



Keeping Residents Informed

CHAOS WITHIN THE LOCAL CONSERVATIVE PARTY



The last few months has seen Councillors being sacked or resigning from their roles within the Council and more recently something of a coup which has seen a change in leadership, leaving 22-year-old Cllr Dan Swords as Leader of the Council. The Deputy Leader, Cllr David Carter, has been given responsibility for Council housing, an area of work we believe he has never experienced. Quite frankly we believe this is no way to run a Council.

EPPING FOREST DC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

You will probably know that last March Conservative led Epping Forest DC agreed to the final version of their Local Plan, which will see thousands of homes and other buildings constructed on the Green Belt close to Harlow's Southern and Western borders. Tory candidates in Harlow stated before the recent local elections that only a vote for the Conservatives could stop these developments.



HAP will continue to keep the Conservatives under the spotlight by asking questions of them at Council meetings.

WHERE HAS CLLR STEVE LEMAY BEEN?



Cllr LeMay was elected as a Councillor in May 2022 and subsequently given the role of a portfolio holder to include responsibility for potholes. We have to say we thought he did a good job because there were more holes than ever before! He did not last long, either being sacked or resigning. It has come to light that he did not attend any meetings for almost six months, the last but one on 15 December and then not until 7 June when he made a very brief appearance at a meeting and said nothing. This was a clearly a calculated move on the part of the Conservatives, a delay of more than six months would have meant that a by-election can be called. Clearly the Conservatives did not want to face losing a seat on the Council. We at HAP think he should call it a day!

HARLOW COUNCIL PURCHASES THE HARVEY CENTRE



The Council purchased the Harvey Centre last January using a loan of £21 million. Despite repeated requests for a summary document which led to the purchase the Conservatives have failed to produce one. It is clear that no-one else was willing to purchase this shopping centre, one has to wonder why? With the Poundland store moving, a café closing, other empty shops and a car park which is still partly closed off, one must begin to have doubts about this purchase, **which we as Council Taxpayers will of course be paying for.**

IS THIS GOOD INVESTMENT IN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION?

What could be called a Development Brief for the Town Centre has now been produced by the Conservatives as well as more detailed plans in respect of certain sites. Millions of pounds are to be spent, to include a new bus station (called a terminus) and work to create



a “cultural quarter” around The Playhouse. As things stand a number of tower blocks will be constructed, the tallest being some 16 storeys high. HAP'S view of this plan is well known, we believe the Council should have followed in the path of Stevenage Council whose plan will see blocks only 6 storeys high. The Conservatives think that the creation of bars and restaurants will see the regeneration of the town centre, a bit ironic because staff in such establishments are generally low paid. HAP believe that the millions of pounds given to the Council by Government would be better spent to provide a new, larger theatre, an exhibition space and live music venue on the site occupied by Market House, creating a Cultural Square in Market Square.

COUNCIL PURCHASE OCCASIO HOUSE SITE FOR £1M

This building was also purchased by the Council last January. The plan is to demolish it, I think everyone would agree that this is a positive step forward. However instead of replacing it with a building used for cultural purposes, HAP believe the land should be used to build homes for older residents who would be encouraged to move from their under occupied home, releasing them for families. This is an ideal site for such a proposal, being near the shops, bus services, and the hospital and leisure facilities.



FROM YOUR HARLOW ALLIANCE TEAM

We are actively looking for people who would like to be candidates next year when 33 seats on the Council are up for election. Let us know if you feel like the challenge would be something you would like to consider. You would be supported and given some guidance and would not be on your own.