**Buckinghamshire Council 2019/2020 update.**

**North Marston Parish Council Annual Meeting, 20/05/2020.**

**Councillor Scott Raven.**

[Scott.Raven@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Scott.Raven@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

**Our New, Unitary Council**

On the 1st of April 2020, the five district and county councils of Buckinghamshire were joined to form one, unitary Buckinghamshire Council. Due to Covid-19, the elections for the new council were unable to take place, and therefore I have been designated as your county councillor until the new elections are held in May, 2021. My new email address can be located above.

**Oxford/Cambridge Expressway**

The project, which has attracted a lot of interest over the past year, has been tabled by central government, who have no immediate plans to act upon it.

**VALP (Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan)**

As reported previously work on the VALP continues to progress. The Inspector has concluded that the Plan is capable of being made sound. At the end of December 2019, a six week consultation on the main modifications recommended by the Inspector, to make the Plan sound, was concluded successfully.

Approximately 850 individual representations have been received and the Inspector asked that AVDC give a response to the issues raised in the representations. Accordingly officers have continued to engage with several external consultants, but the Covid-19 pandemic has slowed progress greatly. VALP has been seconded by the council for now in order to prioritise more essential work, especially maintaining social care projects.

**Covid-19**

Community response and adherence to social distancing across Bucks has been great so far. The Covid-19 Councillor fund exists for grants up to £2000 for individuals, charities, and community groups to apply for funds to help assist the local community for covid-19 related response actions. Most recently, St. Laurence’s Church in Winslow has received £2000 for funding to provide food to vulnerable groups around the local area. If anyone in North Marston and the surrounding villages would like to apply for funding they can contact me at my email address mentioned above.

If you are shielding and need to attend a hospital appointment, we can organise private taxi transport which will take you from your home, to the hospital and home again.

To provide this service, Buckinghamshire Council have repurposed our home-to-school transport contracts, which means that all of the drivers are thoroughly vetted, DBS checked and experienced at transporting clients with even the most complex transportation needs. If you are a registered shielded resident there is no charge for this service and it can be arranged by contacting us (at least 3 working days in advance of the appointment) at [aylesburysupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:aylesburysupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) or on 01296 395000.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties due to the impacts of the Covid-19/coronavirus crisis, we encourage you to contact a local foodbank who may be able to support you. Both the Vineyard Storehouse and the Aylesbury Foodbank are both supporting residents during this difficult time. Their websites and contact details are below:

[Vineyard Storehouse](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faylesburyvineyard.church%2Fcontact&data=02%7C01%7CScott.Raven%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C4fa518a3d3f24d448d0108d7fbd6010b%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637254768891505668&sdata=6oUHm4C0JOFmFes8Ixns6GitGgl1akpQkfxti2Pq2%2Bo%3D&reserved=0) – 01296 424440 | [storehouse@aylesburyvineyard.org](mailto:storehouse@aylesburyvineyard.org)

[Aylesbury Foodbank](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faylesbury.foodbank.org.uk%2Fcontact-us%2F&data=02%7C01%7CScott.Raven%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C4fa518a3d3f24d448d0108d7fbd6010b%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637254768891505668&sdata=JJNE9YJWAzYRAtcgZ6J1K6BjEhq8mxiTZrpAie8mriI%3D&reserved=0) – 01296 395514 | [info@aylesbury.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@aylesbury.foodbank.org.uk)