury wards requested that large village development sites should not be included in the Local Plan until a transport plan was put forward. The response was that transport modelling would be undertaken to inform site selection and yet over three years later sites have been identified for this area without such a transport plan.

With new housing developments being completed, issues with affordable housing are starting to emerge. In one case a developer was required to re-examine compliance with the District lettings policy. In Pearl Lane in Astley, the market element of 34 houses was converted to Affordable Housing by the developer and in the process no CIL payments towards infrastructure were required. This has resulted in such housing being built in our District effectively to satisfy the housing needs of other authorities.

Pam and Paul Cumming

Baldwin Ward