

Peter Emery, District Councillor - Another year of change and challenge

As one of the three elected representatives serving not only Eynsham but also Cassington and South Leigh this has been a very busy year but, in many ways, an unsatisfactory one. The WODC Local Development Plan has continued on its way towards being 'made', that is becoming a fully fledged legal instrument, I would expect the Government Inspector, Mr Rivett, to declare the plan 'made' sometime within the next eight weeks. This is good news in terms of fighting speculative development, but it is bad news in that it confirms the intention to build 1000 new homes on the west of Eynsham and a further 2,200 homes in a new 'Garden Village' to the north of the A40. During this last year I have stepped up my efforts to challenge the site selection and the selection criteria for both sites with the planners, but to no avail. A look back at the minutes of the Council and the Cabinet meetings will show how many times this has been raised by myself, what it does not show are the meetings with the Council Leader or with other Cabinet members to further question this allocation.

As a result of this and as many of you know I am standing down as an elected representative for Eynsham. After all, if I cannot stay 3,200 houses from swamping the village facilities then it is time to let someone else try.

I am pleased that one of my last actions as a District Councillor and Chair of one of the scrutiny committees has been to ensure that a WODC Scrutiny Committees takes on the job of scrutinising the actions of the Growth Board to keep an eye on the actions of a half dozen people as they go about allocating more than £200 millions of Government funded infrastructure money across the County.

My thanks go to the members of the three Parish Councils, my two fellow District Councillors; Edward and Peter, Charles Mathew our County representative and to the many members of the public I have had the pleasure to help over the last four years, for helping to make serving you a pleasure.

I do intend to continue as member of Eynsham Parish Council for as long as they will have me.

Peter Emery