

Since the election the Conservatives have lost 3 seats. One was caused by the death of Ringmer Councillor Paul Gander and the subsequent election of the Green candidate, and two defectors to the Independents after a fall out with Seaford Town Council Conservatives. The District is now a hung administration with the Conservatives holding 20 seats and the remaining 21 seats held by Lib. Dems., Greens and Independents. Overall we are doing great things in spite of being a minority, although we have been helped in some way by the Lib. Dems. voting with us when we need them.

A good example of the work we are doing can be seen in the regeneration of Newhaven. The Newhaven enterprise zone will feature a 69 bed hotel, restaurants, shops, a large retail store, many homes and a large new car park.

Another major project in for L.D.C. is the planned development in the Lewes North Street Quarter. I first mentioned this scheme in the Parish magazine back in June 2014 and that as it is in the South Downs National Park they would be the planning authority. We now know that planning permission has been granted and the scheme is just about to start. The project will see 416 new homes constructed, 40% of these will be affordable, a Health Hub for 26,000 patients, 140,000 sq. ft of business space, a riverside promenade and underground public car park. The Government have just awarded £55,000 for the Health Hub after a joint bid by L.D.C. and local health care partners. It will be open 7 days a week and will bring together other health care providers including a practice pharmacist, paramedic and nurse specialists. The government has also announced that the North Street Quarter development will receive £10million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund. The Housing Infrastructure Fund is a government capital grant programme to help unlock new homes. This announcement demonstrates that the government shares the council's view about the importance and significance of the North Street Quarter development. Council officers secured the funding following a competitive bid process. The £10 million grant will be used to fund infrastructure including flood defences and riverfront works, land remediation, and new highways and landscaping.

The District is also making savings and improving services after their merger with Eastbourne Borough Council. We share a Chief Executive and many other staff making savings on salaries and by sharing offices and merging departments we also save money.

The recycling service is much improved with the introduction of a new larger bin. Newick will be getting the new bins by July this year. It will take glass, paper, cardboard, plastic and tins, all in the same wheelie bin. The quality of the recycling is so good that we are getting the best price for our waste. During my time as Lead Councillor for Waste and recycling I was instrumental in introducing the collection of food waste and although the take up is not as good as it could be it is still contributing to our recycling percentage. I also started the initial work to introduce the collection of garden waste and it is gratifying to see that this service is now available across the District and the take up is far better than expected. Due to the demise of "Greentopia", the "Green Waste" collection service has been rolled out throughout the District. The fortnightly service is now available for 12 months with the exception of the Christmas fortnight. To date, more than 3,000 people have signed up for it. It is now available in Newick at a cost of £70 a year. If you feel you don't have enough waste to fill a bin, then you could share with a neighbour and split the cost.

There is a new scheme for house purchase for affordable homes, "Shared Ownership". You start firstly by buying 25 to 75% then pay rent on the balance. This scheme is designed to help first time buyers get on the property ladder.

One of my many functions with L.D.C. is being Vice Chairman of the L.D.C. planning committee. This is a function that I really do enjoy. We meet every 3 weeks on a Wednesday evening at County Hall. The decisions we make are not always popular and someone is always going to be disappointed. We are bound by strict controls on what we can and can't do, but I like to think that we usually get it right.

With regard to the removal of the P.C.S.O. from Newick, this decision was made by the Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne. I have spoken to Katy Bourne personally and stated that all the villages that I represent were appalled by the decision taken and that anti-social behaviour has

increased measurably since their removal. She was not convinced. I could do no more than express my concerns.

Although most of my time is spent on my County Council work, I have six villages to work with, our village of Newick being my only District Council responsibility. At the end of this term I will have completed 12 years and as I will not be standing for election again I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have helped me during my term and to say it's been a pleasure to have served the people that I have been able to help.

If you or somebody you know would like to stand for election next May please let me know.